

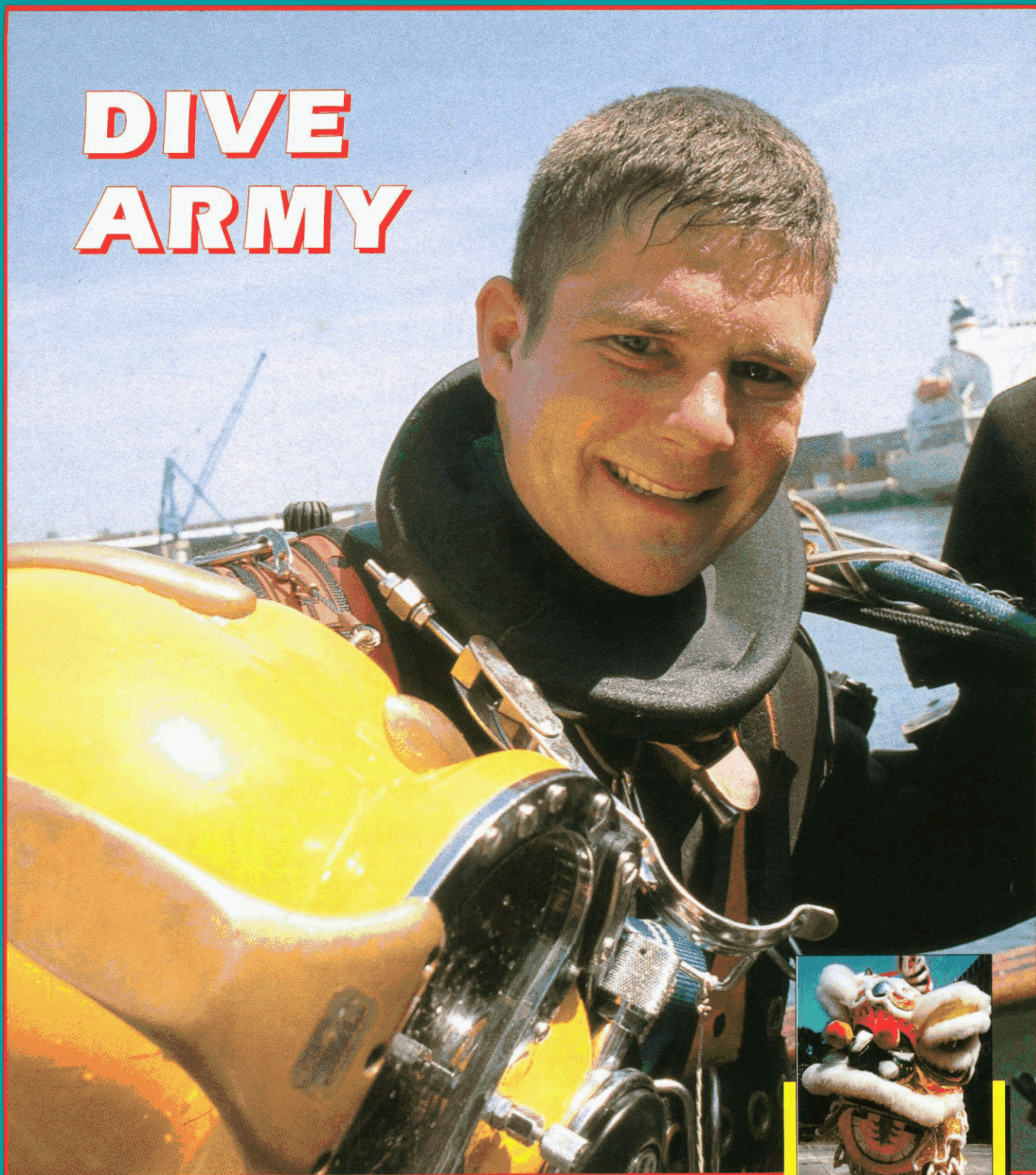
SOLDIER

FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

JULY 7 1997

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July 7, 1997 Vol 53/14

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Hong Kong cover story

TWO special covers will mark the departure of the British Garrison from Hong Kong in the biggest project attempted by the Defence Postal and Courier Services Agency's Philatelic Bureau. Most will be sold in South East Asia, but 2,500 of each will be available from the bureau from June 30 at a cost of £2 each.

Cheques, payable to DPCSA Enterprise Fund, to the Philatelic Officer (HK Cover), DPCSA, BFPO 777. Covers will be on sale at the Philatelic Stand at the Royal Tournament. Proceeds will go to Service charities. Right: Maj Gen Bryan Dutton, CBFHK, signs a cover, watched by Philatelic Officer Capt Donna Peak



Bouncing back!



Sapper crews (above) from 221 and 222 Field Squadrons of 101 (London) Engineer Regiment (EOD) (Volunteers) recover a four-ton "Upkeep" Dam Busters' bomb from the shoreline off Reculver in Kent. In all, four bombs – trial versions of the bouncing bomb used in the famous Lancaster bomber raid led by Wg Cdr Guy Gibson on the Mohne, Eder and Sorpe dams in Germany in 1943

– were retrieved from the bay by Territorial Army engineers based at Rochester and Dartford.

Throughout the weekend operation they were supported by colleagues from 101 Regt's Plant Troop at Catford and its REME Workshops at Croydon.

Dropped in the bay 54 years ago, the bouncing bombs had become visible at low tide. They will be cleaned up and displayed in museums.

FAREWELL

BRITISH military pageantry at its best was preparing to go on show to the world as massed bands and guards of honour from all three Services gathered in Hong Kong to mark the end of 156 years of sovereignty on June 30.

On the military programme for the farewell ceremony on the East Tamar waterfront site, attended by 10,000, was a massed bands performance by musicians from the Royal Marines, the Scots Guards and the Highland Band, with the Pipes and Drums of the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch and the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Coverage planned by more than 8,400 media personnel of this and the July 1 ceremony handing Hong Kong back to China included live global satellite transmission.

Among official events scheduled to precede the formal handover ceremony was a spectacular British 22-minute

firework display lighting up Victoria harbour, from where HM Yacht *Britannia* was later to make a symbolic departure with the Prince of Wales and the former Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten on board.

As this edition of *Soldier* went to press a full house of 40,000 was expected at the Hong Kong Stadium on June 25 for a Programme of Military Music jointly organised by the British Garrison and the Hong Kong Government.

Farewell special –
Pages 21-28

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Picture: Mark Owens

Maj Gen Jonnie Hall, GOC Scotland, inspects new recruits who had just completed the first stage of their basic training at Army Training Regiment Glencorse, near Edinburgh

ARRC's recce brigade formed

RECCE capability of the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) has been enhanced with the creation of Headquarters 1st Reconnaissance Brigade, at Netheravon, Wiltshire.

Established on April 1 under the command of Brig Johnny Torrens-Spence, the multi-capbadge unit will be 69-strong when fully manned. Fourteen posts will be filled by Territorial Army personnel. War role of the headquarters is control of mechanised advance recon units.

Main unit to come under control of the new brigade headquarters is the 9th/12th Lancers, currently based at Swanton Morley in Norfolk.

British general heads AMF(L)

MAJ GEN John Reith was taking command of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) at Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, Germany on July 1. He is the first British commander of AMF(L) since 1983. Gen Reith was succeeding Maj Gen Henry A Kievenaar, US Army.

The Lancers will be joined by the Royal Yeomanry (Volunteers) and the Queen's Own Yeomanry (Volunteers).

Badges already represented in the brigade HQ include the LG, RHD/G, Scots DG, RDG, 9/12 L, KRH, LD, QRL, RTR, R WX Y, AGC, RLC, R Signals and REME.

When on deployment with ARRC, the Household Cavalry Regiment and The Light Dragoons will also be controlled by HQ 1 Recce Bde.

Brigade insignia is an alert orange fox on a black background.

Following low-level training on Salisbury Plain during the summer, the headquarters will run a major exercise in September involving 4,000 troops operating over an area from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Scotland's West Coast.



A former Chief of Staff of United Nations forces in Bosnia has returned to the theatre to take command of British troops. Maj Gen Angus Ramsay (pictured) has taken over from Maj Gen Evelyn Webb-Carter as commander of the Multi-National Division (South West).

Gen Ramsay, who commissioned into The Royal Highland Fusiliers, was last in former Yugoslavia three years ago.

Gen Webb-Carter is to become GOC London District and Major General of the Household Division.

Provost post opens on Rock

GIBRALTAR's new Provost and Security Unit was opened by Maj Gen Simon Pack, Commander British Forces Gibraltar.

The new unit is collocated with the Gibraltar Services Police and includes the Royal Military Police, the Intelligence Corps, the Royal Air Force Police, and the Royal Naval Regulating Branch. It is now the focal point for all military police and security issues within British Forces Gibraltar.

Medics set up in big way

ARMY medics set up the largest field hospital since the Gulf War to test equipment and capability. The huge tented complex at Elvington airfield near York had a capacity for 200 beds.

Normally staffed by 506 people, it included a dental department, psychiatric unit, physiotherapy department, laboratory, X-ray department, laundry and a welfare department and padre.

The week-long exercise was organised by 34 Field Hospital based at Strensall, near York, and began with the delivery by DROPS lorries of 59 ISO containers. Tents were installed with beds and equipment as they would be under operational conditions.

To give the exercise reality, water and electricity were laid on by Royal Engineers who erected water tanks and a purification system, and generated power for lighting and hospital and operating theatre equipment.

Website is the best

A BRITISH Army website launched last year beat 35 top contenders in industry to win the prestigious advertising and promotions category in the 1997 British Interactive Multimedia Association awards.

Judges said the British Army "combined a great deal of information with an elegant interface in a site which makes a valuable contribution to a total communications strategy."

Maj Nick Sharples, who masterminded the launch, commented: "More than half a million visitors can't be wrong."

Elevated to Lords

FIELD Marshal Sir Peter Inge, who retired as Chief of the Defence Staff, was made a life peer in the Birthday Honours.

See military honours in Page 32.



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SOL. PART 1/1



Soldiers from G Battery, 7 Parachute Regiment RHA, get to know children in the village of Ripac, Bosnia during the battery's six-month deployment. They are battery commander Maj Peter Bates (kneeling), Gnr Sean Gallagher (centre) and Gnr Jody Elliot

Airborne Gunners return from Bosnia

Scottish Cavalry tour over

MEN and equipment of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards have returned to their base at Fallingbommel, Germany after a six-month tour of duty in Bosnia. They have been relieved in the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) by The King's Royal Hussars.

Commanding officer Lt Col Austen Ramsden described the tour as a success. "Everyone learned how vital this peace-keeping operation is. You watch footage of Bosnia on television news, but to actually see and work in it on a day-to-day basis makes you appreciate just how important the role of SFOR is."

AFCENT party

HQ Allied Forces Central Europe (HQ AFCENT) marked 30 years in Brunssum in the Netherlands on May 31. It is to implement the first NATO Combined Joint Task Force HQ trials this year.

THE ONLY "maroon" unit in Bosnia, G Battery, 7 Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, returned to Aldershot last month at the end of a six-month tour during which its soldiers did the opposite of what their training tells them.

Natural inclination of the gunners is to lie low and keep out of sight, but in Bosnia they had to maintain as high a profile as possible.

And as the most mobile unit in theatre, the gunners were seen all over the British-led Multi-National Division (South West) area, from Gornji Vakuf in the south to Bihac in the north-west.

Their 105mm light guns were regularly seen beside

major roads, evidence that NATO's Stabilisation Force (SFOR) was not only a friendly and visible force, but one with bite should the need arise.

Battery commander Maj Peter Bates said: "The soldiers feel they have done a great job here. Operationally, the hardship of living in the field in the Balkan winter and the role of G Battery in theatre has given them an insight into working in a war-torn environment."

Bdr Dave Thomas summed up the feeling of his colleagues: "It is good to see the country returning to a more peaceful existence, but you still have to feel for the children and old people who survive on a day-to-day basis."

Signallers' royal visit

TROOPS serving with 14 Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) put on displays for their Colonel-in-Chief when the Princess Royal visited them at their Cawdor Barracks base in Brawdy, Pembrokeshire.

Princess Anne was met by the Master of Signals, Maj Gen Archie Birtwhistle. Accompanied by commanding officer Lt

Col Ian Mackenzie, she watched an abseil descent by members of a light EW team from a Lynx helicopter.

Princess Anne unveiled a plaque to mark the opening of the new Regimental HQ complex and met soldiers and their wives, and members of a troop which had just returned from a tour of duty in Bosnia.

Around the Houses

A summary of Defence topics from Westminster

Veterans' doctor returns

GROUP Capt Bill Coker, previous head of the MoD's medical assessment programme (MAP), is to rejoin the work into ill health among Gulf War veterans, Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid announced.

Gp Capt Coker's departure from MAP was a source of disquiet to many veterans and was raised by them at recent meetings with the minister. He has agreed to return regularly from his present post in the USA.

Dr Reid said the current head of MAP, Lt Col Banu Bhatt, had left at his own request. He regretted the criticisms that had been levelled at Lt Col Bhatt.

□ □ □

The Government has no plans to introduce an official award for National Service. In a written answer, Parliamentary Under Secretary John Spellar said National Servicemen were eligible for the full range of campaign stars and medals available to the Armed Forces.

In a separate written answer, Mr Spellar said that, in the event of funding by private donation or public subscription, the MoD would be "happy to assist" in the identification of a suitable site and to provide representation at any dedication ceremony for a National Service memorial.

□ □ □

Other written answers: Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid said that on June 1 there were 749 UK Service personnel on attached duties in 41 countries.

● Mr Spellar said the MoD had purchased 35 Tactica armoured vehicles. None had an offensive capability.

● Asked by the Countess of Mar if reports that a £1,000 cash prize was being used as an inducement to fill in questionnaires into Gulf War illness, and if the practice was ethical, Procurement Minister Lord Gilbert said in a written answer in the House of Lords that it was the intention of researchers at King's College, London, to enter veterans' names in a prize draw.

"Although the MoD did not commission this research, we are co-operating with it and are satisfied that appropriate medical ethical clearance for the study has been obtained," he said.



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Brave men: From left to right are SSgt Phillip Weaver, Cpl Richard Jones, PC Brown and Deputy Chief Fire Officer Richard Elliott of the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

NCOs rescued injured soldier from blazing vehicle



Feeling better already: Six-year-old Daniel with Fus Joe Walker

Fus Joe to the rescue once again

FUS Joe Walker put his Army medical skills to good use for the second time in a month when his patrol went to the assistance of a boy who had badly injured his hand.

Fus Walker, a member of a 1st Battalion, The Royal Highland Fusiliers patrol in the Poleglass area of West Belfast, cleaned and dressed a deep cut in the six-year-old's hand using the patrol's medical pack.

The boy's father had been unable to stem the bleeding.

Less than a month before, 19-year-old Fus Walker, who has learned first aid techniques since joining the Army, had helped to save the life of a motorist badly hurt in a road traffic accident in Belfast.

Ambulance crews praised his actions.

TWO soldiers serving with Shropshire-based 95 Signal Squadron have received awards for their bravery following a serious road traffic accident last November.

SSgt Phillip Weaver and Cpl Richard Jones were presented with Certificates of Distinguished Conduct from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, and GOC's Commendations from Maj Gen Robin Searby, GOC 5 Division.

Both men were in an Army Land Rover in convoy to an exercise in Germany when it

was struck from behind by a heavy goods vehicle near Twywell in Northamptonshire.

The Land Rover was pushed into the vehicle in front and caught fire. The two NCOs in the front escaped, but a soldier in the rear of the Land Rover, Sig Jamie Walker, was engulfed in flames.

SSgt Weaver and Cpl Jones dragged him clear, sustaining burns as they did so.

Sig Walker received serious injuries. He was found to have multiple fractures of both arms and legs as well as severe burns to his face.

Firemen stand down

EMERGENCY Army firemen were not called on to fight any major blazes in Essex during the strike by county fire services. Military crews provided cover on seven occasions over a six-week period.

Fourteen temporary fire stations were set up in locations ranging from Territorial Army centres to police stations. Operation Fresco was co-ordinated from a joint civilian, police, fire and military control centre at Chelmsford.

Twenty-eight Green Goddesses were manned by troops

from 24 Airmobile Brigade based at Colchester, including 28 Squadron, Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment (part of 10 Transport Regiment RLC), 19 Regiment RA, 47 Regiment RA, 210 Signal Squadron and B Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots. All were trained in fire-fighting techniques at the Defence Fire School at RAF Wattisham.

Fire-fighting became the main focus for 10 Transport Regiment, which committed 367 British and Gurkha soldiers to Op Fresco.



What the papers have been saying

MoD hunt policy for review

FOX hunting may be banned from more than half a million acres of MoD land after a review of policy. A ban would affect around 60 hunts and force a dozen to close. — *Mail on Sunday*

□ Defence ministers are studying an internal report to determine whether they should meet the "debt of honour" to imprisoned doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and padres who continued to care for those in the PoW camps. British authorities docked their pay, believing they were being paid by the Germans and Italians. — *Sunday Times*

□ The "boot camp" for young offenders at the Military Corrective Training Centre at Colchester will continue for at least the rest of the year after the Government decided not to scrap the experiment. — *Times*

□ The Armed Services are to get a new £500 million detection system aimed at preventing them from falling victim to "friendly fire", the Government announced. — *Financial Times*

Highland Gunners on parade

THE people of Colchester, Essex, braved the elements to cheer soldiers from 19 Regiment Royal Artillery — The Highland Gunners — when the gunners paraded through the town centre to celebrate the granting of the borough's Freedom.

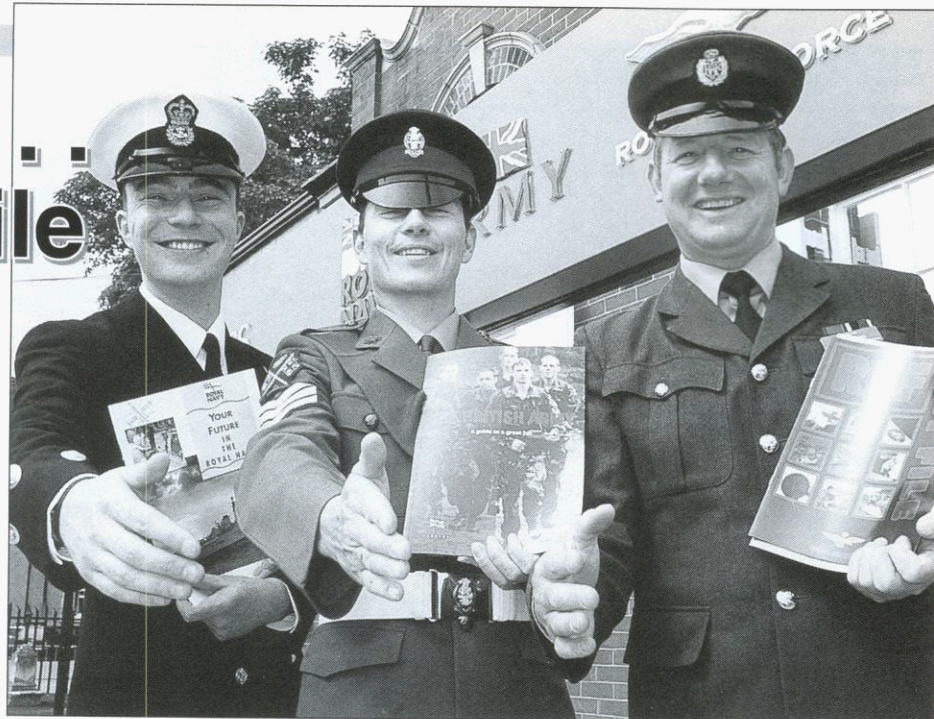
Pride of place went to 105mm light guns which saw action on Mount Igman overlooking Sarajevo in 1995.

The regiment recruits throughout the Highlands and celebrates its tenth anniversary this year.

Services . . . with a smile

Three for one and one for all . . . celebrating the reopening of the refurbished Army Careers Office in Portsmouth are (left to right) CPO **Paddy Moran** RN, Sgt **John Edney** PWRR and Sgt **Bill Marshall** RAF. Opened by Maj Gen **Christopher Elliott**, the establishment in Cambridge Road is now a tri-Service Armed Forces Careers Office. Although situated in a Royal Navy-oriented area (it backs on to the Navy's HMS *Temeraire* PT corps headquarters and sports stadium), the office will still be sponsored by the Army.

Also there for the opening were Commander Recruiting Group, Brig **John Milne**, and Lt Col **Barney Rolfe-Smith**, who heads recruiting and liaison in the south.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Coombs

Knightsbridge Lancer-lot

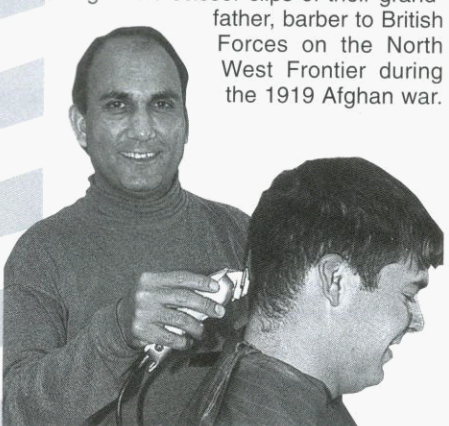
Tpr **Matthew Millington**, on attachment from The Queen's Royal Lancers, has just completed the intense Household Cavalry riding course. And he did so in style, winning the Lockheart Trophy for being best on course.

Matthew, who had to achieve the standard set by Riding Master Maj **Sandy Sanderson**, had never sat on a horse before joining the regiment. Now he can ride in full state uniform, perform intricate cavalry drill moves . . . and clean the vast jackboots, uniform and saddle to exceptional standards. His 18-month attachment to the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment in Knightsbridge will include the Queen's Birthday Parade, State visits, Queen's Life Guard and the Pageant of the Horse.



At the cutting edge

Two Indian brothers are carrying on a family tradition of cutting the hair of British Servicemen the world over. **Abdul Joya**, pictured at his barber shop in Devils Tower Camp, Gibraltar, and brother **Haji**, based at Palace Barracks in Holywood, Northern Ireland, are following in the scissor-clips of their grandfather, barber to British Forces on the North West Frontier during the 1919 Afghan war.



AMC's FLYING START

Heralding a faster, more user-friendly service, Maj Gen **Martin White**, Director General Log Sp (Army), reopens the Air Mounting Centre (AMC) at Duke of Gloucester Barracks, South Cerney. An extensive refurbishment programme has included installation of new check-in desks, air conditioning, Naafi kiosk and vending machines.

Other changes include new processing procedures, reducing the time most passengers have to spend at the centre, and security arrangements which will allow passengers to travel direct to a waiting aircraft if necessary.



Matron moves

Col **Sylvia Quayle** has become the first Territorial Army member of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps to command a field hospital. She is the new CO of 256 (City of London) Field Hospital (Volunteers). Until recently she was matron of the hospital. In civilian life, Col Quayle is managing director of a group which owns and manages nursing homes throughout the United Kingdom.



Court appearance

These Territorial Army drummers from Peterborough-based 6th Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment joined drummers from The London Regiment to play at the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. Left to right are WO2 **John Bradshaw**, Cpl **Graham Coakes**, LCpl **Adrian Howe**, Dmr **Andrew Richardson**, Dmr **Paul Bottomley**, CSgt **Dave Jordan**, LCpl **Adrian Hudson**, and Cpl **Brin Clarke**. They escorted the new guard on parade and the old guard back to Wellington Barracks, a role normally filled by the Regular Corps of Drums from the Household Division.

PEOPLE

Paras and politician

Members of The Parachute Regiment meet Defence Secretary **George Robertson** in Hamilton during a regimental recruiting drive in Scotland. From left to right (standing) are Pte **John Johnson**, CSgt **Tony Tighe**, Pte **Mac McAuliffe**, the Secretary of State, Pte **Mark Daves**, LCpl **Mark Ruddy**, Pte **Mac Macdonald**, Pte **Aaron Jones**, Pte **Paul John Bennett**, Pte **Paul Whitehead** and LCpl **Dane Richards**. The "para" in full rig is a dummy.



LIGHT TRAINING

All set to take their turns on the rifle range at Cullybraggan Training Camp near Perth are **Katherine Prudhoe** (left) and **Rachel Morton**, both members of Tayforth Universities Officers' Training Corps. They were taking part in Exercise Northern Lights.



Cheshire grins

The Cheshire Regiment connection was in evidence when Brig **Keith Skempton** (left) and Lt Col **John Thompson** were invested with New Year Honours at Buckingham Palace. Brig Skempton, now Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander British Forces Cyprus, is a former commanding officer of the 1st Battalion. He received a CBE. Lt Col Thompson, who was awarded an OBE, joined the 3rd Battalion as a Territorial Army officer and rose to command the unit. He is a teacher by profession.



Gulf sickness papers vital to big picture

RESEARCH into cases of alleged Gulf War Syndrome continues with three major new studies adding to the growing pool of information. The new initiatives (reported in *Soldier*, May 12) are based on information collected by questionnaires which will be sent out between now and Christmas.

On BFBS we devoted a whole *Counterpoint* programme to the issues raised by research so far.

Two of the studies will be based on questionnaires sent out on a random basis to those who served in the Gulf as well as those who did not. The forms are quite long and detailed, and include requests for information about current state of health, any symptoms you may or may not have had, and about your experiences.

It is an attempt to obtain as much information at one go as possible and, to give as accurate a picture as possible, it is vital that people who are well and have had no symptoms respond.

Everyone will get a form from the London School of Hygiene, where Dr Pat Doyle is researching reproductive health. Again, she needs as many replies as possible from all sections of the Service community whether they are connected to service in the Gulf or not.

There will also be questions about the health of children born to Service families.

In all cases the appearance of a questionnaire has no sinister connotation. It doesn't mean that anyone has suggested your name

or given any details about you. In two of the three studies, the names have been chosen in a completely random manner, and in the third everyone will have a copy.

The information will be sent back to the research group involved and held by them. It is completely confidential and there is no way in which information about particular individuals can be retrieved now or in the future.

This isn't diagnosis by post, either. The information will not be used to look at an individual's health.

All the forms will have explanatory notes and a freephone number so that you can call in if you need more information.

As to the final outcome, this will be published in scientific journals and the press, so everyone should have a chance to see the results.

Having talked to the researchers I urge you, if you get one or more forms, to fill them in. Veterans who insist their illnesses are related to service in the Gulf need to know where they stand, and the information may prove vital for the future.

It is a difficult area to talk about without bringing in emotional arguments, so this scientific work will enable us to conduct future discussions with more hard facts and fewer subjective judgements.

● **Cari Roberts presents Counterpoint on BFBS radio. Write to her at BFBS, BFPO 786; or c/o *Soldier*.**

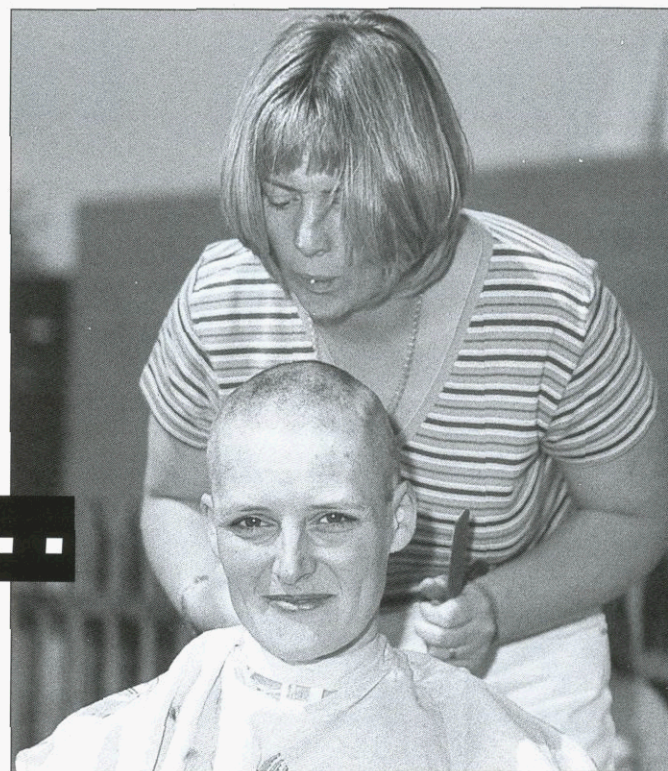


Cari's column



Hair today...

Army wife Julie Brennan subjects herself to a hair-raising experience to help families of the Preston-based 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment raise money for charity. Her contribution in sponsorship accounted for more than half the £600 which they collected for the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths. First snip was made by Cathy Bailey (above left), who co-ordinated the families' fund-raising efforts, and the "extremely short back and sides" was completed by Carol Beetham (top right).



Tidworth launches anti-crime project

A SCHEME designed to cut crime in the military garrison of Bulford and Tidworth has been launched by the Chief Constable of Wiltshire.

Known as Patchwatch, it will provide a system for the military community to report suspicions and concerns to the military and civilian police.

The scheme is felt to be particularly valuable at a time when Servicemen and women are being

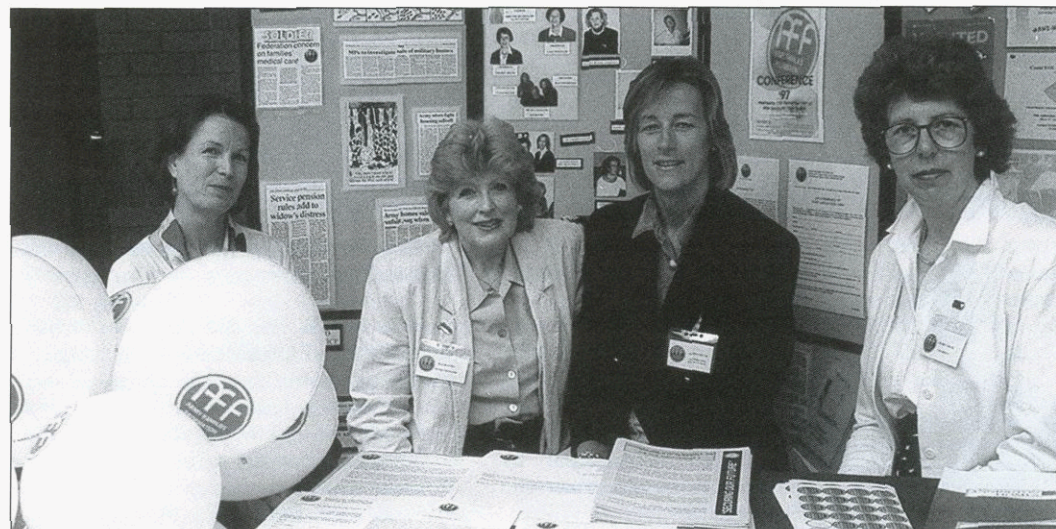
called upon to spend weeks, and sometimes months, away on training and operations, and when the towns themselves are poised to enter a period of growth.

Patchwatch is part of a larger garrison community plan aimed at improving facilities and quality of life. There will be more sporting and social events and more social and community facilities for children, parents and single soldiers.

A fun day with 2 RTR

CHILDREN from both communities in North Belfast spent a fun-packed open day at Girdwood base where they were entertained by soldiers of the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment nearing the end of a six-month deployment.

The tankies organised games and provided lunch. Maj Charlie Hunt said: "It's a bit of a tradition in Girdwood to invite children from as many schools as possible, and the feedback from the schools has been very, very positive."



Getting ready for one of a series of Army Families Federation roadshows are (from left) Sue Hyslop (editor, *Army Families Journal*), roadshow manager Sue Bonney, AFF area co-ordinator Alison Neate, and chairman Cherry Milne.

They set up stall in the Connaught Centre in Aldershot Garrison to meet wives and families and listen to their concerns. Other roadshows to pro-

mote the work of the AFF have or will be held at Swanton Morley, Colchester and Northern Ireland.

"It gives us an opportunity to talk to wives at first hand and to see if the issues we think are the main concerns are also their main concerns," said Cherry. One issue raised frequently was the problem of employment opportunities for wives accompanying their husbands on posting.

Adventure huts in Scotland available to units

ADVENTURE training huts at Dun-donnell, Tulloch and Kingussie are being taken over by HQ Scotland from the Joint Services Mountain Training Centre. They will be available to units for adventurous training and may be booked through Inverness TC.

The hut at Newtonmore is to close.

A new insurance portfolio aimed at the needs of Service personnel has been announced by United Services Mutual Insurance Agency (USMIA), a different branch of the company behind the PAX range of insurance.

Products offer flexibility to meet the needs of military personnel and MoD civilians and their families worldwide.

Call 01233 211334 for a brochure or USMIA direct on 01227 593138.

TV Gladiators Vogue and Falcon put in an appearance for the opening of Naafi's first sports bar, Rocky's, at Gibraltar Barracks, Minley. The themed bar will provide young sappers with a place to relax and watch their favourite sports on large TV screens. Sport-

ing memorabilia will be displayed throughout the bar and the staff will dress in sporting outfits.

The Royal British Legion has launched itself on to the Internet. Features include a "Lost Trails" facility for veterans to make contact with each other. The RBL site address is <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk>.

Plans for a Bill on pension sharing on divorce, to come into force in the year 2000, have been announced by Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security and Minister for Women.

BT is to provide the Union Jack Club in London with ISDN lines and direct dialling capabilities from bedrooms. The system will allow calls to be accurately billed, and improve efficiency in the Union Jack's reservation system.

The 1997 National Franchise Exhibition is to be held at the NEC, Birmingham from October 3-5. Visitors can buy tickets and register for a free information pack by ringing the Franchise hotline on 01203 426461. Tickets bought in advance qualify for discounts.

A computer disk advice and information facility called Franchise Explorer has been developed by Enterprise Advisory Service based at Petersfield, Hampshire. Details on 01730 269300.

A Certificate of Higher Education in War Studies has been introduced by the University of Birmingham. Details on 0121 414 5607/7259.



Mrs Catherine Reid with Cpl Stuart McInnes and his son Callum

Safe and sound in new playground

SUNSHINE and smiles were much in evidence when Mrs Catherine Reid, wife of Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid, opened a new playground for Army children on the Fugglestone Estate at Wilton.

The facility was the idea of Cpl Stuart McInnes, a father of two who lives on the estate and works at nearby Headquarters Land Command.

He was concerned that small children were having to be taken across the busy main road to reach a play area on the other side, and thought a new playground would bring the community of 32 houses

closer together. Cpl McInnes approached the Defence Housing Executive (DHE) which agreed to the scheme.

Work started in January to create a brightly-coloured playground specially designed to be virtually vandal-proof. The latest type of safety surface provides a soft landing for any child who falls from a piece of equipment.

"It's been a definite success," said Cpl McInnes as his three-year-old son Callum tried out the climbing frame. "It was ready in time for the first warm weather and it has been really superb."

"My original thought was to ask for some goalposts, and then I thought why not go the whole way and ask for a playground. I thought it would be rejected, but the DHE was really helpful."

"It has brought the whole community together as well. Everyone is starting to speak to one another and it has become a focal point for people to meet up."

The DHE has provided several similar playgrounds for Army quarters. Mr Brian Harrison, the area manager, said the organisation felt the facilities were an important part of any community.



Mrs Catherine Reid, assisted by Emma McInnes, cuts the ribbon to open the new playground

Euro sappers talk the same language

PICTURE the scene: a multi-national peacekeeping operation somewhere in the world. As a combat engineer you have to build a new bridge to join together a village cut in half by a war-damaged river crossing. To do this you have to collapse the dangerous old one in order to construct the new.

The question is, how much explosive do you need to get the job done? Would 63 kilograms do the trick? Maybe 105.8kg? Possibly 1,265kg?

There are many factors to consider: length, width, design, construction, foundations, stress points . . . the list goes on and on.

The answer, depending on whether you are Norwegian, British, or German, is "Yes". Each nation has its own combat engineers who are taught their own solutions to such problems – and solutions vary.

Further questions arise from this principle. If you are a British Royal Engineer working on the bridge and you are required to hand over to a German Army combat engineer who is taking over, what happens to your carefully planned and precisely positioned 105.8kg of explosive? You are a good 1,100kg too light, at least according to your German colleague. Or maybe you are taking over from him. Too heavy by the same amount.

"Welcome to the world of Interoperability," said Lt Col Klaus Op De Hipt, course director at the Euro NATO Training Engineer Centre (ENTEC).

"Combat engineer principles remain the same – mobility, counter-mobility, survivability – but the practice varies across NATO," he added.

The quote you hear everywhere you go throughout the training Engineer centre in Munich is: "Interoperability is a question of attitude".

The prevailing attitude in this Bavarian school of excellence is most definitely positive.

Located at the German Army Engineer School in Munich, ENTEC is the only NATO training centre for engineer officers and NCOs.

It was founded in 1977 by eight nations signing a memorandum of understanding, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. All contribute to the running and decide on the activities of ENTEC.

Its mission is to promote engineer

interoperability in NATO's Allied Command Europe.

Initially for platoon leaders and instructors of the nations of the Northern and Central Army Groups, it was extended after two years to engineer commanders. The battalion commander and senior engineer staff officer course was introduced later. Further expansion resulted in the



Lt Col Mark Norbury (left) and Lt Col Klaus Op De Hipt



junior staff officer courses as well as the export of ENTEC training in engineer interoperability through the deployment of a mobile training team and a shift towards NATO's rapid reaction corps (ARRC) and the multinational LANDCENT. It is an

acknowledgement that engineers are now more heavily committed to operations other than war

than at any previous time. Mobile courses were run almost weekly during the latter part of 1995, when models of mines found in former Yugoslavia were taken to NATO bases throughout Europe.

Attending the instructors' course were two British sappers, Cpl David Foley from 22 Engr Regt based at Tidworth and Cpl Roy Dobbs from 35 Engr Regt at Hameln.

"There is a lot of operational experience on this course," said Cpl Foley. "Getting used to the French and German translation after every few sentences took a few minutes, but it's a great chance to find out the way other sappers from around NATO do the same job."

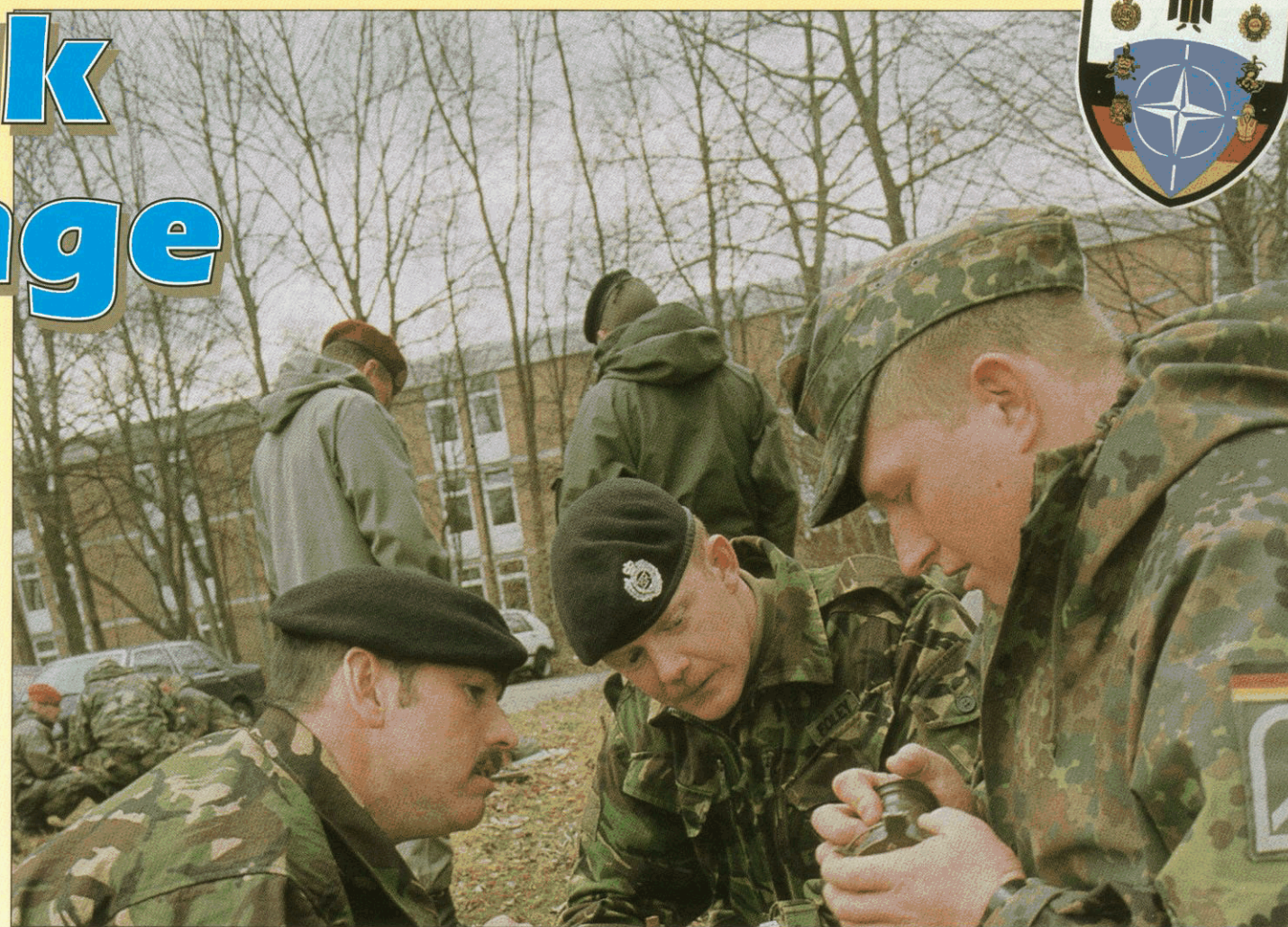
Cpl Dobbs added: "We already find ourselves working shoulder to shoulder with NATO engineers, and we may well be doing that more and more in the future. It's only sensible to find out how everyone works and there's nothing better than first-hand experience. The Americans have told us about their experiences in Bosnia and the French are about to discuss Africa."

SSgt James Mitchell from Connecticut, USA, is a squad leader with Alpha Company of the 94th Engineer Battalion. In 1995 he was in Zagreb and in 1996 he was located at Eagle Base in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"I thought I knew a lot from my experience in Bosnia," he said "but after arriving here I realised I didn't. You have to keep a totally open attitude to the course as there is so much to learn from the instructors and everyone else on the course."

Those sentiments were echoed by the British Army instructor on the multinational staff, QMSI Will McDonald.

"We are constantly updating all our information. This comes from personal experiences of Norwegian, German, British and American engineers in Bosnia,



Cpl Roy Dobbs (left) and Cpl David Foley (centre) examine a fuse on a German anti-tank mine at the NATO school in Munich

the French engineers in Africa, and the Brits and Americans in the Gulf. When you think that an engineer's main reason for being is either to create a problem for an enemy or to solve a problem that the enemy has created, there is always something new to learn. That may be a technique or the working of a new piece of kit," he explained.

An anonymous military observer once said: "You will usually find that the enemy has three courses open to him, and of these

he will adopt the fourth." It is this variable that keeps Dutch Army Lt Col Jan Hogenboom a very busy man.

In keeping with the forward thinking of ENTEC, Lt Col Hogenboom is the co-ordinating officer for creating a database of lessons learnt. This has rapidly become a focal point for the ENTEC member states looking for the latest updates, solutions, and information on engineering systems.

The net is cast far and wide, from NATO engineers in Cambodia, Cyprus, Croatia, and the Lebanon, to Iraq, Kuwait and Macedonia.

Advancing technology, especially in the field of data transfer can cause particular difficulties. The basic problems of interoperability were highlighted by Belgian Army combat engineer Capt Michel Pihard.

"Something as simple as a plug can

almost bring a multi-national operation to a standstill," he said.

"Suppose the Danes took over from the Americans on an operation and went to use the electrical circuits they had set up. The US voltage runs at 110. The Europeans use 220. A potential problem, especially if it's not been thought through previously.

"It's not insurmountable, but it is time spent on something other than getting the job done.

"A standardisation agreement – known as a STANAG – can be drawn up once the format has been agreed. A form is then designed by each nation which presents the relevant information

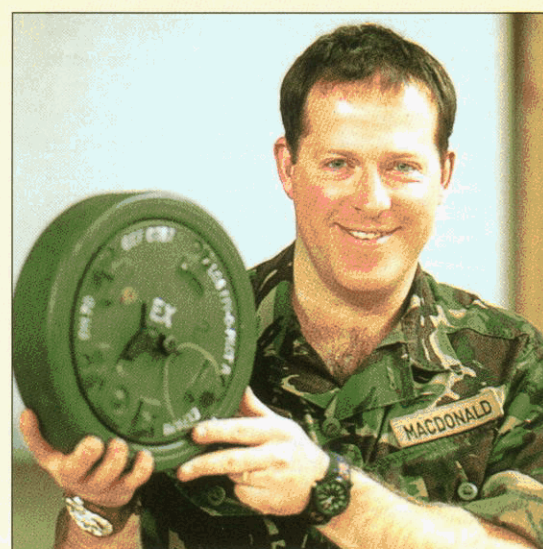
in a standardised format. This is usually in the three main European languages: English, French, and German."

It is reassuring for the British that English is the native language of more than 350

● Turn to next page



Back to school: sappers from several NATO countries pay close attention to an ENTEC lecture

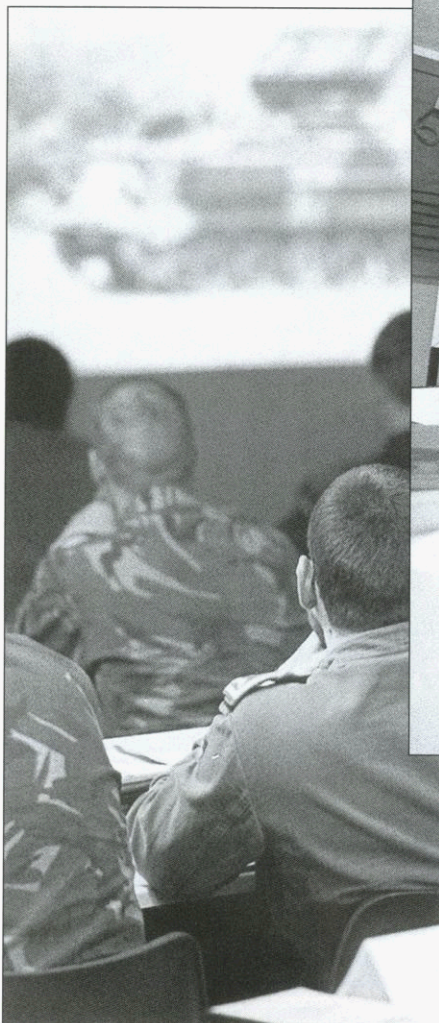


This one's mine: QMSI Will McDonald, a British Army instructor on the multi-national staff

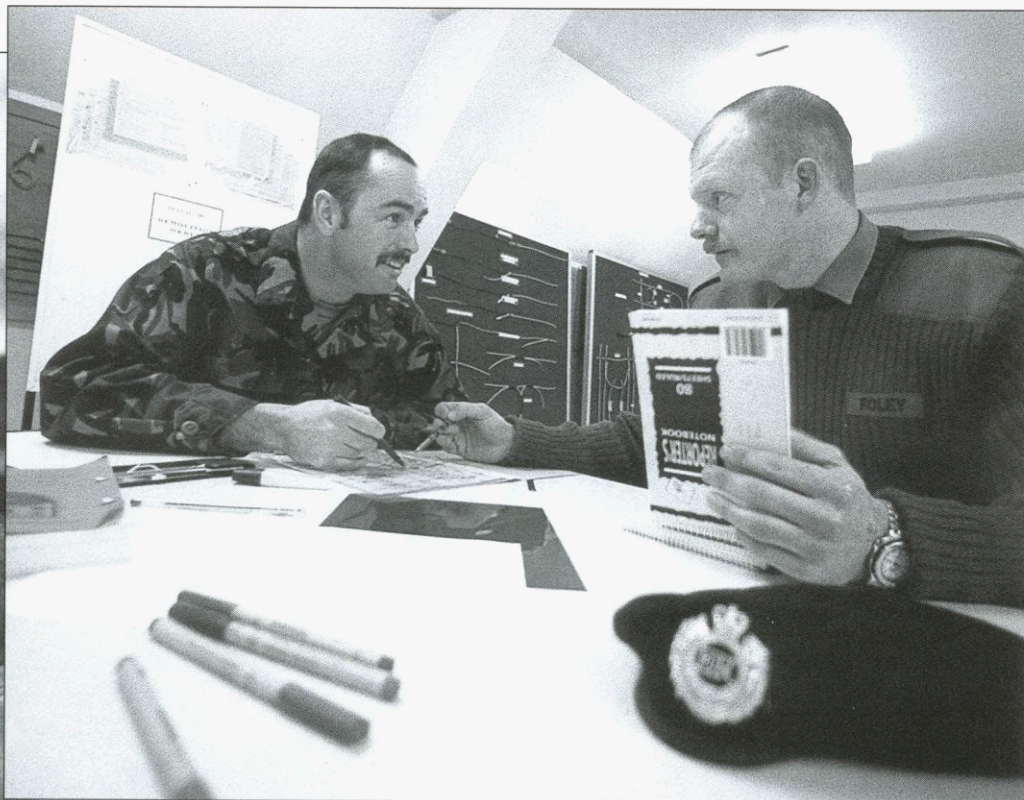


An America soldier has a close look at a British bar mine





On screen: film plays its part in the learning process for NATO engineers



Cpl Roy Dobbs (left) and Cpl David Foley set about solving an engineering problem before presenting it to their students

Language is first hurdle for sappers to overcome

● From Page 15

million people and has official status in 70 countries.

Sod's law, unfortunately, suggests that on a cold, wet, night you will find yourself trying to understand an Italian combat engineer talking about a *condottora sopraelevata*, a Norwegian describing an *overjordisk rørledning*, a German remonstrating about his *oberirdische Rohrleitung*, and a French Canadian becoming animated about *la canalisation de surface*. Not everyone refers to an "aboveground pipeline" in the same way.

Capt Arild Hopstad of the Norwegian Army is currently undertaking the task of preparing the 3,000 terms and phrases in the Combat Engineering Dictionary in all NATO languages.

A CD Rom version of the dictionary is



OMSI Will McDonald gives a lecture on different types of mines encountered around the world

under way as is a handbook of equipment.

"Language is often the first hurdle to cross," he said. "Although English is widely spoken, the technical words may not be known. The dictionary, CD Rom, and handbook would at least start to solve the problem."

The British liaison officer to the German Army Engineer School, Lt Col Mark Norbury, provides a focus for people wanting information on the British or German armies, their equipment and potential joint ventures.

"The diplomatic fostering of relations could well describe the job," he said. Born in Germany and a former chief instructor at RMA Sandhurst and CO of 12 Engineer Regt, Lt Col Norbury is also liaison officer to the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical

Warfare and Military Police schools at Sonthofen and the German Army University in Munich. "Each country that has signed the memorandum of understanding provides an officer for the working group. The group decides the direction for training and courses."

Spain, Portugal, and Italy wish to join and the Partnership for Peace nations are interested in the developments at ENTEC, having sent observers to several courses.

The future holds some excitement for ENTEC. The possibility of becoming a NATO school, and therefore answerable to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), depends on a number of factors. But a better understanding of ENTEC would certainly result in a greater use of its staff and their undoubted skills.

It's different in the desert

ASKED what they thought of exercising in Egypt, members of the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment – from private soldier to commanding officer – responded: "It's different."

Based in Dhekelia Garrison, Cyprus, the battalion deployed its headquarters, C Company and elements of D Company to the desert for a ten-day joint exercise with the Egyptian Army.

They were there to pass on British Army experience during internal security exercises in a United Nations context.

At all levels, from battalion commander in exercise control to rifleman on the ground, there were British and Egyptian soldiers working shoulder to shoulder . . . depending on the hour. Some negotiating by Lt Col Clive Hodges, CO 1 Kings, was necessary to impress on the hosts that war is a 24-hour commitment.

LANGUAGE

Two major challenges throughout the planning and implementation of Exercise Golden Shield III were the language difficulties and the top-heavy rank structure of the Egyptian Army, which was addressed with several promotions in the field.

But it was not captains that were needed so much as brigadiers and generals.

Lt Col Roy Paterson, AGC(ETS), who is fluent in Arabic, said it had been "good to learn a new language" after finding that many of the Egyptian soldiers used local dialects which varied considerably.

Visitors to the exercise included the British Ambassador, Mr David Blatherwick, Air Chief Marshal Sir John Willis, and Commander Dhekelia Garrison, Col Mike Brooke.

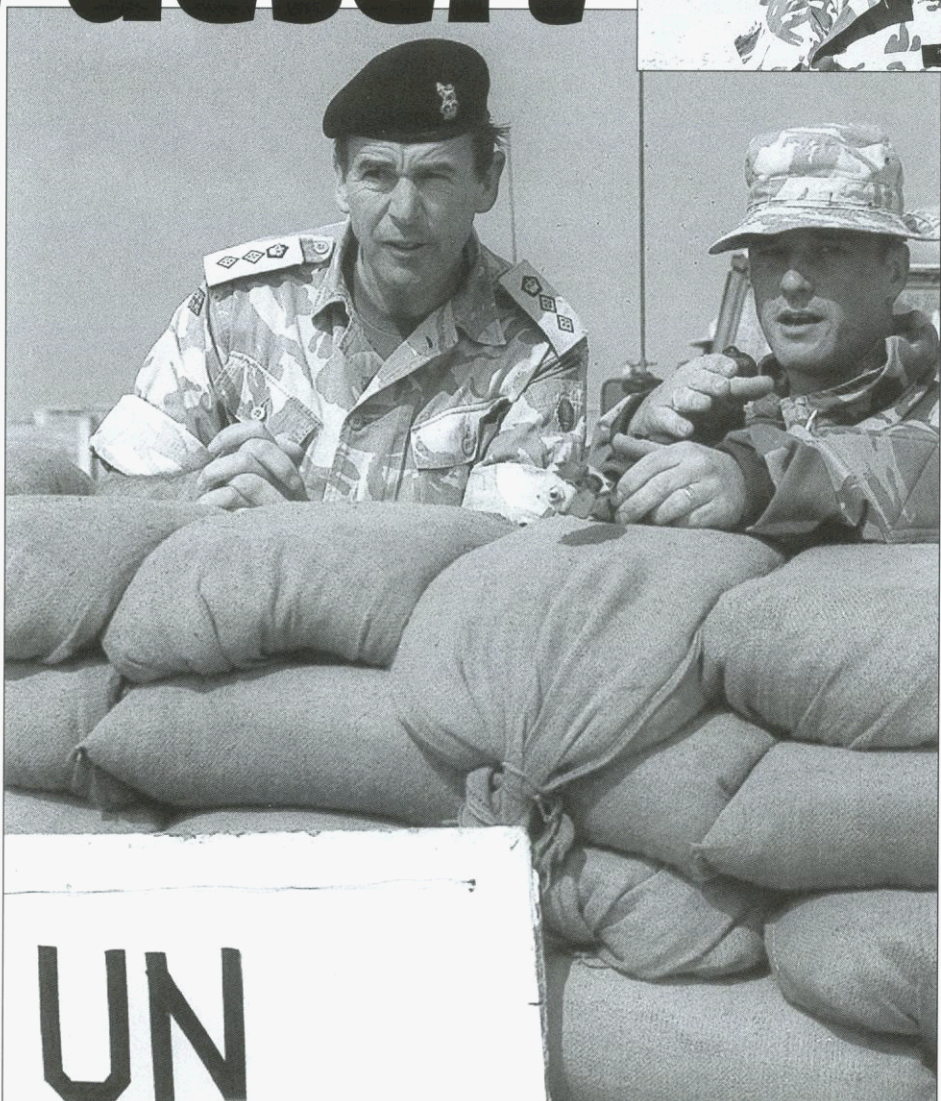
WEAPONS

SA80s and AK47s were exchanged as the troops familiarised themselves with the their different weapon systems. A challenge was issued to C Coy to race the Egyptians at stripping and re-assembling the general purpose machine gun . . . and duly won by Cpl Flemming.

The hosts laid on a cultural evening before the exercise began. Officers were invited to dine at the Officers' Club in Cairo, and later joined the rest of the exercise personnel at the El Galaa Theatre to watch the traditional Ra Da dance troop perform.

Sport was also on the agenda, and a 1-1 football score was the diplomatic outcome.

For many, highlight of the deployment was a visit to the Pyramids and the treasures of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.



Col Mike Brooke, Commander Dhekelia Garrison, is briefed in a sangar by Kgm Richie Gleave. Inset: Lt Col Clive Hodges, CO 1 Kings, in the land of the Pyramids. Among the regiment's battle honours is "Egypt 1882"



LCpl Paul Atherton briefs Kgm Paul Johnson on his arcs of fire

DIVE, DIVE, DIVE

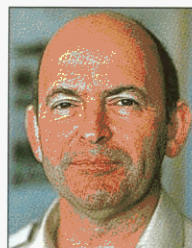
**Report: Laurie Manton
Pictures: Terry Champion**

A SALT water lake at Portsmouth once used to test experimental torpedoes is providing an ideal underwater training facility for Army divers.

The 1km stretch of water, at Horsea Island in Portsmouth harbour, is part of the Defence Diving School (DDS) created by collocating the single-Service diver training organisations at the site.

Among the organisation's main roles are responsibility for training Regular and TA divers and providing advice on all Army diving matters and the maintenance of air breathing equipment.

Providing that advice is Maj Tom Flowers RE, who wears several hats. He is the Diver Training Officer (Army), Chief Instructor, Head of Service and Superintendent of Diving (Army).



Maj Tom Flowers

In the last-named post – distinguished by its abbreviated title, SOD (Army) – he provides the Engineer-in-Chief with advice on diving policy including operations, the trial of new equipment, diver records and, through the Diving Inspectorate, monitors the standards of operational readiness of unit diving teams.

"Most people are slightly surprised to find the Army has divers and, even more so, that the Royal Engineers pioneered military diving before the Royal Navy," Maj Flowers told *Soldier*.

"Effectively, we are commercial divers in uniform. The Paras use parachutes to get to their place of work, our divers use diving suits to get to their workplace."

Army diving tasks fall into three broad categories: underwater demolition, underwater construction and direct support to water-crossing operations.

These might include the use of underwa-



Novice divers prepare to undergo another dive in the lake at Horsea Island during Exercise Hard Fin. At the height of the three-day endurance test they were subjected to sleep deprivation and spent up to six hours at a stretch in the water

ter tools ranging from a hacksaw to sophisticated thermic lance cutting equipment; a chainsaw to – if a degree less precision is required – explosives.

Underwater construction tasks might be as basic as simple sandbagging or as technical as the emplacement of reinforced concrete foundations.

Sappers' support to water-crossing ops includes river-bed profiling and the search,

recovery and the neutralising of land mines. The corps also offers specialist diving support skills in the areas of land explosive ordnance disposal, ship-to-shore fuel handling equipments and sewer searches.

Tasks are carried out in all weathers and in all underwater conditions using simple self-contained breathing apparatus or more sophisticated surface demand gear.

The Royal Engineers have about 300 divers based with operational units, formed into 17 teams. Typically, a 500-strong engineer regiment might have a team of 12 divers on its strength.

Before being accepted for training at the Royal Engineers Diver Training Wing (REDTW), candidates have to pass a rigorous medical examination and aptitude test. Three main levels of qualification provide the framework of expertise required by units: compressed air diver, advanced diver and diving supervisor.

"The six-week basic course for compressed air divers qualifies them to dive as deep as 30m," explained Capt Dom Digby.

"Once they have accrued 50 hours of diving time and are recommended to do so, they can attend the advanced course. After that they can dive down to 50m."

Staple ingredient of every basic diving course is the much-unloved Exercise Hard Fin, which involves a three-day endurance test during which novices are deprived of sleep and spend up to six hours at a stretch in the water, where they are tested on basic skills such as buoyancy control, fin and breathing techniques.

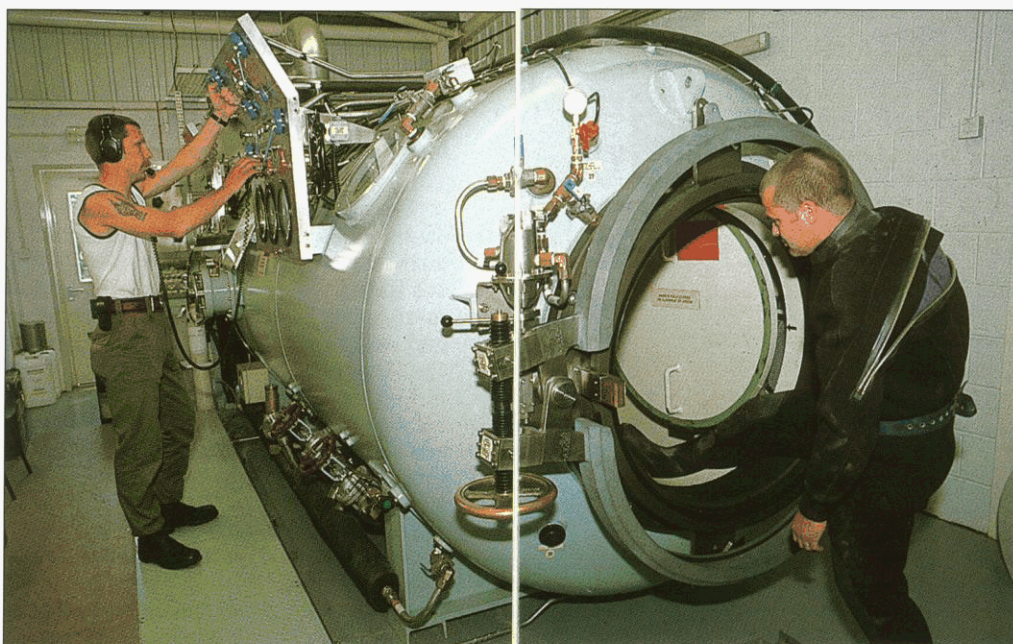
Each diver has to learn to cut and bolt together pieces of metal while underwater. To help them, metal work benches, complete with vices, have been placed on the bed of the lake.

Later in the course, soldiers gain fast-water diving experience in strong tidal currents off the Dorset coast, carry out underwater demolitions, search the sea bed under the hulls of warships moored in Portsmouth harbour, and – using special breathing equipment – look for bodies in sewers and other polluted water sources.

Although the RE Wing lost its single-Service autonomy when it combined with its Royal Navy counterparts, Maj Flowers

has no regrets.

"Collocation was a big plus for Army diving and our ability to provide quality training has been increased," he said. The Defence Diving School is a brilliant facility, and we have to keep pinching ourselves and asking if it is for real."



The type B re-compression chamber forms an important part of the Army's safe diving strategy. Sgt Les Levick (left) checks the controls, while LCpl John Janion prepares to enter



A novice diver enters the water for the first time

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Headquarters of the British Garrison in Hong Kong are in the Prince of Wales Barracks (bottom right), which occupies one of the most expensive harbour-front sites in the world. The swimming pool alone is valued at billions of pounds, and land has been reclaimed between the HQ building and the harbour to add further billions to the value of the barracks

Volunteers... an exclusive club

CAPT Dennis Cheung is a member of an exclusive club. The plaque on the door in the main building of the Hong Kong Jockey Club reveals only that RHKR Association Ltd conducts its business in the rarefied atmosphere of one of the world's best-appointed race courses.

Inside, the ambience derives from that special brand of familiarity that exists in a community of ex-Servicemen, **writes John Elliott.**

Dennis, who has worked for the British Garrison for close to quarter of a century, was also an officer in The Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers), the part-time force which disbanded on September 3, 1995.

Now the Volunteers, an extraordinary cross-section of Hong Kong society, meet at



Capt Dennis Cheung

Happy Valley in their squadron groups on different nights of the week. Government officials, architects, doctors and dentists, artisans and artists... more than 900 in all when their 141 years of service came to an abrupt end.

Dennis, a clerk in the garrison from 1977-81, and an information officer on the Joint Service Public Relations staff from 1984, misses the involvement he had with the regiment for more than 18 years.

The exercises in the New Territories, the challenge of helping to secure the border with China, the attachments to British Army units...

In its early days the Volunteers were dominated by British and Portuguese personnel; when it disbanded, 99 per cent were Chinese. They were commanded by a

British Army lieutenant colonel, whose staff included a training officer and a regimental sergeant major from the Regulars.

It all began in 1854 when 99 men answered a call from the colonial authority on the outbreak of the Crimean War: their mission, to defend lives and property in the absence of the fleet. It was a short-lived force, stability in Europe leading to its first disbandment eight years later. "The Ninety-Nine", the originals, are still toasted today.

Re-formed within months, the Volunteers lasted four more years in their second incarnation before settled times once more undermined their usefulness.

In 1878 they were raised again, this time as the Artillery Volunteers, existing from that time, give a name change or two, until the autumn of 1995 when Britain's Hong Kong Garrison began the process of

● **Turn to next page**



Troop accommodation on Stonecutters Island

Pictures: Terry Champion

Island in the sun

SNAKE FARM, gunpowder magazine, prison, smallpox refuge, hospital, military base . . . Stonecutters Island has been many things to many people.

No longer an island – the world's busiest harbour has "reached out" and engulfed one end of it – Stonecutters has most recently provided a barracks for the final resident British battalions and a headquarters for the Hong Kong Military Service Corps.

Its buildings, a patchwork of ancient and modern, reflect the many purposes to which its now peaceful acres have been subjected.

Even in the presence of an infantry battalion, the island remained a tranquil place. In its last days as a British territory it appeared worlds away from the sky-scraped city shimmering out of the harbour haze just a short ferry-ride away.

Named after the peasants who quarried its resources centuries ago, Stonecutters was claimed for the Crown in January 1861, when the Chinese Manchu Empire ceded it and Kowloon in perpetuity. As Hong Kong had been established in 1843, the island



was immediately drawn into the colony.

A gaol was built on Stonecutters in 1866 and a prison hulk anchored off its shores. Someone had a change of mind and the cells were never used for their intended purpose.

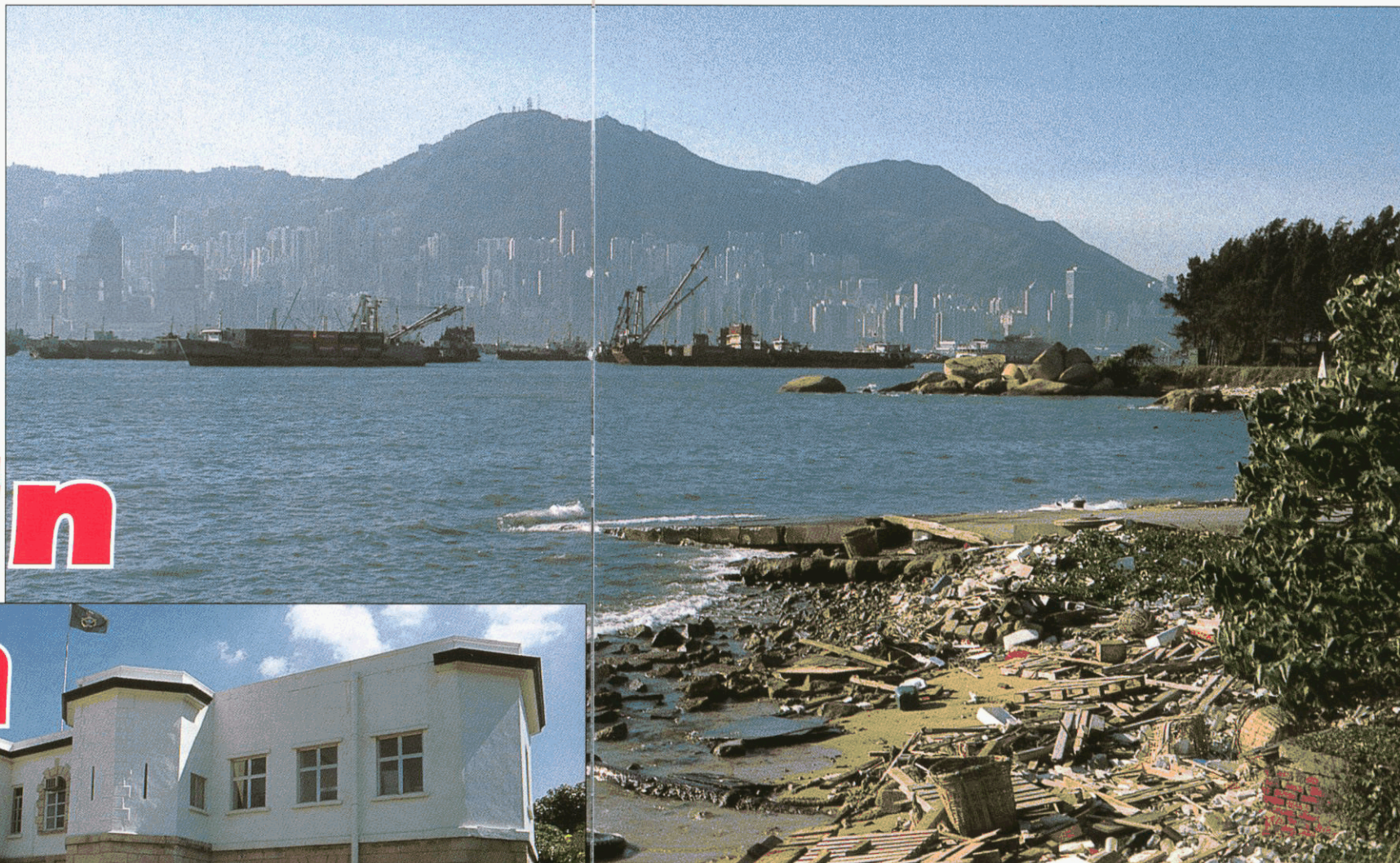
A powder magazine was started in 1870, a forerunner of what was to be the Royal Navy Armaments Depot. Subsequently it became an Army depot, later known as the Ammunition Sub Depot RAOC.

When smallpox threatened to decimate

the colony in 1870s, the government attempted to isolate carriers of the dreaded disease by placing them in quarantine on Stonecutters.

A legacy of the time is the grave on a grassy bank in the north-west corner. It is the last resting place of William L Anningson, an inspector of police who contracted smallpox and perished on the island.

While the bodies of Chinese patients were claimed by relatives, European victims were buried at sea in an attempt to contain



Above – World apart. This short stretch of water has preserved the tranquility of Stonecutters Island from the frenetic pace of Hong Kong in the distance

Left – The flag of The Staffordshire Regiment flies above the 1st Battalion's headquarters on Stonecutters

the disease. Why Inspector Anningson was buried on the island is not known.

Before the turn of the century a hospital for poor people was built, and gun batteries were constructed for the defence of the island. In 1980 it was designated a military reserve area and thereafter closed to the civilian population.

By the outbreak of the First World War Stonecutters was predominantly Royal Navy, but with Royal Artillery personnel manning its gun batteries. Much of its use was recreational.

A large Chinese population – mostly amahs and boys working in the quarters, messes and barracks – moved in. Stallholders and small businesses opened for busi-

ness along Range Road, enabling residents to do most of their shopping on the island.

Underground storage chambers for the RN armaments depot were completed in 1935, and Wuthering Heights quarters, used for officers' accommodation, dates from that time.

When the Japanese attacked in December 1941, troops stationed on Stonecutters withdrew by ferry after practically every building had been hit. The Japanese held it for the next 3½ years, using it mostly for rest and recreation.

They also introduced a snake farm to produce and collect serum. A gun mount on Wuthering Heights is Japanese, but little other evidence of the occupation remains.

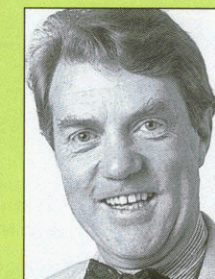


Trough times in the Eagle's Nest

IN the early Seventies, the old Hong Kong Hilton – subsequently flattened for offices – introduced a lunchtime promotion in their top floor Eagle's Nest restaurant. No one thought it could last long, believing that it would bankrupt the hotel.

Not only could you eat as much as you liked from the vast hot and cold buffet, but you could also drink as much as you wanted . . . and this wasn't limited to the house wine.

One tended to start with a few G and Ts, followed by wine with lunch and coffee and cognac or Irish coffee to follow.



George Mackenzie

The young bloods of the military, when not on border duties, tended to take the place over every Friday. Saturday was left to the banking set.

They were the only lunches I've been to where everyone turned up on the dot for a midday start. A few minutes from closing time, at 3 o'clock, the standard operating procedure was to order two, three or four more Irish coffees. Amazingly, this was allowed.

I remember some great lunches in the old Eagles' Nest, especially with the Irish Guards, who were usually led by their genial RC padre. We were all, no doubt, subsidised by the many genteel Chinese ladies who also lunched there, but sat on an orange squash, for the Hilton kept the deal going for a couple of years.

And the cost . . . a whopping HK\$18, about £1.25. – **Capt George S Mackenzie, 7th DEO Gurkha Rifles, on the staff at HQ 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade.**

Exclusive club

● From Page 21

disbanding itself. Regimental archives reveal that the Volunteers were called out in 1864 to subdue an outbreak of rioting between British and Indian troops, and in 1899 they were ordered to defend Kowloon during what turned out to be an unfounded war scare following the extension of British administration to the New Territories.

With the recall of British Forces to Europe during the First World War, the

Volunteers were the only military unit left in Hong Kong.

Chinese were gradually recruited in the 1920s, starting with Sir Mankam Lo, an Oxford-educated barrister who enlisted as a private soldier.

In 1933, the regiment acquired its first armoured car, complete with two machine-guns. Four more followed.

Although the original was scrapped before the outbreak of the Second World War, the others all played a part in the battle for Hong Kong in December 1941.

The Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps, as it was then known, mobilised 2,200 of all ranks, including three rifle and four machine-gun companies, five batteries and the usual ancillary units.

When the Japanese invaded, 289 Volunteers were listed as killed or missing. Many others were wounded or captured. A few escaped to mainland China and joined the British mission to the Chinese nationalists, others served with Orde Wingate's Chindits.

Many were taken prisoner and, like Arthur Gomes (see Page 23, June 9 issue),

spent most of the next four years in captivity.

After the war, the Volunteers reorganised to become part of the Hong Kong Defence Force, which had integral air and naval elements. In recognition of their services, soldiers of the regiment were awarded 19 decorations for gallantry and good service.

In 1957 the regiment was granted the battle honour "Hong Kong", to be carried on the Queen's Colour. Its first Colours, awarded in 1928, were buried in 1941 to prevent them falling to the Japanese.

Their remains were unearthed in the

Central District in 1957 and put on display.

The force was granted its "Royal" title in 1951. Later the naval unit was phased out, and in 1970 the Defence Force was disbanded to make way for the Royal Hong Kong Regiment and the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force.

An infantry regiment until the early Sixties, it was then given a reconnaissance role with infantry and home guard companies. Equipped with Land Rovers, it trained regularly, supported 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade in internal security and anti-illegal

immigration operations, sent officer cadets to Sandhurst, and relieved the British Army on the border for a week every November.

All that is gone . . . but not forgotten. Dennis Cheung and his comrades see to that in their Happy Valley clubhouse.

And the spirit of the Volunteers lives on in the form of what was once its Junior Leaders' section, now the backbone of the Hong Kong Adventure Corps.

Dennis and his family are preparing for a new life in the West. He is about to begin a job as a sports journalist in America.

Life on Gun Club Hill

AS politicians negotiated the future of Hong Kong in the mid-1980s and its stock market fluctuated alarmingly, life in Gun Club Hill Barracks, situated in the heart of teeming Kowloon, remained reassuringly stable, writes **Judith Stares**.

Gun Club Hill, long since closed, was then home to the Gurkha Transport Regiment and the Queen's Gurkha Signals. With their cheerfully tranquil natures, the Gurkha residents refused to be troubled by uncertainty over the future.

Gurkha soldiers worked a three-year contract before returning to Nepal for six months' leave. While the first two tours were unaccompanied, wives and families were allowed to join their husbands on subsequent tours, accommodation permitting.

Modern quarters at Gun Club Hill Barracks, now handed back to the Hong Kong Government, were regarded with great pride by Gurkha families thrown into a dramatic cultural somersault when they arrived from primitive Nepalese hill villages to live in one of the world's most exciting cities.

A senior Gurkha officer was on hand to watch over them in a fatherly way, helping them to adapt. There was a fine line to tread, because it was felt unwise for families to become too "westernised". They faced a return to Nepal and would need to be accepted by, and accept for themselves, their old communities.

Most would return as relatively wealthy people, in a position to build their own houses. A typical Nepalese dwelling was constructed as a show house in the grounds of the barracks. While it had all the outer charm of a thatched English cottage, visitors were reminded that in its native surroundings, the floors would be of bare earth, there would be no running water and no electricity.

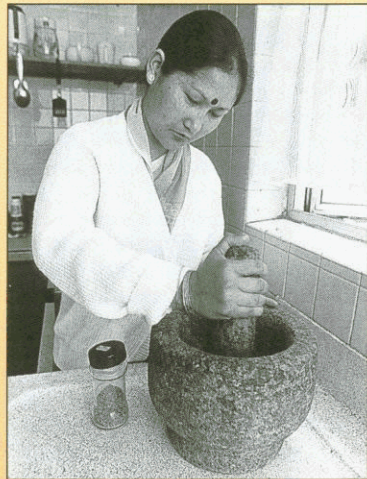
Smoke from a central fire percolated through the roof, fumigating pests.

The barracks' smart quarters were a far cry from this, and in 1984 there were 116 wives and 300 children enjoying "innovations" such as television sets. Their immaculate bathrooms and kitchens were filled with every kind of cleaner and abrasive, all of which were considered to be of great novelty value.

The Nepalese influence was represented by a giant mortar and pestle for grinding spices, a standard issue item from Army stores. Wives used it to make the famous *bhat*, or Gurkha curry.



Modern quarters in Hong Kong are a far cry from village homes in Nepal



Standard issue mortar and pestle used by Gurkha wives to prepare the spices for the daily *bhat*



The goldsmith's shop. Mr Bekha Ratna Sakya with his wife and son



Pictures: Brian Dorman

Gun Club Hill Barracks, once home to the Gurkhas stationed in Hong Kong

Helping with the cultural challenges of families at Gun Club Hill Barracks was someone from the WRVS, an essential link between the Gurkhas' domestic and military lives.

A shy, retiring people by nature, it could take a long time for welfare staff to build a rapport with them. Some from rural areas had never been to school and could neither read nor write.

The WRVS organised shopping trips and leisure activities, even introducing the Gurkha women to the "terrors" of the escalators on the underground.

Younger wives were soon playing badminton, swimming and absorbing the latest fashion trends – although under strict instructions to wear only their saris or lungis. The rules at Gun Club Hill Barracks

were upheld by the Gurkha Major, who had spent a lifetime in the Army.

Girls were allowed to wear jeans or casual dress until they got married, but afterwards anything less than formal attire was not considered suitable, and would be unacceptable in Nepal.

Another essential part of the Gurkha entourage was the goldsmith. In Gun Club Hill it was run by Bekha Ratna Sakya and his family, a long-established business within the barracks. In Nepal, banks were viewed with a certain amount of suspicion, and the Nepalese traditionally had their money transformed into gold which wives wore as jewellery around their throats, and in the ears and noses.

A tiny hospital in the barracks acted as a half-way house between the families and the

main British Military Hospital in Hong Kong. For many newcomers, used to walking for several days to the nearest medical facility, this was truly wonderful. Not surprisingly, most Gurkhas wanted their families with them so that they could take advantage of facilities so superior to anything in Nepal.

Curiously, a major problem was teaching young Gurkhas to drive in the statutory eight weeks. Those from the mountains had rarely seen a wheel, let alone a vehicle, and they had to learn to cope quickly with Hong Kong traffic capable of testing the stoutest nerves.

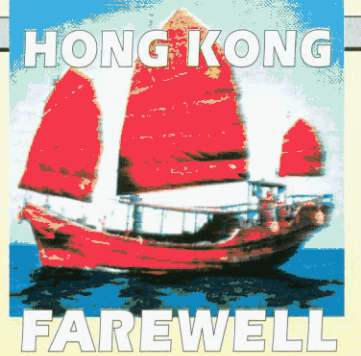
The pleasure of Gurkha families transplanted to be part of the British Army in Hong Kong was all too obvious. Despite the fact that the Indian Army had room for ten times as many Gurkhas, their first choice was invariably the British colours.



A Gurkha family in front of the shrine and temple used on feast days



A Gurkha house built by soldiers in the grounds of Gun Club Barracks



How Big Wave Bay lost its 'feeling'

Good beaches abound in Hong Kong. At the end of a single-track road, Big Wave Bay featured soft sand, big waves, a marked absence of the hordes that plagued other beaches... and a "feeling".

I had swum off Big Wave Beach in 1958 and 1959, and in 1964 returned to the Colony and found myself, with others, on a hillside overlooking the beach, under canvas for a week of adventurous training. Always that "feeling".

The successful exercise was repeated in 1965 when we saw the northern end of the beach and adjacent land being excavated for the foundations of a leisure complex and marina. Mechanical diggers uncovered about 30 skeletons, at first indicating a forgotten cemetery.

Later it emerged that the skeletons were wired together, and the proliferation of British military equipment and badges evidenced a wartime atrocity.

The bones were re-interred elsewhere. And Big Wave Bay lost its "feeling". – **Ian Leggat**, who served in Hong Kong for about five years between 1958 and 1966, as a corporal with 56 Coy RMP, and as sergeant in charge of the Legal Aid Bureau, HQ Land Forces.



Ian Leggat

Tank tunnel

In December 1972 a squadron of Centurion tanks drove through the newly-opened Lion Rock Tunnel in the middle of the night en route from Clearwater Bay to Sek Kong.

C Squadron, The Royal Hussars (PWO) was based in Tidworth and was the last squadron to fly out to Hong Kong for five weeks to exercise the tank stockpile.

(The late mark, low mileage Centurion tanks were sold in 1973 and tanks from the British Army did not serve east of the Suez Canal until the Gulf War in 1990-91.)

The squadron's 15 Centurions had embarked at Gordon's Hard on LSL *Sir Lancelot* for the short voyage through Hong Kong harbour to Clearwater Bay, but no suitable ship was available for the return voyage. – **Maj Gen John Friedberger** (Colonel of the Regiment, The King's Royal Hussars), Peninsula Barracks, Winchester.



Maj Gen John Friedberger



A Scout helicopter of 660 Squadron AAC is refuelled at Sek Kong before making a sortie along the border to look for illegal immigrants. The photograph was taken by Soldier's Paul Haley in January 1985, at a time when the helipad at Sek Kong was reckoned to be the Army's busiest

Sek Kong: stationed at the sharp end

SEK KONG's "advanced" position in the New Territories caused some tooth-sucking when it was first chosen as the site of a British military airport in 1939.

No sooner had work begun at Pat Heung, as it was then known, than it became obvious the airfield would be well within artillery range of hostile troops on the border. Work was discontinued and Sek Kong became a refugee camp until the Japanese invaded in the dying days of 1941.

At the time, the Royal Air Force was based at Kai Tak in Kowloon, where it was fast outgrowing its accommodation. When, on December 8, 1941, Japanese aircraft strafed and bombed Kai Tak, it was promptly abandoned by the RAF.

Nearly four years later the air force returned on board the *Empress of Australia*, and within 48 hours Kai Tak was again reverberating to the thunder of British fighter aircraft.

Sek Kong airfield was eventually constructed in mid-1950, speeded by the outbreak of war in Korea. Tension in Hong Kong highlighted the need for more effective air defence of the Territory. Over the following two decades the base was to be home, in turn, to Spitfires, Venoms and Hunters. Since the early Seventies the base has echoed to the beat of helicopter blades.

Sek Kong Station also became home to a Gurkha battalion when 1 RGR moved into

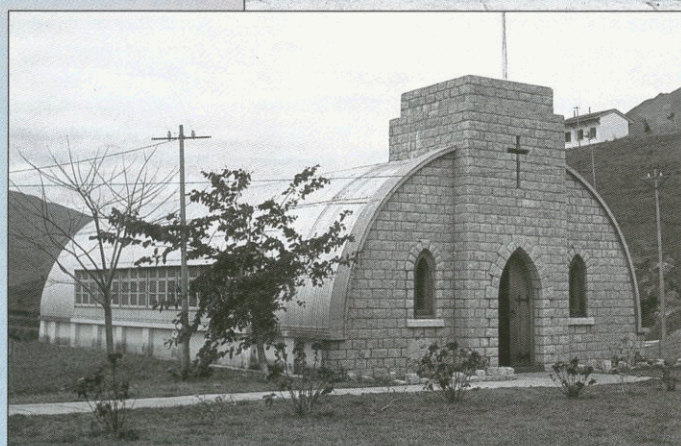
Malaya Lines after many years in Cassino Lines near Fan Ling.

The Gurkha connection was broken on November 1 last year when the 1st Battalion deployed to the United Kingdom as the base was run down before being handed over to the Hong Kong Government.

Another long-established unit stationed at Sek Kong was 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME, which, until it disbanded last August, repaired and maintained the garrison's vehicle and electronic equipment.

A combat engineering capability was provided by 67 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron, Queen's Gurkha Engineers, also on the station books.

But perhaps the best known Sek Kong institution – certainly the most popular – was also its least prepossessing. From a rusty tin shed wafted the tantalising hint of Eastern spices: Shaffis was to become a legend in its own lunchtime. Famed for the excellence of its curries, served up at



The garrison church in the families' village at Sek Kong. The picture was taken in 1956

budget prices, Shaffis is a name familiar to thousands of Servicemen who worked in the New Territories.

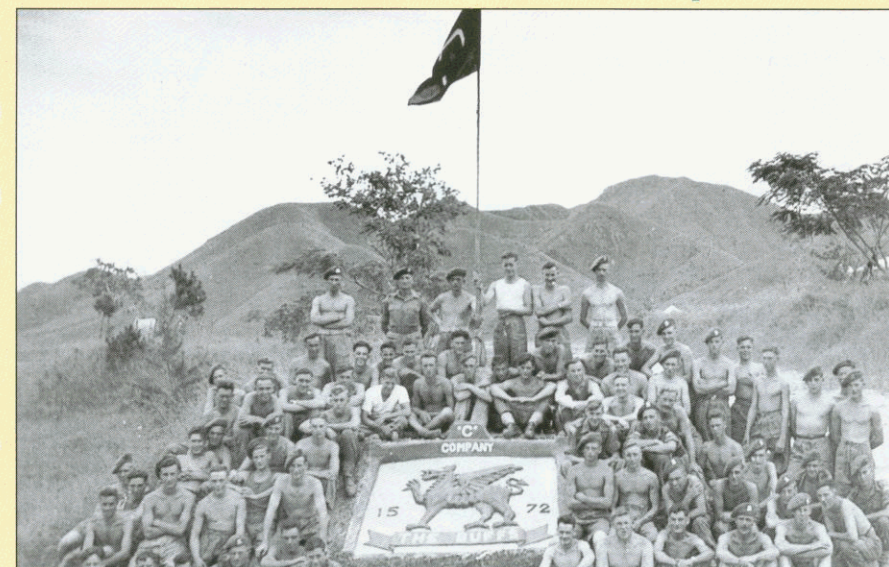
By popular demand, a Shaffis II was opened at Kowloon Tsai. Last November it moved into nearby Osborn Barracks and came under the control of Naafi. New restaurants subsequently appeared in Victoria Lines and in Yuen Long. Many old Hong Kong hands will be hoping that attempts to "export" Shaffis to the UK are successful.

Will the taste of Sek Kong live on... perhaps as Shaffis of Blandford?



Hill station: married quarters at Sek Kong. When the photograph was taken in 1956 there were 200 families and 300 children living in the "village"

From the Buffs' scrapbook



Men of the 1st Battalion, The Buffs in the New Territories in 1948. Pte Harry Newing was there with the battalion until 1950 and recalls having "a good time"



In loo of an enemy sighting

NIGHT after night 19-year-old Bdr Paul Piggott peered into China from the observation post he had helped construct under cover of darkness.

Every time a light moved across the border from Hong Kong's New Territory he logged it and reported it on his radio.

"Twenty-two hundred hours: light moving east..." A routine was soon established. Inevitably the light made the return journey a few minutes later. Months afterwards Paul was to find out exactly what he was radioing back to base.

By then the analysts had worked out that what he was so diligently recording were the border post guards making their nocturnal ablutions, or, to put it another way... Chinese troop movements.

"We climbed Crest Hill to see if we could spot the Chinese hordes coming at us, but I never saw a Chinese soldier in all my time there."

It was June 1949 when Paul, now a retired lieutenant colonel, arrived in Hong Kong with 23 Field Regiment RA, part of three brigades tasked to hold up the anticipated Chinese attack on the Territory.

With the Communists in Canton, it was widely believed that China would move on Hong Kong. The British guns, 25-pounders, were dug in four or five miles further back; Paul's battery was sited at the end of what was to become Sek Kong airfield.

Young Bdr Piggott actually turned the first sod in the observation post on Crest Hill, overlooking the border at Lo Wo, on Christmas Eve 1949.

Back in Hong Kong as a "dependant" – his wife Ann is the Civil Secretary in HQ British Forces – Paul recently visited Shenzhen, the skyscraper city built by the Chinese in the then unpopulated valley he observed so carefully nearly 47 years ago.

Looking back at the OP from "the other side", he was surprised at just how visible it was.



Paul Piggott



Picture: Terry Champion

There is a corner of a foreign field . . . the cemetery at Stanley Fort will continue to be maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Cemeteries will be cared for after handover

BRITISH military graves – both war and non-war – in Hong Kong and the New Territories will be maintained after the Garrison has left.

In the weeks leading up to the handover, cemeteries in the colony were visited by Lt Col (Retd) Paddy O'Connell and Mr George Papadopoulos from the Army's casualty cell at Upavon, which is responsible for co-ordinating tri-Service policy on military graves in Hong Kong.

On the ground the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) ensures cemeteries are in pristine order, while a contract for the upkeep of non-war graves, and graves of dependants, has been awarded to Serco Guardian, a long-established UK company experienced in facilities' management.

A report on cemeteries revealed:

Gurkha Cemetery (Old): Adja-

cent to Cassino Lines in the New Territories, contains the remains of 65 Gurkha dependants. In the middle of dense jungle, access is difficult.

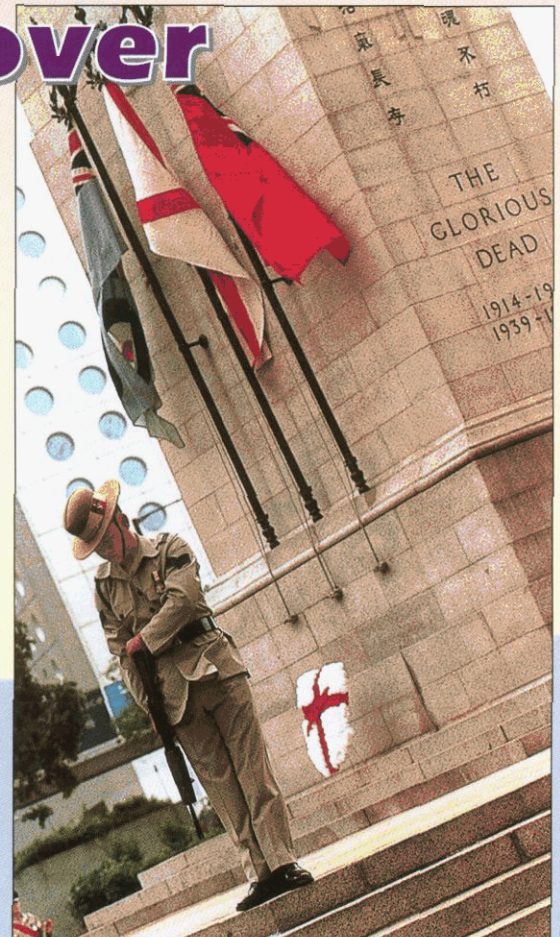
Gurkha Cemetery (New): Accessed through Cassino Lines, with an assurance from the People's Liberation Army general that visits will be allowed to continue uninterrupted.

Happy Valley: Area is so polluted that porous Portland stone headstones have to be replaced every five years.

Stanley Military Cemetery: Beautifully maintained, close to Stanley Fort. Many non-war graves cared for by CWGC to same standard as war graves. No new burials since 1948.

Cape Collinson Military Cemetery: The current "in use" British military cemetery close to the Sai Wan Bay CWGC cemetery at the eastern end of the island. Of 65 graves, 35 are of locally engaged personnel, whose families enjoy much "face" from the excellent *feng shui* offered by this prime site. In need of some serious gardening attention.

Sai Wan Bay: This cemetery epitomises the CWGC at its best. A "great tribute" to all who have been laid to rest there.

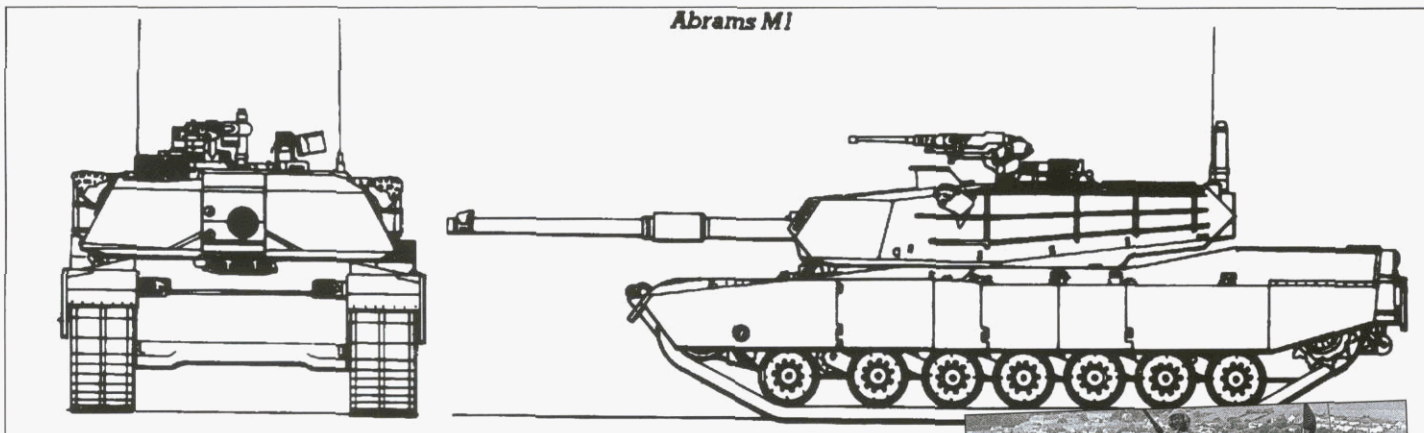


Picture: JSPRS Hong Kong

Cpl Gangaram Subba of the Queen's Gurkha Signals stands guard at the Cenotaph during the last occasion in Hong Kong on which British troops marked St George's Day



Sign outside Cape Collinson Military Cemetery



Abrams M1

In the lead: Abrams M1 with 105mm main gun, as illustrated in Greenhill's *Modern Battle Tanks*

Tank-building heavy hitters locked in battle



QUESTION: Does the main battle tank have a future, or will new anti-tank weapons point the way to obsolescence? **Answer:** Who knows?

Some years ago, research centred on lightweight, fast vehicles which hugged the ground. Today, if Greenhill's manual *Modern Battle Tanks and Support Vehicles* is anything to go by, heavyweight designs with huge guns are the order of the day.

It seems that the USA, France, Germany and the

Modern Battle Tanks by Alan K Russell. Greenhill Books, £12.99.

United Kingdom are locked in battle to design tanks for world markets. Success depends on sales, which in turn depend on whether a tank can meet the demands of customers.

Armour, gun size, fuel consumption, speed, plus a whole lot of other factors – not least cost – are considered when buying these awesome weapons systems.

Heading the field, according

to this manual, is the Abrams built by US General Dynamics, which has sold well in Egypt (M1A1 version), Kuwait (M1A2) and Saudi Arabia (M1A2).

These sales, plus the upgrading of the US Army's own MBTs, has safeguarded American tank production into the next century.

Second in the league is the French Leclerc, which recently won an order from the United Arab Emirates for a diesel-engined version, confirming

Giat Industries as one of Europe's major heavy armour producers.

Germany's improved Leopard 2 version, too, has sold well to the German Army, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Spain.

Last in the league is the UK with the Vickers Defence Systems' Challenger 2 which, says the book, is "definitely not cost effective when compared to the others".

The battle of the tank manufacturers is not over yet. – JM

Hitler's invincible army

THE Versailles Treaty that settled the Great War left Germany in a state of economic ruin and internal disorder.

The new Weimar Republic was desperate to establish law and turned to right-wing volunteer units that had grown up under the name *Freikorps*.

Manned by dissatisfied ex-military officers and men, the *Freikorps* were by no means the ideal choice as a law-enforcement body: they had no central direction and lacked proper discipline.

In 1921 the Weimar Republic set up a 100,000-strong force, the Reichsheer, the bulk of which was composed of ex-*Freikorps* units. This was the forerunner of the Wehrmacht, established in 1935 by the Nazis and destined to become one of the most formidable armies in history.

For *Wehrmacht: The Illustrated History of the German Army*

in WW II, John Pimlott, head of the Department of War Studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, has collected more than 200 photographs of the Wehrmacht in action, in triumph and defeat, drawn from archives recently found in Warsaw.

Dr Pimlott's accompanying text provides a concise and clear history of the Wehrmacht from its foundation, the bloodless occupation of territories before the outbreak of war to the *blitzkrieg* invasion of the Low Countries and France.

The overwhelming of the Allied armies in May-June 1940 was "stunning in its speed and impact", and no doubt caused the Nazi leaders, and the Wehrmacht to believe theirs was an invincible force.

Success followed success,

until Hitler issued his directive for the invasion of the Soviet Union. It was "an enormous undertaking, involving three million soldiers, 600,000 vehicles,

3,580 tanks in 17 panzer divisions and 7,184 artillery pieces, backed by a

Luftwaffe of 1,830 aircraft".

The invasion took panzers to the gates of Moscow and Stalingrad, but Russia's oldest ally, winter, brought the German advance to a standstill.

Old photographs show the Wehrmacht first in elation and then in agony as it was bled of its strength and resources, not only in frozen Russia but through fighting on too many fronts, including North Africa.

The failure of Operation Barbarossa coincided with the extension of the war through Pearl Harbour and Hitler's ill-

considered declaration of war on the USA.

Even so, the end was a long time coming. Despite defeats and retreats in Russia, North Africa, Italy and, after the Normandy landings, in North-West Europe, the Wehrmacht fought bravely for the Fatherland. As late as the end of 1944 it was amazingly strong, with more than ten million men in uniform, many recruited from occupied countries.

When the war ended the once great Wehrmacht ceased to exist. Its victories and its determination to continue the fight to the end had achieved nothing other than an estimated loss of three and a half million men in five years.

Time has been less than kind to their memory but John Pimlott has emphasised pictures of ordinary Germans fighting for their lives, their homes and their families. – BJ

Le Tiss assists in an udder great goal

ENGLAND and Saints football star Matt Le Tissier paid a visit to the **Royal Hospital Haslar** to officially unveil a new Gamma camera in the Department of Diagnostics.

The camera, which cost £300,000, will be used for diagnostic and research purposes in the tri-Service hospital at Gosport, Hampshire.

After the ceremony, Matt was ambushed by a panto cow collecting money for the Hospital Chaplains' Department, which is raising funds to buy a cow in calf to send to Bosnia.

Lucy will be the second cow



Matt Le Tissier with Brig Guy Ratcliffe and Haslar the cow

paid for by the hospital and sent out to former Yugoslavia.

Commanding officer Brig Guy Ratcliffe and "Haslar", the fund-raising cow (aka the Rev Chris Luckraft and partner), were on duty to referee and see fair play.

The Gamma camera is the first in a military hospital anywhere in the world and only the second to be installed in the United Kingdom.

Dartmoor challenge

The Jubilee Challenge, an event held in conjunction with the Ten Tors expedition, attracted 200 less abled youngsters to the wilds of Dartmoor. Officer cadets from Exeter University Officers' Training Corps were on hand to help some of the wheel-chaired participants. More than 2,400 teenagers took on the rigours of the 38th Ten Tors expedition which covered eight miles of the rugged Dartmoor terrain.



Picture: Media Ops, Land Command

Wye the loggies made a big effort

SIXTY intrepid teams, including one from **6 Supply Regiment RLC** based in Gutersloh tried their luck in the annual River Wye raft race.

The challenge was for a ten-strong team to paddle 100 miles in three days, 34 miles on the first day, a tortuous 42 miles on the second and a slightly easier 24 miles on the last.

The loggies' racing raft was constructed from two thin aluminium beams in parallel, kept afloat by 56 empty 25-litre drums, and joined together by six aluminium poles. Paddle-power was required to move the raft, sometimes for up to nine hours at a stretch.

A total of DM 2,000 (£738) was raised for Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital as the team completed the race in nine minutes under 19 hours, earning them a well-earned 35th place overall.

The loggies took 22 hours to finish the race when they last attempted it in 1995.



Loggies from 6 Supply Regiment RLC set out on the famous River Wye raft race

Gunner power pulls in cash for hospice

THE IDEA of pulling a 25-pounder field gun from Cwbran to Newport appealed to 12 gunners from Newport-based **104th Regiment RA (V)**, who completed the four-mile course for charity.

The Territorial Army gunners, from Headquarter Bat-

tery, have been collecting money for the Ty Hafan Children's Hospice for months.

They raised more than £1,000 for the Barry-based charity.

If you saw "The Merry Men of Essex" with "The Menage à

Trois" in Paris recently you would have to thank the **Royal British Legion**.

They were the names of two of the 250 teams which cycled to the French capital to raise money for the Legion.

Many riders were sponsored by their companies including BT, Thames Water and Drapers.

It was the second London-Paris ride organised by the Legion and it raised more than £250,000 for the charity which cares for ex-Servicemen and women and their dependants.

As part of the 50th anniversary of the Territorial Army in Northern Ireland, soldiers from **152 (Ulster) Ambulance Regiment RLC (V)** hit the road after being flagged off by the Lord Mayor of Belfast.

More than 30 members of the regiment drove around the United Kingdom during Exercise Grasshopper, visiting 50 towns and cities to raise money for Save the Children.

They used four Discovery off-road vehicles loaned to them by Land Rover for the exercise.

A cheque for more than £13,000 was presented to the Princess Royal in her role of president of the charity and Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Logistic Corps.



Proving that a bit of mud will not stop soldiers helping out a charity – or enjoying themselves – are nine Territorial Army members of Peterborough-based **200 Squadron RLC**. They were among 31 teams who got stuck, literally, into a 24-hour

motor-cycle endurance race. Sgt Norman Greeves and his team raised more than £600 for SSAFA, Childline and the Army Benevolent Fund. Exercise Enduring Help was held at Bordon, Hampshire and involved Regular and TA units.

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our soldiers who
fight for us...**



...guarding our freedom and protecting our children's future. Some fall on hard times.

We need your help to help them.

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The Army Benevolent Fund will help soldiers, ex-soldiers and their families in need.

To: The Army Benevolent Fund, Dept. SOL, 41 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HR

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Please charge my Access/Visa/CharityCard No. _____

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ARRC

Cpl A E B Urquart QARANC.

Cheers and tears at Falklands reunion

THERE were poignant scenes of renewed friendships, shared memories and grief at a reunion of Falklands War veterans in Gosport on June 14-15, writes **Graham Bound**.

On the Saturday, 2,500 ex-combatants with their families converged on HMS *Sultan*, where rows of marquees served as meeting places for regiments, corps, ships and squadrons.

But long before the afternoon was over, the veterans were mingling as one group, just as they had in the Falklands 15 years earlier. In the beer tent and before the open air stage where bands played and comedians entertained, they renewed old friendships.

Although some units had organised their own reunions in the years since 1982, this was the first occasion when men of all units were able to meet in one place. For many, it was an emotional occasion,

bringing back the camaraderie and spirit of the time, and many painful memories.

Veterans applauded when Sir Rex Hunt, the Falklands Governor in 1982, stepped up to the stage. On behalf of the Falkland Islanders, he thanked the men for their sacrifice.

On Sunday, Baroness Thatcher and Armed Forces Minister John Reid were the guests of honour at a ceremony of remembrance on the town's sea front. Within sight of the harbour from which the task force sailed, Baroness Thatcher said: "Times may change, but courage, honour and steadfastness endure. Today we remember and salute all who fought there and everyone who died."

The final act in the celebrations belonged to the ex-combatants. They marched proudly through Gosport behind the band of the Royal Marines.

POINTS IN QUESTION

Nazi saboteurs

With reference to John Hopley's question (June 9), I can confirm that in 1944-ish, in the push for Bremen, motor-cyclists were taken off the road for the reasons mentioned.

I was in 52 (L) Division RASC and some jeeps had the vertical angle iron fitted to the front of the vehicle to protect the driver in the event stretched cables were encountered, night or day. I assume it was expected the cable would snap on impact, although I did not know of any driver having this experience.

I served in a workshops platoon and I feel quite sure that the modification was carried out on advice from "higher up", not as the result of a whim.

Regarding sabotage, however, the Nazis recruited youths into small units nicknamed "werewolves", the function of which was to harry and harass advancing troops. I never saw any, but no doubt they could be a nuisance if nothing else. — **J C McCarthy, Liverpool.**

I served 1939-46 with the RASC and well remember the period when Nazi fanatics began operating from large forests. I can assure Mr Hopley that these fanatics used piano wire fastened to trees either side of the roads, as despatch riders were very vulnerable at night until the steel angle iron — usually 2in x 1½in or 2in x 2in — were welded on to the front of small vehicles such as jeeps which patrolled in trouble spots.

Wires were placed by "werewolves", fanatical Hitler youth groups, and a special Canadian unit was formed to track them down. I remember one area where many troops were brought in to "beat out" the area, just like game beaters in the United Kingdom.

I do not know who ordered the fitting of the angle iron devices, but I can confirm it was not a joke and had become a serious problem. Anyone who recalls the Dorethan Klippen area will confirm this. — **Ron Wood, Wolverhampton.**

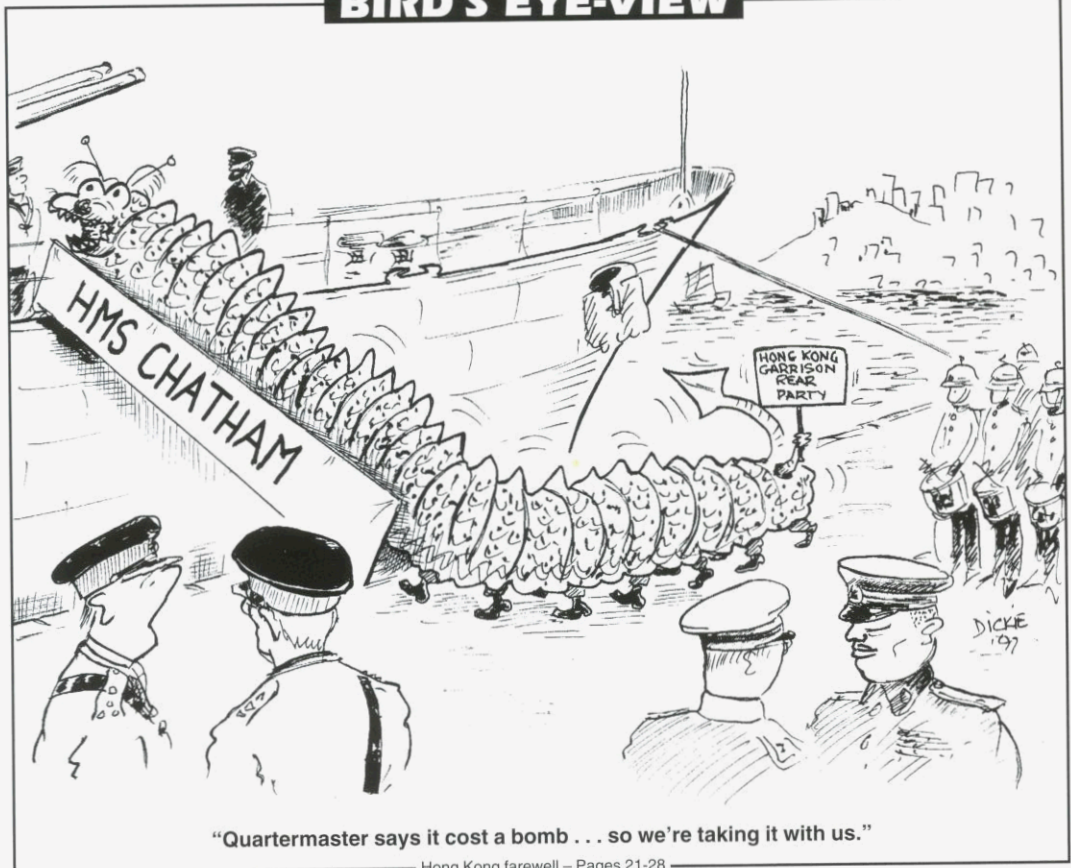
Suez zone petition forms

FOLLOWING publication of my letter in *Soldier* (June 9), I have had a good response to the appeal to Suez veterans. But I failed to mention in my letter that if any individual or regimental association requires petition forms they should

contact me, and I will send them by return.

The more signatures I get, the better for our cause. — **Tom Radford, 29 Leighton Road, Tranmere, Birkenhead, Wirral L41 9DY (tel 0151 647 8288).**

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



"Quartermaster says it cost a bomb . . . so we're taking it with us."

Hong Kong farewell — Pages 21-28

Canadian brigadier 'fought so heroically'

YOUR articles on Hong Kong (June 9) referred to the Canadian Brig J K Lawson's death there in December 1941.

While serving in Canada I found the Japanese records which described this incident. Lawson's headquarters at the Wong Nei Chong Gap were almost surrounded when he telephoned to say that he and his staff were "going to get out-

side and fight it out rather than be killed inside like rats."

Japanese machine-gunners caught sight of him in his distinctive brigadier's uniform and he was seen to stagger and fall. Lawson "had died of a wound to his right leg and loss of blood", reported Col Shoji Toshishige, the Japanese commander.

"I ordered the temporary

burial of the officer on the battleground on which he had fought so heroically."

Had Lawson not been chosen to command this brigade in Hong Kong, he would certainly have reached high rank in the Canadian Army that took such an important part in the defeat of Germany in the North-West Europe campaign of 1944-45. — **Col (Retd) Oliver Lindsay, Brookwood, Woking.**

Rights and lefts

ON THE morning of June 4 I had the privilege to be at the Royal Chelsea Hospital in London for Founders Day when the reviewing officer was

the Duke of Edinburgh.

I was most impressed with both march-pasts by the In-Pensioners; the first included an "eyes left" as each veteran saluted with the right hand, the second an "eyes right", but with the salute given with the left hand.

I asked the hospital RSM why the left-hand salute was given, and if it had its origins in the First World War. Is there anyone who can throw more light on it? — **P A Reader, Ascot, Berks.**

For the record . . .

Korea VCs

I would like to offer an amendment to Lt Col Whitmore's interesting letter (June 9): Pte W Speakman was KOSB attached Black Watch, rather than the reverse, as stated. — **Ken Forsyth, Fairlie, Ayrshire.**

Soldier welcomes letters for publication from all readers, whatever their status. Letters must be brief, typed or written clearly and include the correspondent's name and address in block capitals, not necessarily for publication. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to edit for length, clarity or style.

Cook's tour to honour Ernie

ADJUTANT'S Bugler LCpl Steven Cook of the 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, dashed from duty in Northern Ireland to play his part in the ceremony at Suio, Italy, honouring the late Pte Ernie Foster.

As reported in these pages (June 23), Pte Foster saved the life of a baby caught in cross-fire in 1944 when British and German soldiers battled for the village in the Aurunci mountains between Naples and Rome.

Suio's inhabitants never forgot the incident, and on May 25 the main square was renamed Piazza Ernest Foster in memory of the soldier of the 5th Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment who, aged 19, risked his life to help a young mother hit as she dashed across the square.

The woman died in Pte Foster's arms, and as he laid her down he found in a shawl her 18-month-old baby, Alessandro Lefeno, wounded by the same bullet that had killed his mother.

Years later Ernie Foster, who lived at Bedhampton, near Portsmouth, Hants, traced the boy and made contact with his family. When Ernie died five years ago, Alessandro, now a father himself, attended his funeral.

As soon as news of the civic ceremony reached 2 PWRR in Omagh, it was felt the occasion should be marked by the regiment and LCpl Cook, a member of the Drums Platoon, was dragged from his bed in Clogher Security Forces base and dispatched at very short notice.

A combined effort by Battalion Headquarters and staff at the British Embassy in Rome ensured



the bugler reached Suio in time, and that he was looked after when he got there.

Villagers fell silent as LCpl Cook (pictured above), looking splendid in full dress scarlets despite a long day of high temperatures, took up his position to play the *Last Post* in the sun-drenched village square.

Contingents from the Italian Armed Forces, boy scouts, the mayors of 14 local towns, Ernie Foster's widow Sylvia and children, and media representatives



tal secretary Col Paddy Panton. Jumpmaster is Sgt Roly Coleman.

Highlight of their year will be 1 PWRR's Colours parade on June 30 in the presence of the Colonel-in-Chief, Queen Margrethe II of Denmark.

PIAZZA ERNEST FOSTER
SOLDATO INGLESE CHE DURANTE IL 2° CONFLITTO MONDIALE CON ATTO EROICO SOTTO LE GRANATE IL 17-02-1944 A RISCHIO DELLA PROPRIA VITA SALVO' QUELLA DI UN BAMBINO IN SUO PAESE

were there to see a British soldier's bravery honoured. "It was," said LCpl Cook, "an amazing experience."

We ARE the best

BRITISH ARMY entries swept the board at the annual Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) and Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) Recruitment Advertising Awards.

The Army picked up several awards for a series of ads produced by Saatchi and Saatchi for the Central Office of Information.

As well as winning the Advertisement of the Year award – a first for a radio entry – the Army scooped top prizes in another four categories and had seven finalists at the ceremony sponsored by the *Guardian* newspaper.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, July 1947

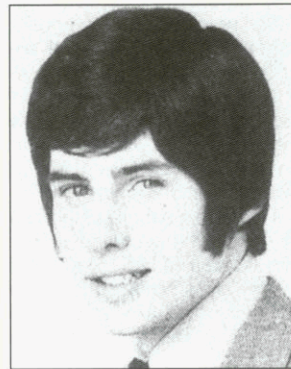
AT THE CROSSROADS

The Indian Army of Kitchener and Kipling – the proud fighting force which pillared the British Raj during five reigns and fought the King-Emperor's cause in two World Wars – is halted at the crossroads, awaiting orders: one arm of the signpost points to Hindustan, the other to Pakistan.

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, July 1972

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Be in fashion, but retain your Military Requirements by purchasing one of our Trendy Male Wigs, which are manufactured in Human Hair or Man-made Fibre. Cost: Human Hair £8; Man-made Fibre £6. Discount on 2 or more 5 per cent. – *Extract from an advertisement.*

Italy Stars on coach pilgrimage

ITALY campaign veterans were touched by the warmth of their welcome when they completed a 3,518-mile pilgrimage by coach to Second World War battlefields and memorials.

A highlight for the Italy Star Association members was a tour of Rome with a commentary by a member of the British Embassy staff, followed by a meeting with the Ambassador and a meal in the embassy.

Wreaths were laid at 23 cemeteries during the 16-day trip, which took in Anzio and Monte Cassino, and the veterans paraded in several locations.

A private tribute was laid on behalf of association national chairman Maurice Cheadle for his driver, Joe Morley, at the Forlì cemetery.

Mr Cheadle was unable to make the trip because his wife was ill.

Last course for enlisted National Servicemen?

COLONELS Derek Smith and David Bunney, who may be (unless you know better) the last two Regular serving officers in the British Army to have enlisted on National Service, took part in a dinner to mark the end of pay offices as we know them.

Officers of the AGC(SPS) joined Brig Neil Mackereth, Director SPS(A), at Worthy Down to mark the closure of Fixed Centre Pay Offices in Glasgow, Ashton under Lyne, Leicester, Chester, York and Exeter.

Guests included Maj Gen Richard Oliver, the Chief of Staff AG, and Maj Gen David Burden, Chief Executive of the Army Personnel Centre.

Col Smith is due to retire at the end of September at the age of 62 having managed the closure of RPO Exeter. Col Bunney, 61, retires on August 31 having overseen the demise of RPO York.



Col David Bunney



Col Derek Smith

Way forward for corps, regimental museums

THE announced reduction of 12.7 per cent in Ministry of Defence funding for regimental and corps museums, currently running at £1.68 million a year, has brought into sharp focus the absence of an official MoD policy for museums, and the absence of an agreed methodology for apportioning a cut in funding between museums.

Antony Makepeace-Warne, the Director of the Army Museums Ogilby Trust (AMOT), says both deficiencies are being addressed with some urgency. A policy paper is being drafted by a working party which includes representatives of

the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC), Area Museums Councils and AMOT.

It is likely that eligibility for MoD funding will be based on three key issues for a museum: that it be open to the public; registered with the MGC; and subject to a service agreement between MoD and the museum trustees. Mr Makepeace-Warne believes trustees will probably have to offer improvements in access, education and staff training in return for undertakings by MoD on security of tenure and provision of services.

The measures should serve to

widen the appeal of regimental museums and improve professional standards. Once eligibility for MoD support is established, the scale of support will be decided by an assessment panel.

Some indication of the nature and scale of the 12.7 per cent cut is expected in July.

MoD intends to establish an Army Museums Panel chaired by the Director of Personal Services (Army) with representation from the National Army Museum, AMOT and MGC to manage day-to-day policy and ensure cohesion for the whole family of regimental and corps museums.

Not-so-Green Howards Museum scoops award

YORKSHIRE-based museum of The Green Howards has won second prize in the White Rose awards presented annually by the Yorkshire Tourist Board.

Situated in Richmond, the museum was runner-up to the Ryedale Folk Museum in the category of attractions receiving under 50,000 visitors a year.

"This is a marvellous recognition of the money spent (almost £90,000 from regimental funds over the past two years), and a compliment to the efforts of our development officer, Maj Roger Chapman, to enhance the museum," said curator Lt Col Neil McIntosh.

"Not only that, but it is a tremendous boost to be judged to the same standard as the winner and runner-up in the over-50,000 category, when you consider that they were the Royal Armouries

Museum in Leeds and the National Railway Museum in York."

Improvements at the museum have included the installation of a stair lift for disabled visitors. Further improvements to lighting are mooted by the end of the year.

SEARCHLINE

G R Dowson would like to hear from anyone who was a prisoner-of-war with his brother, Pte John "Jack" Dowson 5837302, 2nd Bn, Beds and Herts Regt. He was captured in North Africa April 1943, and imprisoned in Camp PG65 near Naples, Stalag XV11A at Kaisersteinbrunn near Vienna, and Stalag XV11B at Gneixendorf. Finally transferred to a working camp at Pottenbrunn, he died in Melk general hospital on August 25, 1944 from injuries sustained during an American air raid on the

airfield at Markersdorf two days earlier. Replies, particularly from anyone who was with him during the fatal air raid, to 69 Fircroft Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 6PU.

RAMC OTTs and ORAs: If you served or are serving in the Army as an operating theatre technician and are interested in a reunion in Portsmouth in September, please send a 5in x 9in sae to Tony Valeisa, Operating Theatres, Royal Hospital Haslar, Gosport, Hants PO12 2AA.

DATES

JULY

4: Evening lecture by Maj Gen Anthony Deane-Drummond CB DSO MC, Italy and Arnhem. Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot. Tickets on 01252 349614.
6: 30 Signal Regt, open day, Bramcote, nr Nuneaton, featuring White Helmets, R Signals and Brigade of Gurkhas bands, APTC display (01455 222551).
15-27: Royal Tournament, Earls Court. Tickets: 0171 244-0244.
20: Aldershot Military Museum special events day, 1.30pm. Details: 01252 314598.
27: Middle Wallop Challenge 97 air show. Tickets: 01980 674421.

SEPTEMBER

6-7: Berwick Military Tattoo, The Barracks, Berwick-upon-Tweed.
13-15: Military Survey 250th anniversary, Hermitage.

OCTOBER

7-8: Cyprus Walkabout.
12: Military Historical Society annual exhibition at the National Army Museum.
24: Isle of Thanet Festival of Remembrance. Tickets: 01843 292882.

● To include public events in this diary, contact the Editor.

Alamein battle-cry

UP TO £35,000 is expected to be paid for the original manuscript of Fd Marshal Montgomery's personal message to the Eighth Army before the Battle of El Alamein when it is auctioned at Sotheby's on July 17.

Written just hours before the start of the battle that stopped Rommel in his tracks and changed the course of the Second World War, the message is written in pencil on both sides of a single sheet of paper.

In it, Monty exhorted his Desert Rats: "And let no man surrender so long as he is unwounded and can fight." He told his 150,000 troops that the battle would be one of the decisive of history.

REUNIONS

WFR Regimental Association: Crich dinner, July 5, pilgrimage to memorial, July 6. Details: RHQ WFR, Foresters House, Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Notts NG9 5HA (tel 0115 9465415).

Army Catering Corps Sunday: St Omer Barracks, Aldershot July 6. Tickets and passes from AAC Association on 01252 340893/4.

Brotherhood of Veterans of Greek Campaign: Reunion at Clacton on Oct 3-5. Details: E Hurlington, 163 Walton Road, Walton-on-Naze, Essex CO14 8NE (tel 01255 677178).

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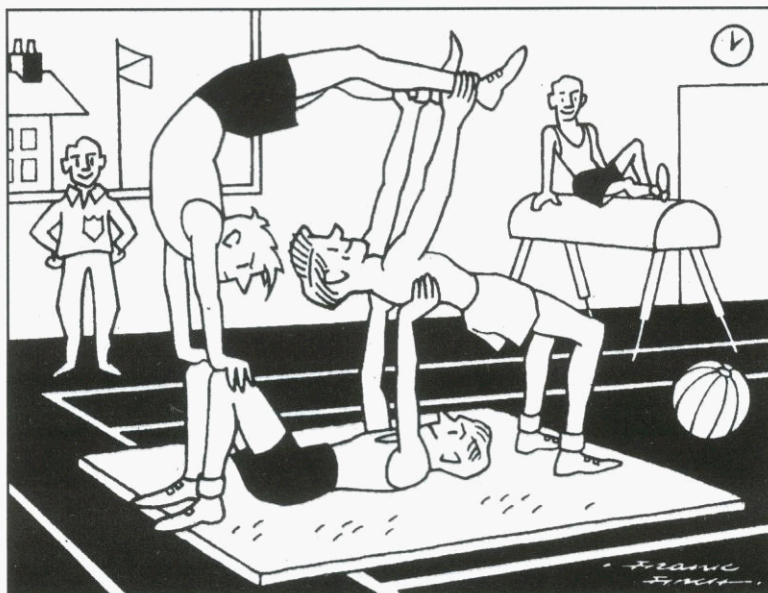
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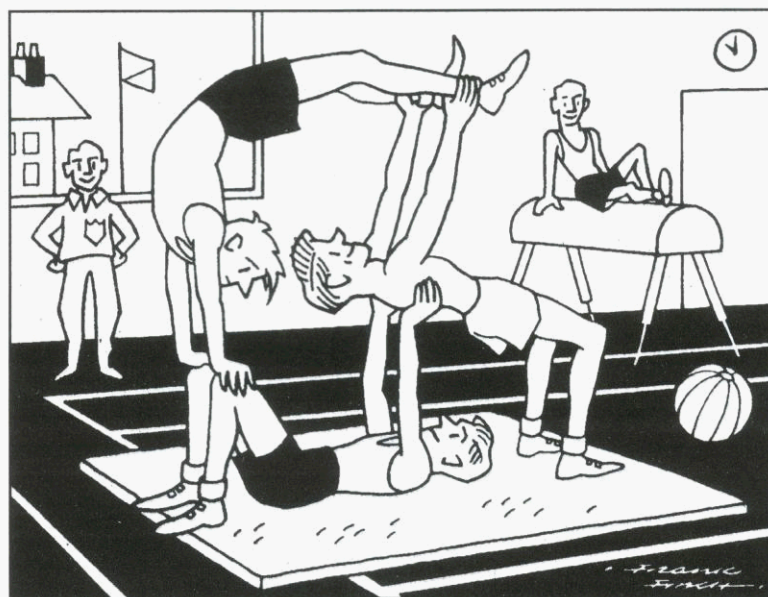
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in your envelope. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. The first correct entries drawn will be the winners. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner of the £50 first prize and two runners-up (awarded book prizes) will be announced in the August 18 issue.



Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

Competition No 662 (May 26 issue): First correct entry drawn was from Miss T Slater, of Woolwich, SE 18, who wins £50. Book prizes go to runners-up Mr T Edwards, of Denbigh, Clwyd, and Mr J G McAvoy, of Putney, SW15. The ten differences were: guard's helmet; leaded window; turret cross; moon; ghost's cuff and shoe; saddle girth strap; door plaque; stable notice; diamond stud on door (bottom right).



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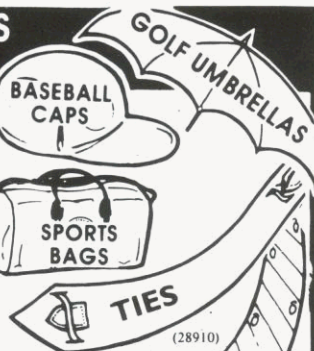
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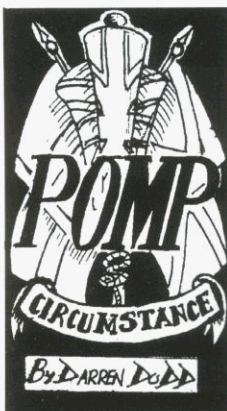
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Darren's worthy effort sinks the champions

DEFENDING champions AGC Worthy Down were resoundingly beaten in the first round of the Army Cricket Cup by the current Infantry champions, the 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment at Canterbury.

Star of the match was Sgt Darren Cornhill, who smashed the Worthy Down bowlers to all parts of the ground in a majestic innings of 184 out of 308.

Neither side was at full strength because of other commitments, and nearly half the PWRR team had deployed during the Zaire crisis to Congo on Operation Determinant.

Worthy Down won the toss, put the Tigers in to bat, and were rewarded with an early wicket. But Cornhill stabilised the innings and quickly raced to a half century.

A second-wicket stand of 180 between Cornhill and Capt Stuart Houghton put 1 PWRR in control. After the departure of Houghton for a stylish 67, lower order support pushed the PWRR score to an impressive 308 for five in 40 overs, Cornhill finishing on 184.

It was a tall order for the AGC batsmen, and, as the run rate rose, they were put under increasing pressure. They were finally all out for 118, Cpl Adam Dodman finishing with three wickets for 31.

1 PWRR 308-5 (Cornhill 184, Houghton 67). **AGC Worthy**



Top scorer: Sgt Darren Cornhill (1 PWRR) scored 184 in the first round of the Army Cup

Down 118 (Dodman 3-31). **1 PWRR** won by 190 runs.

Army v Middlesex II

With the previous week's game against Wiltshire at Marlborough abandoned without a ball being bowled because of a waterlogged pitch, the Army side was looking forward to playing the Middlesex 2nd XI at Aldershot.

At 57 for three (effectively four as a broken finger forced Wellings's retirement), Middlesex were struggling against some good fielding and bowling, particularly by Capt Paddy Logan (AAC) in his first spell.

Had LCpl Lenny Hutton (RDG) not been in no-ball bowling mode – he had Dutch out twice in one over, both off no balls, before the score was

80 – the Middlesex total may have been reduced and the whole tenor of the match changed.

In the end, the young professionals played extremely well and, due to some weak batting by the Army, won with ease.

Middlesex 285-7 (Dutch 144). **Army** 113 (St George 25). Middlesex won by 172 runs.

Army v Kent II

The Army bowling and fielding was good for most of the match and Kent were struggling at 84 for four after two hours' play which, by any standard, reflected a decent bowling performance.

Immediately after lunch, Kent were deep in trouble at 110 for six. But the tail played sensibly, while the Army bowling and fielding became ragged.

The Woolwich pitch is not difficult to score on. But for some poor shot selection by some of the Army batsmen (St George and Fielding being the only ones to have been genuinely dismissed by fine bowling), the result could have gone either way.

Kent 242-8 (Logan 2-31). **Army** 123. Kent won by 119 runs.

Combined Services v NAYC England U-19

Two days of good weather at Vine Lane produced batting performances and fine bowling by Capt James Carr-Smith (RY).

The RAF opening pair dem-

onstrated their cricketing talent, Glyn Lumb's technique, patience and all-round excellence setting a fine example to both sides and Mark Bray showing what an exciting batsman he is by playing a chanceless innings of high quality.

Carr-Smith bowled with his usual mixture of flight and guile and, when the seventh wicket fell, NAYC played out for a draw.

Combined Services 243-7 dec (Lumb 114) and 267-2 dec (Bray 117). **England U19 XI** 252-5 dec and 242-7 (Carr-Smith 6-73). Match drawn.

Great result puts Army in the selector's eye

Army 32, GB U-19 18

AFTER a notable victory over the Civil Service at Bath and a tight win against an improving Royal Air Force side, the Army rugby league squad made it three in a row with a good win over the Great Britain Under-19s, writes Steve Tranter.

Early pressure paid off for the Army as the GB side was forced into some uncharacteristic errors. Paul Roberts (SEME) opened the scoring in the third minute after hard driving by the forwards. Stand-off Shaun Fanning (RAMC) missed the conversion.

Making the most of the good start, the Army turned up the heat. Collecting a ball on the GB 20m line, Sgt Tim White (REME) stormed through a static defence to score on 11 minutes.

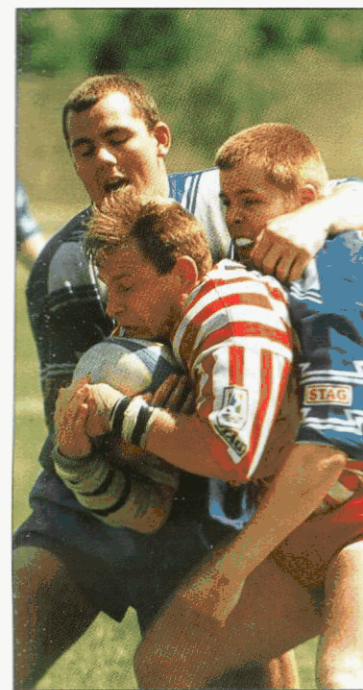
The British juniors finally woke up and laid siege to the Army try line.

Having defended well on their own line, the Army finally ran out of cover and the GB winger raced into the left corner to score.

With both sides squandering chances, the Army edged further ahead when Fanning went over, the conversion



An Army player (centre) is intercepted during the inaugural match on the Army's second synthetic hockey pitch at Aldershot, which was opened by the Adjutant General, Gen Sir Alex Harley. The Army beat the President's XI 3-2



Sgt Tim White (REME) tries desperately to keep the ball. Spot the offending hand

opening the gap to 14-8. The Great Britain side scored a try on the stroke of half-time and went into the interval within four points of the Army.

From the restart they piled on the pressure and levelled the match at 14 points each.

Army captain Cpl Wayne Braddock (R Signals) got his side moving forward again and scrumhalf Kevin White cheekily dummied his way over to put his team in front again. Fanning converted to put some breathing space between the teams.

After good work from White and Roberts, Sgt Rick Nelson (RE) burst through two tackles to score and Fanning's kick made it 26-14.

The Army were on a roll and man-of-the-match Fanning went flying over for his second converted try.

The game ended with a great interchange between Cpl Bob Hinton and full back Steve Emm (RE) which resulted in a try being disallowed for a dubious forward pass.

Final score of 32-18 did not reflect how close the game actually was. Although this was a deserved victory for the Army, in the end they were pushed all the way to the final whistle.

Jackie Reid, chairman of the international selectors, said he was surprised by the skill and strength of the Army team and would be casting an eye over the squad in future.

Sappers on course to victory

Prince, took the fourth semi-final place.

Day two saw the Signals progress to the final, beating a lacklustre RLC team 3-2. In the other semi-final, current BA(G) golf captain Taylor was held to all square after 18 holes by McMillan (REME), but a birdie on the first extra hole was enough to win his game.

With the scores level at 2-2, WO1 Lance Rosie held his nerve to sink a testing putt on the 18th to level his game with Maj Jacques Lemay (RE). Once again, the REME lost out to the sappers when Lemay sank a long putt on the first extra hole.

In the play-off for the Plate, the REME players proved too strong for the RLC.

In the final, the sappers always seemed to be in control of the match against the signallers. A scratch bogey competition, contested by the remaining teams, was won by the RE B team.

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The squat is probably the most difficult lift of three. An excellent effort by 56kg LBdr

Pressing matters

Mike McDermott (4 Regt RA) in lifting 120kg took him to third place. However, it was the heavier lifters who came out on top, with RAF Bruggen's Jason Coulthard (190kg) having to accept the runner-up spot after being edged out by Sgt Morland's 205kg lift.

First place in the bench press went to SSgt Andy Garner

(FSST) who pipped LCpl Lois Pulham (35 Engr Regt) by virtue of his lighter body weight.

The deadlift proved an exciting round with 90 per cent of the competitors achieving personal bests. Heaviest lift, at 225kg, went to Morland, but the winner was the lightest man in the competition, McDermott.

Overall, the competition proved a closely-fought contest. Morland was eventually declared winner ahead of team mate Cpl Bob Kirby (1 ADSR) and Garner.

Sky-divers' winning ways

A NEW Army four-way formation sky-diving team is being sponsored by five British defence companies.

Calling themselves Quiksilva, Maj David Tyler (RLC), 2nd Lt Alastair Macartney (RLC), LCpl Wayne Thomas (RGJ) and Pte Jase Baxter (PWO) completed 60 jumps during a training camp in Florida.

Coached by the South African national team captain, Solly Williams, they made an excellent start in the Southern regional championships, finishing third.

A week later they were second at the Scottish nation-



Quiksilva build a Canadian Tee in the skies above Florida

als during which they combined with another four-way team to win the Scottish eight-way competition.

Quiksilva have been promised support by Vickers

plc, In Flight Refuelling, Alvis, Avimo and GEC Marconi.

The 1997 Army Parachute championships will take place at JSPC Netheravon on October 4-12.

Low turn-out for inter-corps anniversary rifle match

JUST five divisions, including one infantry regiment or corps, managed to support the 25th inter-corps target rifle match at Bisley.

In contrast, three units – the Royal Irish, Royal Signals and REME – entered B teams.

The weather was hot and sunny, with the haze at the longer ranges proving more difficult than the light, variable wind. Scores overall improved on the previous two years.

On Century range, the morning details saw the R Irish establish a lead of ten points at 300yds over the Army Air Corps, making a return after their absence last year. This lead was extended to 15 points at 600yds.

In the afternoon, on Stickle-down Range, the R Irish lead was cut back to ten points at 900 yds, with the RE and REME tied in third on 536 points each. At 1,000yds the AAC encountered problems, leaving the R Irish clear winners by 24 points. REME finished third, ten behind the AAC.

Highest individual score was by LCpl G Clarke (R Irish) with 191.21 out of a possible 200. The Reserve Prize was won by Capt H Woods (R Signals) with a score of 185.11.

Nicky puts the rest to the sword

FOR the first time the Inter-Services fencing championships were held at the Army School of Physical Training at Aldershot rather than at the Royal Tournament.

Lt Nicky Chester (AGC), a former Commonwealth Games fencer, swept the women's individual weapon titles by consistently showing the power of her accurate, aggressive attacks and almost impenetrable defence.

That is not to say the other Service fencers were a walkover. One of Chester's keenest foil fights was against Lt Cdr Maggie Myers, whose penetrating left-handed close-encounter weapon handling almost tipped the balance in her favour.

With the scores level at 4-4, tension mounted as the deciding hit was given to Chester, securing her third individual win of the competition and the Inter-Service Champion-at-Arms trophy. She went on to win the Champion Swords-woman Shield, which will be presented to her at the Royal Tournament.

Cpl Ian Stewart had his eye on the men's novice sabre title and fought tenaciously to over-



Master Swordswoman Lt Nicky Chester and (right) Wilkinson Sword gold medal winner, Cpl Ian Stewart



come strong opposition from Royal Navy and Royal Air Force fencers and win the Wilkinson Sword gold medal.

In the Master Swordsman competition some finely-judged cuts to arm dispatched the RAF Champion-at-Arms, Sqn Ldr Steve Jackman, while an inspired series of running attacks defeated the Navy champion, Lt Cdr Graham Oliver.

However, after several close matches, the three Service fencers were level on points.

In the deciding sabre competition Stewart was over-

whelmed by the ferocity of the Navy attack and was unable to match Sqn Ldr Jackman's well-judged attacks.

It was still a good result for Stewart in his first major championships and he can be well satisfied with his bronze medal in the Master Swordsman competition.

Other successes included a gold medal win for Maj Tony Williams (RE) in the senior foil, a silver medal for Capt Rebecca Harrison (AGC) and a silver medal in the Champion-at-Arms and bronze in the foil for Col Neil Sutherland.



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E SQUADRON 2ND ROYAL TANK REGIMENT Charity Challenge 2000KM



Relief all round as 11 members of E Squadron, 2nd Royal Tank Regiment reach the end of a week-long 2,000km relay run around the Maze prison in Northern Ireland. They had taken turns to carry a baton around the perimeter. The tankies, who have been providing a guard force at the Maze, raised about £7,000 for two charities, Children Nationwide and the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. More Good Causes, Pages 30-31.

Picture: Terry Champion

