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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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ARMY

Tidings from the top

A Christmas message from the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Peter Wall

THIS time last year, looking ahead to 2012, I reflected with confidence on the challenges and opportunities that lay before us as we embarked on a five-year period of change to a leaner, adaptable and ready Army.

So how are we doing a year in?

Operationally, in Afghanistan we have continued to make superb tactical progress through the skill, courage and determination of our brigades.

The soldiering has been challenging but we're on track as we enter a key time frame where, albeit as part of a wider government effort, we must deliver a sustainable Afghanistan for the future.

Serious hard work lies ahead as we reduce our footprint and recover the equipment we require for the future Army, without lessening the support that the Afghans need most. And a reducing footprint means lighter scales and a more expeditionary approach for those who will be the last to deploy. Combat operations in Afghanistan will remain the Army's main effort.

More of the Service is diverting its attention to general preparations for contingency.

Such deployments tend to come from unexpected directions at short notice.

They may, as we have seen this year through the Olympics and the potential fuel strike, involve us operating in the UK.

On that note, I remain intensely grateful to all those who took part in the London 2012 security effort: a job brilliantly executed with charm and good humour.

Meanwhile, we're making steady progress on delivering Army 2020, including our element of Future Reserves 2020.

This time last year I called for your patience while work continued.

As you read this, the future Army structure and

regimental roles have been announced.

The Reserves green paper has been launched, and the secretary of state intends to announce future Army basing this month.

I know how unsettling waiting for such important information can be, but you should be entirely confident that tackling such uncertainty is a key priority for me, and we will keep you informed every step of the way.

The first two tranches of redundancy have now been announced and I regret I have to confirm that more will follow.

I am clear how debilitating this is, most of all for those non-applicants who are selected. I can only offer that it has the full attention of the Army Board and we will not leave a stone unturned in the pursuit of a transparent and fair process.

Years 2015 and 2020 are not the only horizons that we're working to.

There is plenty else to do, especially our obligations to our bereaved, our wounded and their families.

Although others from the public, charitable and private sectors have a crucial role to play, it is the British Army which will always carry this moral responsibility.

Work is ongoing as to how we take this fundamental obligation forward.

Thanks to lots of hard effort, cool heads, and your remarkable patience we are making good progress, and I couldn't be more proud of everything you have achieved.

Wherever duty calls you this Christmas you can look back on the last year with immense satisfaction and pride.

Very happy Christmas to you all and I hope, for those of us lucky enough to be with friends and family, we will find a moment to think about colleagues who are away from home (again).

My sincere thanks to you all and best wishes for 2013. ■



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Cover picture: Graeme Main

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BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET news@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Picture: Steve Dolk

Looking forward: An extra £1.8 billion will be made available for equipment, training and uniforms for Reserves over the next decade

New territory for Army Reserve

THE Territorial Army is to be given a new identity as part of wide-ranging plans to overhaul Great Britain's Reserve Forces.

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond announced details of the move last month, when he called for the organisation to be renamed the Army Reserve in a bid to reflect its enhanced role within the military structure.

The proposal was among a number of measures included in the Future Reserves 2020 consultation, which aims to find ways of creating a force that is fully integrated with the Regular Army.

An extra £1.8 billion in funding will be made available over the next ten years for equipment, training and uniforms, while a new relationship will be forged between soldiers, their employers and the government.

It is hoped a transparent approach will give bosses greater certainty about the timing of possible mobilisations and more notice when they occur.

At present there are 29,291 Reserves across all three Services, with 25,430 of those in the Territorial Army.

As previously revealed, the MoD is hoping to grow the total of fully trained military personnel to 35,000 by 2020, of which 30,000 will come from the

Army's ranks – creating a Land Force of 120,000 troops.

To help facilitate the rise in numbers the consultation will look at increasing the amount of training days for Reservists from 35 to 40 a year, while encouraging more ex-Regulars to join.

"This transformation will see a radical shift in the way we use our Reserves, with formations deployed as units or sub-units as well as delivering individual augmentees," Mr Hammond said.

"Increased training, better equipment and extra investment are all integral to our vision of a formidable, adaptable and flexible Armed Forces, with a Reserve/Regular balance more in line with our main allies.

"The consultation is about working with personnel, their families and employers to use this money to design the Reserve Forces of the future."

Vice Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Nick Houghton added: "Since 2003 more than 25,000 Reservists have

been mobilised, fighting alongside their Regular counterparts.

"A total of 29 have paid the ultimate price for their country and just this summer we saw 2,000 soldiers provide a pivotal security role at the London 2012 Games.

"In the future we will become even more reliant on our Reserves.

"But this increased dependence means there are key issues that we have to tackle – like our relationship with employers and the notice period ahead of mobilisation – to get it right.

"I want to encourage every Serviceman and woman to be involved in the process and have their say."

The consultation period runs until January 18.

To view the document and comment search for "Future Reserves 2020 consultation" at www.mod.uk

● **Reservists 'require society's support' – page 19**

40 THE NUMBER OF ANNUAL TRAINING DAYS PROPOSED FOR RESERVISTS AS PART OF PLANS TO REVAMP THE TERRITORIAL ARMY



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“I HAD A SLOW START AND WAS EDGING ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION BUT I KNEW I HAD HIM IN THE SECOND ROUND WHEN I KNOCKED HIM DOWN”

— GUNNER FINDS GLORY WITH BOXING BRILLIANCE, PAGE 85



Picture: Graeme Main

The gift that keeps on giving: The Ministry of Defence made an initial order of 200 Foxhound vehicles in November 2010 and a further 100 were requested late last year as part of a £340 million package. The recent boost to the fleet will bring its total to 376

Further Foxhounds for Op Herrick

FRONT-LINE troops will benefit from an additional 51 Foxhound patrol vehicles, the MoD has announced.

Philip Dunne, minister for defence equipment, support and technology, confirmed the £46 million contract during a visit to the Telford facility of the platform's manufacturer, General Dynamics: Force Protection.

Foxhound – the British Army's most agile protected vehicle – was first introduced to Afghanistan in June this year, where troops have been using it in their mentoring and partnering role with the country's security forces.

With unparalleled features for its weight and class, the asset can reach speeds of up to 80mph.

It is also able to drive away from improvised explosive device strikes on three wheels, while the modular construction of the engine means that it can be fixed in just 30 minutes and back on the road soon afterwards.

The latest cash injection brings the fleet to 376 and the total investment to £340 million.

In July's *Soldier*, Service personnel driving the vehicle spoke in glowing terms about its capabilities.

Sgt Mark Lawrence (R Signals), one of the first to get behind the wheel earlier this year, said: “From what I have seen so far it is superb and the technology it

has is sensational.

“It is nice to drive and there is a lot more space in the back.”

Mr Dunne said the procurement process for the Foxhound, which lasted 40 months from initial design to deployment, was a “real success story”.

He added: “Balancing the MoD's budget means we can now confidently invest in equipment like this, which has the flexibility and adaptability to operate in a wide variety of environments, providing capability for the Army well

into the future.”

The chief of staff at Camp Bastion's Force Protection Wing, Sqn Ldr Jim Stewart, echoed praise for the cutting-edge platform.

“Foxhound is an enormous leap forward in capability,” he said.

“The off-road mobility, enhanced protection and night-vision systems that it offers troops on the ground are unmatched in a vehicle of this size.”

● Boffins behind battle – pages 36-37

Santa serves British soldiers

THOUSANDS of troops spending Christmas away from their families will receive festive gift boxes courtesy of uk4u Thanks.

Some 22,000 packages are winging their way to deployed Armed Forces personnel across the world.

The charity will promote its 2012 box on December 4 with the help of the Royal Marines Commando Display Team and television personality Lorraine Kelly, although the full contents of the parcels will remain a mystery until they are opened on Christmas Day.

uk4u Thanks is one of four organisations that the Ministry of Defence encourages the public to support rather than sending unsolicited mail into operational theatres.





“THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE CHEERING AND FAMILIES ASKING FOR PICTURES OUTSHINE TALK OF REDUNDANCIES”

- TROOPS REFLECT ON HIGHS AND LOWS OF 2012, PAGE 90

FESTIVE CALENDAR CLUB

■ WITH 2013 just around the corner, the latest crop of fund-raising calendars from the Forces community have hit the shelves in time for Christmas.

Proving that charity really does begin at home, models of all ages have been striking a pose in the name of various military causes.

Children's charity My Daddy is a Soldier Adventures has compiled a heart-warming collection of images called the *Little Troopers' Me and My Soldier* calendar.

Army families based around the world entered their snaps into a competition to star in the publication, with the 12 most poignant pictures selected to illustrate each month.

Priced at £9.99, proceeds will help the organisation support the children of deployed personnel.

Elsewhere, Service wives and girlfriends have once again dared to bare all for the greater good.

Among them are the Garrison Girls, who hope their 2013 effort will boost their mission to raise £5 million for Armed Forces personnel suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Incorporating military elements into sensual photography, the creative collection costs £10 and is available via the website www.garrisongirls.com

The 11 members of the British Legionettes have put a racy take on various regimental uniforms in their offering, which will raise money for the ongoing Poppy Appeal.

The group's founder, Lisa Aston, is the sister-in-law of Russell Aston, one of six Royal Military Policemen killed in Iraq in 2003.

Produced as a tribute to all those who lost their lives in the service of their country, the glossy calendar is available online for a minimum donation of £10.

Orders can be made at www.thebritishlegionettes.co.uk

Seventeen ladies from Tidworth Garrison have joined forces to produce the 2013 Armed Buns calendar in aid of Combat Stress and Help for Heroes.

Tilly Lambert, who started the initiative three years ago, explained that not only would the risqué project raise money for a worthwhile cause, but taking part had given the models a much-needed morale boost while their partners were away.

“It's easy to fall into a slump and feel pretty down about yourself. So this calendar will enable the girls to say, 'I did that' and give their husbands something to be proud of,” said the Army girlfriend.

Visit www.armedbuns.com to buy the calendar, which costs £10.



Picture: Cpl Obi Igbo, RLC

Taking flight: Personnel from 16 Medical Regiment are tested on their helicopter skills

Serpent shows soldiers the way

IRBORNE medics have been training on a Royal Air Force Chinook helicopter to perfect the specialist skills needed for their role on the battlefield.

Exercise Eagles Serpent saw personnel from 16 Medical Regiment learn a number of techniques ranging from the basics of dangers caused by rotor downwash to the complexities of rigging vehicles and equipment to be carried as underslung loads.

Regimental Sergeant Major WO1 Justin Harris said: “This exercise is a great opportunity to polish up our skills of working with helicopters as we get

back to our role of being ready to deploy on contingency operations.

“Using airframes to move casualties or medical equipment quickly could save someone's life, but the first thing to perfect is being able to do it safely. To get under a Chinook is the exciting bit at the end of a week of solid learning.”

Pte Stevie Peters added: “This is all new to me and the skills we are developing are very important.

“There are lots of safety precautions to think about – the downwash from rotors, heat thrown out from the exhausts and static electricity – and it really keeps you on your toes.”

LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN		
SWAG	FORCE FOR GOOD	QUIDS IN
£100,000	MONEY, MONEY, MONEY Staff at The Money Shop organised a host of fund-raising events including charity balls, mountain climbs, skydives and quiz nights. Collections have been made in stores across the UK, with Help for Heroes merchandise also being sold.	Help for Heroes
£34,000	BOXING FOR BUCKS Fighters from the Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force stepped into the ring during a gentlemen's black-tie boxing evening at the Home on the Hill in Richmond. Cash raised at the sold-out sporting event will help to fund nursing and therapeutic care for injured Servicemen and women.	The Royal Star and Garter Homes
£5,085	BAGS OF RESPECT A generous group of 12 soldiers from Cambrai Troop, 206 Signal Squadron, 3rd (UK) Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment spent four days packing bags for kind-hearted shoppers who then donated to the cause at supermarkets in the Tidworth and Bulford area.	ABF The Soldiers' Charity



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TAKING THE TOP TO TASK

■ SENIOR warrant officers have met with the chief of the defence staff to discuss the issues causing troops most concern on the front line.

Gen Sir David Richards set up the tri-Service forum a year ago to hear about problems and gauge morale first-hand.

Among the topics raised at the third gathering (pictured above) were Service conditions, manpower, allowances, Future Reserves 2020 and the Armed Forces Covenant.

Speaking after the meeting, the senior officer said: "I attach the utmost importance to the opportunity I have to speak directly to the Service command warrant officers.

"My discussions assist me in applying pressure to improve the way we look after our people in the future."

WO1 Vern Stokes (Coldm Gds), academy sergeant major of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, said the meetings put him in a "unique and privileged" position.

"I can relay fears and issues to the highest level and get honest, instant and current feedback, which I pass on to regimental sergeant majors to disseminate through their chain of command," he added.



Picture: Cpl Andy Reddy, RLC

Girl power: The Army has been commended for its commitment to employing more women

Strides for Servicewomen

THE British Army has been rated one of the best in the public sector for female employment.

A gender and race diversity survey conducted by UK charity Business in the Community ranked the Service among the top ten public sector organisations.

The Royal Navy also featured in the list, while the Royal Air Force and Ministry of Defence were considered to be among the most ethnically diverse.

Carried out annually since 1998, the study scores public and private sector bodies on their diversity processes and policies, as well as the impact of those measures.

Maj Nikki Worsley (RA), SO2 capability development at Army Headquarters, compiled the Service's submission.

She welcomed the result but said there was still work to do to boost the number of female soldiers.

"This is great news but we can't pat ourselves on the back yet," explained the officer.

"There are lots of areas we still have to address such as flexibility in working hours, which is one of the main reasons women leave."

"The ideal would be giving troops the option to reduce hours and take a salary drop but that's not possible in the Army at the moment."

"We also don't have many females at the higher levels."

"Other companies have quotas but we don't want to go down that route. We can't just recruit a female brigadier, it takes 24 years or more to develop one."

At around eight per cent, the Army still has a very low percentage of women employees in comparison to other organisations. However, it was the Service's approach to improving this figure which meant it scored highly in the survey.

"We are taking action," Maj Worsley added.

"For example, we've appointed a general as a gender advocate and we have shown that we are addressing our shortcomings."

Helen Wells, director of the charity's equality campaign, said that she wasn't surprised to see institutions traditionally considered to be male environments among the top ten.

"Sometimes you can look from outside and make assumptions about what it feels like to be in an organisation but a lot of them are trying to create cultures that really make diversity part of the mainstream," she added.

Other bodies commended for their commitment to employing females included the Crown Prosecution Service, Genesis, HM Revenue and Customs, the Home Office, Leicestershire Police, Ofcom and the Ministry of Justice.

Picture: Eddie Slobart

LOOKING FOR LOGGIES

■ AN initiative to help Service leavers into the civilian logistics sector has been launched by the government.

Funded until March 2013 and delivered by the Skills for Logistics organisation, the military work placement scheme will offer personnel two-week internships with commercial companies.

Various positions are available across the UK at different levels, including drivers, warehouse operatives, supply chain managers and fleet coordinators.

There is no training cost to the individual but leavers are advised to check their entitlement to travel and subsistence with their regional resettlement centre. For more information visit www.skillsforlogistics.org



“THIS IS ABOUT INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY”

- BLOODHOUND GANG DOGGEDLY PURSUE RECORD, PAGES 30-32



Medal in a haystack: How the honour got from Berlin to Afghanistan remains a mystery

Bazaar decoration discovery

A FORMER lance corporal has been reunited with his service medal 13 years after it went missing following a surprise discovery at an Afghan marketplace.

Mick France, who served with the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, got the decoration back after being contacted via social media.

“My girlfriend logged into an account on Facebook that I never check and found my platoon sergeant in Berlin had been in touch and wanted me to call him,” the 39-year-old (pictured below) said. “I obliged as he always had something stupid to say to me.

“On speaking to him I was amazed to hear that my Northern Ireland service medal had been found at a bazaar in Afghanistan – a place I never went with my regiment.”

The honour was unearthed by Stan Bates, a British police superintendent who had been working as a civilian adviser to his



counterparts in Helmand province.

“I regularly trawl the local bazaars in Kabul where India general service medals are not uncommon,” Bates explained. “However, this item was engraved with Mick’s name and unit and obviously had a story to tell.

“Having bartered the price down, I purchased it and contacted the regimental museum.”

France, who is still baffled about how the medal came to be in the Middle East, was presented with the decoration for a second time at a ceremony at The Duke of Lancaster’s Regiment headquarters in Preston.

“I probably last saw it in Berlin and can only assume someone borrowed it and never returned it,” said the veteran, who left the Army in 1999. “I’ve had to apologise to my mum; for years I’ve accused her of losing my medal. It’s fantastic to have it back.”

WIN

007 FANS need not

have gone undercover to crack the clues to last month’s spine lines competition. Inspired by our

Skyfall review, the names on the side of the issue had a musical link to the world-famous Bond movies.

(Carly) Simon, (Sheena) Easton, (Tina) Turner and current chart-buster (Adele) Adkins have all released songs (*Nobody Does it Better*, *For Your Eyes Only*, *GoldenEye* and *Skyfall* respectively) which have come to be widely associated with the British institution.

This month we are giving away ten pairs of tickets to The Telegraph Adventure Travel Show in London.

The event at Olympia on January 26

and 27 is aimed at those who like to venture outside the mainstream. So who better to attend than soldiers?

Featuring travel advice, photography and writing seminars and talks from explorers and television adventurers, the showcase will cover everything from trekking to safaris, overland trips and volunteering projects.

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets, tell us what links the words on the side of this magazine.

Answers, plus your postal address, to the usual place or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by December 31.

Readers can also enjoy a reduced price advance ticket to the show for £6. Visit www.adventureshow.com to book a place and quote “Soldier” when ordering.

APP ASSISTANCE

■ A NEW app offering guidance on how to use the JPA system is available for download by troops.

The tool, for iPhone and Android devices, includes advice on updating emergency contacts, applying for leave, claiming refunds for subsistence and completing appraisals. Visit www.forcesgateway.mod.uk



PLEA TO PICK UP PEN

■ CHARITY Words for the Wounded is urging aspiring writers to put pen to paper to help raise money for injured troops.

The organisation will donate all the proceeds from its first writing competition to the rehabilitation of personnel.

Backed by Oscar winning screenwriter and *Downton Abbey* creator Julian Fellowes, the contest is open to all ages and abilities.

Submissions can be poetry or prose but must be no longer than 400 words. Entry costs £3.50 and the deadline is March 11.

For further information on the contest visit www.wordsforthewounded.co.uk

SUPPORT FOR SINGLES

■ A SURVIVAL guide for single Service personnel has been launched by British Forces Germany.

The publication is designed to help unmarried soldiers get the most out of a posting to the European country and includes key facts about local support organisations, community groups and finance arrangements.

Hard copies will be distributed through HIVE information centres and the booklet made available to download via www.bfgnet.de/hive-europe

DINNER DEBATE

■ PERSONNEL are again being asked for their views on the pay as you dine system to help guide future contract decisions.

A rerun and extension of the 2007 survey is available on ArmyNet and the Army Knowledge Exchange throughout December.

...A pair of adventure travel show tickets





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TROOPS LAY GOLDEN EGG

SAPPERS from 21 Engineer Regiment have replaced an important bridge to assist the local population of Nahr-e Saraj in Helmand province.

Known as Golden Egg, the structure links the main highways and local communities within the city of Gereshk and helps the Afghan National Army (ANA) maintain communication networks.

The original crossing was destroyed by enemy forces and Danish troops were called upon to install a temporary replacement.

Based on a simple design, the permanent bridge erected by the Royal Engineers can be easily maintained by Afghan tradesmen using local materials.

It is also overlooked by an ANA checkpoint and has additional measures in place to prevent insurgents from targeting it.

Team commander Lt Henry Morton said the installation reflected an enduring Afghan solution that would “last for years once Isaf forces have left”.



Soldiers pass French test as alliance progresses

AIRBORNE forces from Britain and France have taken part in training serials to simulate how they would operate on a joint mission.

Exercise Citadel Guibert, which was staged in Reims, saw headquarters staff working side-by-side on an operation to stabilise a region troubled by international disputes, terrorism and humanitarian problems.

The venture was an important step in developing the relationship between 16 Air Assault Brigade and 11e Brigade Parachutiste, which are at the forefront of a closer military alliance between the two countries.

Both formations provide rapid reaction forces that stand at high readiness to deploy anywhere in



Picture: Daily Mirror Pride of Britain Awards

Proud to serve: Cpl Carl Taylor receives his award from Myleene Klass and John Bishop

Battlefield bravery draws high praise

THE courage and dedication of Cpl Carl Taylor (3 Mercian) has received national recognition at the *Daily Mirror's* Pride of Britain Awards.

A host of celebrities saw the soldier honoured for his act of bravery in Helmand province, where he dashed through enemy fire to save three children who had become separated from their mothers during a Taliban attack.

The section commander was on patrol in the village of Pupalzay when his formation was targeted by the enemy.

As the Servicemen took cover they found two terrified women whose sons had become isolated from their parents during the fighting.

Thinking nothing for his safety, Cpl Taylor ran through incoming fire to help the boys and picked up one of the

children before dashing back. He then returned with Capt James Cook to rescue the other two youngsters.

“I saw them and I didn't have a lot of time to think about it; instinct took over and it just went from there really,” Cpl Taylor said.

“Afterwards I thought about it properly and realised it could have been a bit close. You don't really get time to think about individual moments as you are out there for such a long time. When put in that situation I would like to think anyone would do the right thing.”

The NCO was presented with the outstanding bravery award by comedian John Bishop and television personality Myleene Klass at last month's ceremony.

He received the Military Cross earlier this year.



the world and have been tasked to develop an intermediate combined joint expeditionary force for contingency operations.

Work could range from disaster relief to war fighting and they should

be ready to deploy from spring 2013.

Col Jacko Jackson, deputy commander of the UK formation, said: “It is the first time we have done combined planning with 11e BP and practically demonstrated our joint capability for missions.

“It has been a challenge to understand each other's methods but we are realising where the common points are and developing personal relationships to smooth the process.”

Col Xavier Vanden Neste, deputy commander of 11e BP, added: “We are the leaders in the relationship between our two countries' militaries and, after a year of hard work, we will soon be ready to go on operational deployments together.”



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Picture: Steve Duck

Team players: Maj Gen Ranald Munro believes Territorial Army soldiers will become an integral part of the country's overall Force

Reservists 'require society's support'

THE country's relationship with its Armed Forces must change if plans set out under Future Reserves 2020 are to be realised, according to the Territorial Army's most senior officer.

The newly appointed Deputy Commander Land Forces, Maj Gen Ranald Munro, said shifts in culture, legislation and finance would be critical to delivering measures outlined in the green paper (page 7), which recommends an increase in TA numbers and allocated training days.

"Society must understand that it is contributing to defence," the officer (pictured right) told *Soldier*. "We all have to play our part and we need to explain that we're doing things differently."

"For employers there will be an element of carrot and stick.

● **PERSONNEL** from 72 Engineer Regiment (Volunteers) faced a stern test of their military skills during their annual training camp in Sennelager.

The Reservists were joined by members of 211 Engineer Company of the US National Guard for the Germany-based exercise, which featured a range of tasks such as bridging, demolitions and installing water supplies.

The American sappers were integrated into sections and participated in all aspects of the training serials.

Members of the UK regiment's light aid detachment were also given a hands-on role in a functioning vehicle workshop, where they helped take platform availability from 32 to 70 per cent.

"We want a situation where it is positive for firms to hire Reservists, where they will gain benefits in terms of training or financial incentives."

In order to increase public understanding of the TA's role, Maj Gen Munro suggested Britain could follow the example of coalition partners whose volunteers make up a major portion of the overall force.

"We're looking at the US, Canada and Australia, who are further down the line in terms of the size of their Reserve component," he explained. "When they deploy they take these soldiers with them because they're an integral part of the army."

As well as changing the nation's mindset towards its military, the officer

said serving personnel will need to adapt. "Regular culture has to change," he continued. "If the Army wants to deploy it has to take the Reserves

so we need to recruit in the right numbers and then train and integrate with them appropriately."

Conceding that the planned increase of the TA to 30,000 by 2018 was a significant challenge, he said units should look to attract new members early and believes ex-Regulars should be welcomed into the fold.

"Evidence suggests that people leave and after about 18 months or two years they want to reconnect with the military," Maj Gen Munro added. "It's our job to make that as painless as possible."



Mercians shine on Viking Star

PART-TIME troops have been training alongside foreign counterparts on Exercise Viking Star in Denmark to prepare for future operations.

The drills primed personnel from 4th Battalion, The Mercian Regiment for their upcoming deployment to Uganda, where they are set to instruct the country's army ahead of its United Nations tour of Somalia.

The joint serials also served to put a company of the unit's Reservists through their paces ahead of a six-month mission on Op Tosca in Cyprus.

Speaking about the value of working alongside foreign troops, Brig Gerhard Wheeler, commander of 143 (West Midlands) Brigade, said: "It helps retain



TA soldiers because they get to take part in challenging exercises overseas and it also allows them to develop as a force." Tpr Jack Fitter added: "Anyone thinking about joining the Reserves will realise that it's nothing like Dad's Army these days. We are now doing exactly the same as the Regulars, if not more."

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IN MEMORIAM



CPL CHANNING DAY (25)
3 MEDICAL REGIMENT,
ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS
KIA OCTOBER 24 – AFGHANISTAN



CPL DAVID O'CONNOR (27)
40 COMMANDO,
ROYAL MARINES
KIA OCTOBER 24 – AFGHANISTAN



LT EDWARD DRUMMOND-BAXTER (29)
1ST BATTALION,
THE ROYAL GURKHA RIFLES
KIA OCTOBER 30 – AFGHANISTAN



LCPL SIDDHANTA KUNWAR (28)
1ST BATTALION,
THE ROYAL GURKHA RIFLES
KIA OCTOBER 30 – AFGHANISTAN

A FEMALE Army medic was killed alongside a Royal Marine when their patrol came under small arms fire in Helmand province.

Cpl Channing Day, of 3 Medical Regiment, and Cpl David O'Connor, from 40 Commando, were shot near Char Kutsa in the Nahr-e Saraj district.

The 25-year-old Servicewoman joined the Army in 2005 and successfully passed her class one combat medical technician course two years later before being posted to her unit.

She deployed to Afghanistan in October with the UK Medical Group, based at Patrol Base One, where she provided support to 40 Cdo.

Lt Col Phillip de Rouffignac, commanding officer of 3 Med Regt, said: "Cpl Channing Day was a star for the future."

"Diligent in every respect of her preparation, she had worked hard all the way through the build-up training and led by example in all that she did."

"Hugely popular with her friends in Preston, Catterick and in southern Afghanistan, she made the most of everything and had lived a lifetime in a short period."

Cpl Day is survived by her parents, two sisters and brother.

In a tribute to the talented sportswoman, her family said: "Channing was bubbly, sporty, beautiful and lived her life for the British Army."

"She died doing what she lived for and in the life that she loved."

"Channing played football for Northern Ireland, as well as ice hockey, and gained her qualification as a ski instructor through the Army."

"She was also the Northern Ireland gymnastics pairs champion."

"A girl who lived her life to the full without ever giving up on her dreams."

Cpl O'Connor passed for duty as a Royal Marines Commando in January 2003 and first deployed to Afghanistan in 2007.

In 2009, the 27-year-old returned to Helmand province to operate in the volatile area of Sangin, where his bravery earned him a Commander Joint Operations' Commendation.

After completing the Royal Marines junior command course, Cpl O'Connor deployed on his third Herrick tour as a section commander with the Transition Support Unit in Nahr-e Saraj.

Lt Col Matt Jackson, commanding officer of 40 Cdo, said: "Dave O'Connor was one of the best; he was loved and respected by those around him and was relentless in the pursuit of excellence in his duties."

"Utterly professional, his four operational tours of Iraq and Afghanistan marked him as one of the most devoted individuals in the commando."

"Brave, committed and humorous, it is difficult to find words that can possibly fill the void which has been left by this truly excellent junior commander; his loss is difficult to comprehend."

Maj Chris Hall added: "Dave's cutting, self-deprecating wit, easy-going manner and endearing personality will never be forgotten by all those who had the privilege and pleasure to have met and worked with him."

"He fell protecting his men, doing the job he adored, surrounded by those who loved him."

father and sister.

A family statement said: "He loved the Gurkhas and died among friends doing the job that he wanted to do."

LCpl Kunwar passed the arduous selection for the brigade in December 2004 and, having completed his year-long infantry training, joined 1 RGR in October 2005.

He served with the battalion in Bosnia-Herzegovina before moving with his unit to Brunei, where he conducted extensive jungle training and qualified as a sniper in 2007.

The 28-year-old deployed to Afghanistan in the same year and returned for a second tour in 2010. He was operating as a sniper section commander with the Transition Support Unit in Nahr-e Saraj on Herrick 17.

Lt Col Robinson said: "Siddhanta Kunwar was a great character and a tough, professional Gurkha soldier with a proven and impressive operational record. Strong and highly experienced, he stood out from the crowd not only as an incredibly capable sniper but also for his smile and sense of fun, whatever the situation he found himself in."

"On this, his third tour of Afghanistan, he knew the dangers and understood better than most what it meant to do his job at the toughest end of soldiering. As such, he was a role model for the younger soldiers around him."

The Serviceman leaves behind his father, stepmother, four sisters and brother.

In a tribute his family said: "We shall treasure all the good things he did in life. He has made us all so proud."

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IN MEMORIAM



CAPT WALTER BARRIE (41)

1ST BATTALION,

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND
DIED NOVEMBER 11 – AFGHANISTAN

SOLDIERS from 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland are mourning the loss of a colleague killed in Helmand province on Remembrance Sunday.

Capt Walter Barrie was taking part in a football match between British and Afghan troops at FOB Shawqat when he was shot at close range by a member of the Afghan National Army.

During a long and successful military career, the 41-year-old served on operations in Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Northern Ireland, as well as completing a tour of Afghanistan in 2008.

A talented NCO, he was selected to be an instructor at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. In 2007 he became the regimental sergeant major of 2 Scots and he commissioned

as an officer in 2009.

His subsequent posting to D Company, 1 Scots placed him at the heart of the battalion's role as the Brigade Advisory Group, mentoring ANA soldiers on Herrick 17.

In paying tribute to Capt Barrie, his commanding officer, Lt Col Benjamin Wrench, said: "He was an experienced and highly professional infantryman. As a fellow officer he was a loyal, enthusiastic leader of soldiers and supportive brother officer. It is almost impossible to express the sadness we as a close battalion are experiencing at this time."

Capt Barrie leaves behind his son and wife, who described him as "a great man, a doting and amazing father and a fantastic husband".

MANSELL REMEMBERED

■ TRIBUTES have been paid to popular BFBS Radio presenter Glen Mansell, who died of cancer at the age of 56.

The broadcaster, a familiar figure to many in the military community, joined the station in the 1980s after serving as a technician in the Royal Air Force.

His distinguished career saw him transmitting from Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf War and later fronting *Calling the Balkans*, which connected families with loved ones serving in the former Yugoslavia.

Having moved to BFBS Radio 2 in 2002, Mansell spent the last four years managing the service's output in the Falklands.

"Glen's immense courage and determination was inspirational and his skill on-air something much admired by his colleagues; the voice of wisdom and a guiding influence within the organisation," said BFBS controller Nicky Ness.

"The station has lost a special colleague and outstanding broadcaster, the Forces audience a true friend."



TARTAN FOR HEROES

■ TEXTILE specialists Lochcarron of Scotland have showed their support for the military community by launching a new tartan.

The design blends the colours of the three Armed Forces and for every product sold, ten per cent of the price will be donated to Help for Heroes. To view the range visit www.lochcarron.com

ESSEX SHOWS SUPPORT

■ THE county of Essex has given its backing to the military by signing one of the largest ever Armed Forces covenant pledges made by the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Representatives from a number of organisations and authorities put their signatures on the document during a ceremony in Chelmsford.

Essex County Councillor Derrick Louis said: "It is our duty to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of our Armed Forces, including the country's dedicated Servicemen and women, their families and veterans."

Picture: Steve Dook



Force for good: Maj Baz Melia (Rifles) with Jillian and Phillip Orme at the Sandes centre

Soldiers strive to save Sandes

PIRBRIGHT-based personnel are raising money to secure the future of a much-loved welfare institution.

Built more than 60 years ago, the Sandes Soldiers' and Airmen's Centre is showing its age, with upgrades to the roof, windows and heating overdue.

Used by an average of 2,000 staff and recruits every week, the facility provides a space for Servicemen and women to unwind during breaks or in the evenings.

The centre is one of several run by the organisation in the UK and is managed by husband and wife team Jillian and Phillip Orme.

"Sandes has been a Christian mission to the Army since 1869," explained Mr Orme. "The original vision was to give troops somewhere to go. Sometimes it's just small things, like helping soldiers with homesickness.

"People come in, have a cup of tea and a chat and go away feeling better.

We see it as our calling and we get so much reward from it."

So far, the community has raised £225,000 through a combination of grants and fund-raising events, but another £90,000 is needed to make the refurbishment possible.

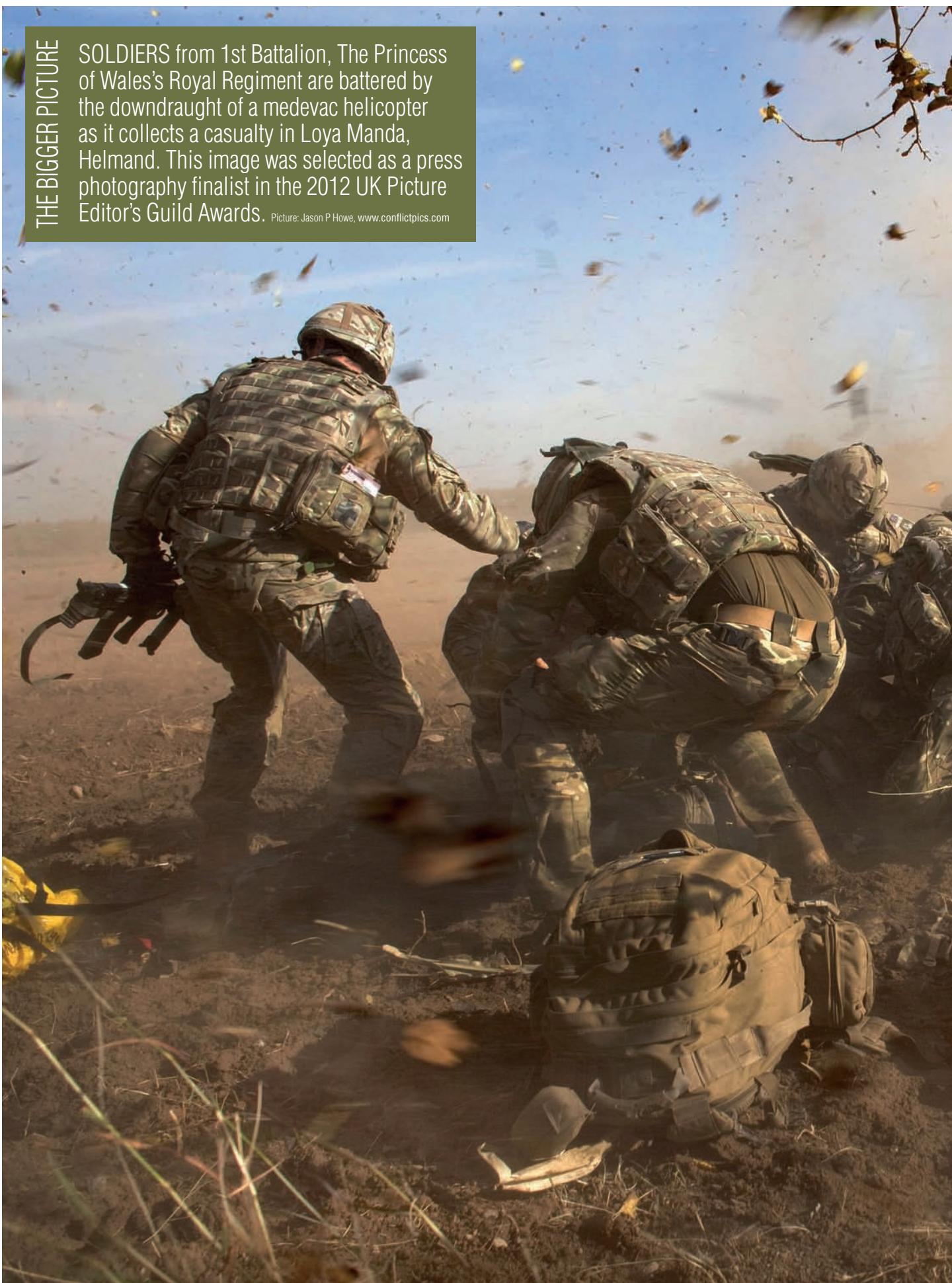
Maj Baz Melia (Rifles) said the institution plays a vital role at Pirbright.

"With Sandes you can literally see where every penny of your money goes," he explained. "There are tangible benefits. Basic training can be hard but they provide someone to talk to who is outside the military.

"They offer a friendly relaxing environment that helps retain recruits and takes the pressure off the welfare teams. We think of them very much as Force multipliers."

To support the campaign to renovate the Sandes centre visit www.bmycharity.com/friendsofsandes

SOLDIERS from 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment are battered by the downdraught of a medevac helicopter as it collects a casualty in Loya Manda, Helmand. This image was selected as a press photography finalist in the 2012 UK Picture Editor's Guild Awards. Picture: Jason P Howe, www.conflictpics.com





Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

WHEN ground troops find themselves in trouble on the front lines of Helmand province they have the reassurance of knowing that help is invariably close at hand.

While Apache helicopters are often called upon to neutralise enemy threats, the Royal Air Force play an equally important role with their impressive fleet of fast air jets.

These fearsome aerial assets fly out of Kandahar and although the pilots and support crew are based well outside Army circles, they have direct access to all things green courtesy of skilled ground liaison officers (GLO) who are embedded within their squadrons.

Such personnel act as a link between the two Services to ensure those in the air have a clear understanding of the situation below.

"Our role is about taking everything that is happening on the ground and translating that into basic speak for the aircrew," Capt James Perring (1 R Anglian) told *Soldier* during the Tornado force's War Week exercise at RAF Marham.

"They have no idea about the situation on the ground so we talk them through the process. I get involved with anything that is Army related.

"We are trying to give as much information as possible so when they are up in the sky they know where people are and what is going on."

Capt Perring is now on a four-month deployment with 9 Squadron in Afghanistan and the Serviceman was quick to highlight the differences between his roles with the RAF and Army.

He explained: "GLO is a posting I applied for

and is something completely different. I had no idea or appreciation of how air assets work so it has given me great insight.

"This is going to be an interesting tour and in a way I will have a greater understanding of the bigger picture in Afghanistan compared to spending six months on foot.

"Working with the RAF has been a bit of a culture shock.

"Sometimes the bureaucracy can be frustrating but it works for them and it is like that for a reason. It has been hard to adjust but there are positives to take."

Capt Perring was not the only soldier involved in War Week. Maj Jeremy Higgins (RA), a Reservist who is a director for Cross Country Trains, was also on hand to offer expert advice and guidance from an Army perspective.

**IT IS ABOUT TAKING
EVERYTHING THAT
IS HAPPENING ON
THE GROUND AND
TRANSLATING THAT
INTO BASIC SPEAK
FOR THE AIRCREW,**



The exercise is designed to test personnel on the scenarios they are likely to face in theatre and the officer was determined to add as much realism as possible.

"We are trying to ensure the aircrew get the training they need ahead of the deployment, while tying in with other agencies such as forward air controllers," Maj Higgins said.

"It is about orchestrating different elements in the air and on the ground so when the jets go out they get the training they require."

"We will be talking to troops in the field beforehand, asking what they need and what they are trying to achieve."

"The aircrew also highlight the areas they want to work on, such as night missions, and the soldiers come up with different scenarios for them."

"Effectively we have two serials feeding into one another."

While there is a close link between the two forces, GLOs are mindful of not overloading their

airborne colleagues with unfamiliar Army tactics and thought processes.

And it is not just UK personnel who benefit from the support offered by the Tornado crews.

"It can be quite challenging as we cover the whole of Afghanistan and can be allocated anywhere," Maj Higgins explained.

"It is an international role and we have to get information from soldiers who do not have English as their first language."

"We give the aircrews some situational awareness and that can be quite important due to the various forces we work with. They have different kit, depending on what they are doing, so a footprint of life on the ground is vital."

"A Toyota Hilux with guys in the back could be perceived as being the enemy, but it may also be local allies."

"Our role is about adding value in any way we can. We may be asked simple questions or ones that completely floor us. We interact with land

troops to get a picture of what they want from the fast air jets."

The demand for aerial assets is inevitably strong as soldiers maintain the Army's operational tempo and such requests mean the RAF are on high alert during the training cycle.

Sqn Ldr Lisa Foy, the acting officer in command of RAF Marham's operations wing, said: "There is always more demand than we can meet but we strive to match the requirements from Land whenever possible."

"We want to benefit the personnel on exercise while training the Tornado crews as well. We recognise that the Force needs to train with soldiers and War Week is the perfect opportunity to do that."

"A lot of 9 Squadron's training during this phase has been provided by the Army and GLOs are critical in bringing everything together."

"Our expertise is in the air and these guys form a crucial link with the ground." ■

TALKING TO THE TORNADOS

SOLDIERS OFFER ARMY EXPERTISE TO AFGHAN AERIAL ASSETS



Helping hands: Maj Jeremy Higgins (RA, left) and Capt James Perring (1 R Anglian) join the Tornado force for the War Week exercise at RAF Marham



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Reclaims UK is working closely with the Armed Forces to help give back to our British soldiers. Reclaims UK recently sponsored The Royal Artillery Gold Cup Day at Sandown Park and we are working closely with various charities to help raise awareness.



Mr & Mrs Allen (39 Regt RA) presenting the Winners Trophy at the Royal Artillery Gold Cup

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As sponsors of the Royal Artillery Gold Cup Day at Sandown Park on Friday 17th February 2012, we were able to invite the two couples as our guests on the day. It was a fantastic day where they were able to choose the best turned out horse and given the opportunity to go up into the Royal Box and watch our race. The day was a huge success and is a superb event organised by Major General Andrew Ritchie, Chairman of the Royal Artillery Steeplechase Committee, and we hope to continue our support for the event again next year.

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Reclaims UK has visited several UK and German based regiments in the last 12 months and our campaign to raise awareness of mis-sold PPI and claim back money for soldiers has been an ever growing success. If you feel that you or someone you may know may have paid PPI please get in touch today. You can call our freephone number, e-mail or fill out a contact form online. It's a hassle free process that can only benefit you. This is the biggest financial scandal in history and we are here to help.

Reclaims UK has helped claim back over £400,000 for British Armed Forces. There are still thousands of personnel out there that do not know they have PPI and could be entitled to thousands of pounds in repayments and compensation. Call Reclaims UK today to see if you have a claim.

**To make your claim contact us on:
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Reclaims UK
YOUR CLAIM IN THE SAFEST HANDS

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures Graeme Main

FROM entering dangerous conflict zones on operations to scaling uncharted mountains during adventurous training, the British Army is famed for succeeding in unknown territories.

But its latest venture helping to build, develop and maintain a 1,000mph vehicle – powered by a jet engine and a rocket – is one of the more audacious projects for Service personnel to be tasked with.

After a rigorous selection process a team of five soldiers from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers have been chosen to work on the Bloodhound supersonic car initiative, which aims to break the land speed record while inspiring a new generation of technicians, designers and mathematicians.

Project director Richard Noble, himself a former holder of the land speed record with Thrust 2, spoke excitedly to *Soldier* about the ambitious mission.

"It is absolutely terrific to have Army guys on-board," said the pace-ace.

"What we are doing here is building a very high performance vehicle that is effectively a jet fighter on steroids – it will go 200mph faster than the Eurofighter aircraft and it's on the floor."

The idea for Bloodhound was borne from a discussion between Mr Noble and the former minister of science, in which the politician explained there was a shortage of UK engineers due to the lack of inspiring projects to capture the nation's imagination.

"In the past there wasn't a problem because designers and scientists were pushing the boundaries of what was

ENGINEERING HISTORY

REME TROOPS HELP TO CREATE THE WORLD'S FIRST 1,000MPH CAR



possible," said Mr Noble.

"When Britain moved away from that sort of thing, youngsters became interested in other areas.

"So we decided to create a massive programme to get schools and kids involved. Can we go supersonic in 2013? Only time will tell."

The simple idea is that quick objects,

loud bangs and extraordinarily daring feats excite people, particularly the country's schoolchildren.

Therefore, a vehicle travelling faster over land than anything in history, powered by an EJ200 jet from a Typhoon fighter, a hybrid rocket and a Cosworth Formula One engine, should tick the right boxes.

The team behind the dart-like supercar is made up of some of the world's most sought after engineering brains from aerodynamicists to aeronautical experts.

However, Service personnel have not been brought in to make up the numbers.

They will provide expert knowledge of working with extreme attention to detail under high pressure and in potentially dangerous circumstances.

Speaking ahead of the test firing of the

BLOODHOUND SPECIFICATION:

LENGTH	13.47 METRES	44'
MAX. HEIGHT	3 METRES	9' 2"
WHEELS DIAMETER	0.915 METRES	36"
TURNING RADIUS	120 METRES	394'
CAR MASS (FULLY FUELLED)	7,786 KG	17,165LB





FLAMING FORCE: BLOODHOUND'S HYBRID ROCKET PRODUCED 14,000LBS OF THRUST

car's Falcon rocket at Newquay Aerohub, WO2 Mark Edwin (REME) said: "When someone told me there was a chance to get involved with this my jaw dropped and my hand went up straight away – to me the whole thing is simply phenomenal."

"I'm an avionic technician by trade, working with Army helicopters, which will undoubtedly help. This is a machine that will travel at 1,000mph so I'll be assisting with the various aviation safety elements."

"The plan is to build a car to move at an incredible speed and hopefully with our different skill sets we can bring that to fruition."

Maj Oli Morgan (REME), Army team manager, added: "The idea is that through our operational experience we have a best practice that suits maintaining and



BLAST OFF: THE ROCKET WILL ACCELERATE AT A FORCE OF UP TO 2G TO REACH 1,000MPH

supporting aircraft and that's vital in terms of keeping safe."

"What we're doing here is unique and it's completely unknown whether we can reach our aim but we believe we can do it."

The event in the quiet countryside of Cornwall saw the Bloodhound crew ignite the largest rocket of its kind ever designed in Europe and the biggest fired in the UK for two decades.

During the test the engine burned for ten seconds, creating 14,000lbs of thrust – equivalent to 30-40,000hp and generating 185 dbs of noise.

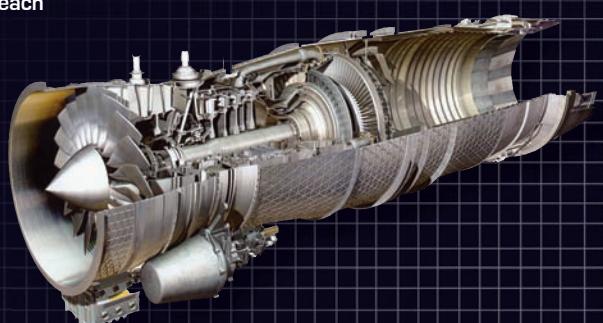
Speaking after the successful experiment, LCpl Graham Sargeant (REME) said: "There were a lot of

moving parts with the Cosworth engine working at 17,600rpm and it was our job to anchor it to the floor."

"This is precision engineering so we can't have it shifting around."

In the coming months the team will assemble the car at its technical centre in Bristol, prior to undertaking further tests and travelling to South Africa for the record attempt.

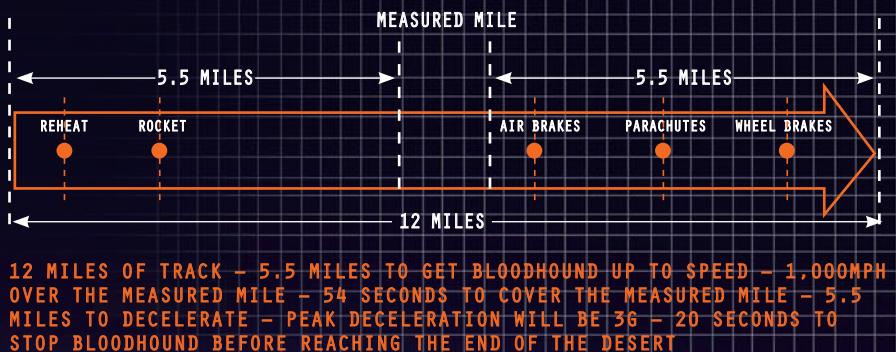
Putting the process of taking a four-wheeled machine from zero to 1,000mph into layman's terms, Bloodhound's chief engineer Mark Chapman said: "We'll take the vehicle from stationary to 350mph using just the EJ200 jet engine on full power. >>



TYPHOON TECHNOLOGY: THE EJ200 IS THE MOST ADVANCED JET IN THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AND ALONE WILL POWER THE CAR TO 650MPH

HOW THE RECORD ATTEMPT WILL UNFOLD:

1. Driver Wg Cdr Andy Green will accelerate using 20,200lbf of thrust from the EJ200 jet to reach 350mph
2. He will then use the hybrid Falcon rocket to provide a further 27,500lbf at peak power
3. The Royal Air Force man will aim to enter the measured mile in the middle of the course at 1,000mph and hold that speed all the way through the set distance
4. On exiting the mile the driver will close down both engines
5. Air brakes will be deployed at 800mph and there will be an option for a parachute at 700mph
6. Wheel brakes can be used for final stopping from about 200mph





SPEED SCIENCE: THE BLOODHOUND PROGRAMME AIMS TO INSPIRE A NEW GENERATION OF ENGINEERS AND PROVIDE AN ICONIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME WITH STUDENT ACCESS

"Then the Cosworth engine will be revved to 18,000 rpm, which will power oxygen through the rocket.

"The contraption will ignite and with the jet and rocket at full power, the car will race towards 1,000mph."

The aerospace boffin added: "The process for getting the car up to maximum speed is quite simple; it's not rocket science – although it actually is."

The daredevil taking on the challenge of driving a measured mile in 3.6 seconds happens to be the only man in history to have driven through the supersonic barrier.

That person is the Royal Air Force's Wg Cdr Andy Green, who reached 763mph in 1997 with the Thrust supersonic car.

With all going to schedule, the fighter pilot will get behind the steering wheel of the vehicle in September next year for the record attempt at Hakskeen Pan in South Africa.

"It is 3km wide and 20km long and 300 people have hand-cleared 6,000 tonnes of stones to create the world's best



ANDY GREEN

racetrack," said Wg Cdr Green.

"It's been the most heroic effort from those working on the track and they've done it because they realise the benefits to their country."

In response to the simple question of 'why attempt 1,000mph?' the 50-year-old added: "This is about promoting Britain on a global stage.

"We've got a huge amount to be proud of and it's not good enough to stop discussing our country now the Olympic Games are over – this initiative will keep us talking.

"There aren't many iconic engineering projects out there at the moment and this is about inspiring the next generation in science and technology."

With open access to all project data, anyone from five-year-old schoolchildren to mathematics aficionados can take what they want from the mission.

Aided by the Army, the Bloodhound team is on track to take the land speed record and spark a new hunger for innovation among the British population. ■

BLOODHOUND: THE VITAL STATS

70



THE WORLD LAND SPEED RECORD HAS BEEN A LONG-TERM BRITISH SUCCESS WITH THE UK HAVING HELD IT FOR 70 OF THE 112 YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE

180 x



THE THREE POWER UNITS FOR THE VEHICLE WILL GENERATE THE EQUIVALENT DRIVE OF 180 FORMULA ONE CARS



AT FULL SPEED THE BLOODHOUND WILL COVER ONE MILE IN 3.6 SECONDS – THAT'S 4.5 FOOTBALL PITCHES PER SECOND

10,200



AT 1,000MPH THE ALUMINIUM WHEELS ON THE BLOODHOUND WILL BE ROTATING AT 10,200RPM

THE RULES:

TO BREAK THE LAND SPEED RECORD THE BLOODHOUND MUST COMPLETE TWO RUNS IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS WITHIN ONE HOUR. THE CAR HAS 60 MINUTES FROM ENTERING THE MEASURED MILE ON THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO LEAVING THE SAME MILE TRAVELLING IN THE OTHER DIRECTION ON ITS SECOND LEG



**The partners who grieve,
The injured who suffer,
The families who struggle,
The veterans who remember,
The aircrew who fly,
The children who wait,
The homeless who shiver,
The seamen who sail,
The unemployed who despair,
The soldiers who fight,
The disabled who strive,
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ARMY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2012 CATEGORY WINNERS

BEST OVERALL IMAGE

Winner: SSgt Mark Nesbit (RLC)

PROFESSIONAL NON-OPERATIONAL VIDEO

Winner: Sgt Gary Kendall (RLC)

Runner-up: Sgt Gary Kendall

PROFESSIONAL OPERATIONAL VIDEO

Winner: Sgt Tom Robinson (RLC)

Runner-up: LCpl Georgina Coupe (RLC)

MULTIMEDIA

Winner: Cpl Andy Reddy (RLC)

Runner-up: Cpl Mike O'Neill (RLC)

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Winner: SSgt Mark Nesbit (RLC)

Runner-up: Cpl Steve Blake (RLC)

PROFESSIONAL PORTRAIT

Winner: Sgt Russ Nolan (RLC)

Runner-up: Bdr Murray Kerr (RA)

PROFESSIONAL SPORT/ADVENTURE TRAINING

Winner: Cpl Paul Morrison (RLC)

Runner-up: Cpl Kellie Williams (RLC)

PROFESSIONAL OPERATIONAL IMAGE

Winner: Cpl Steve Blake (RLC)

Runner-up: Cpl Barry Lloyd (RLC)

AMATEUR OPERATIONAL IMAGE

Winner: Capt Dave Scammell (RA)

Runner-up: WO2 Glen Hartwell (RE)

AMATEUR SPORT/ADVENTURE TRAINING

Winner: WO1 Clive Smith (RLC)

Runner-up: Cpl Si Longworth (RLC)

AMATEUR PORTRAIT

Winner: Capt Dave Scammell (RA)

Runner-up: Capt Rich Willing (9/12 L)

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Capt Dave Scammell (RA)

Runner-up: Capt Mike Claydon (RAMC)

Picture perfect: One of a portfolio of images which secured Capt Dave Scammell (RA) the amateur photographer of the year category in the 2012 Army Photographic Competition



FORCE IN FOCUS

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION SHOWCASES CAMERA CREATIVITY

Report: Becky Clark

THE diversity of life as a British soldier has been captured in this year's Army Photographic Competition.

From operational scenes to adventurous training, sport and ceremonial events, the images were taken by professional and amateur snappers from across the Service over the last 12 months.

Open to all Regular and TA personnel as well as cadets and civil servants working for the Army, the contest required entrants to show both creativity and technical proficiency in their work.

The 12 winners (listed left) were announced by the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Peter Wall, at a ceremony at the Imperial War Museum.

Speaking after being named professional photographer of the year, SSgt Mark Nesbit (RLC) said: "I am very happy to be recognised for my photographic efforts. Having spent most of the last 12 months working with video, my stills portfolio isn't as extensive as I would like but my camera and 50mm manual lens went everywhere looking for the opportunist shot."

In the amateur competition, Capt Dave Scammell (RA) was awarded first place for the second year running after winning in three separate categories.

Describing how his interest in photography began during a deployment to Iraq in 2003, the officer said: "Back then I didn't really know what I was doing. I only had a little compact camera and the settings were always on automatic but I knew what I wanted to portray in the images, it was just working out how."

"This year when I heard I had won I was completely shocked as I really did not expect to get anything, but to take three out of four categories is truly unbelievable." ■



Best overall image winner SSgt Mark Nesbit



Professional portfolio winner SSgt Mark Nesbit



Professional sport winner Cpl Paul Morrison CSBA



Professional operational image runner-up Cpl Barry Lloyd



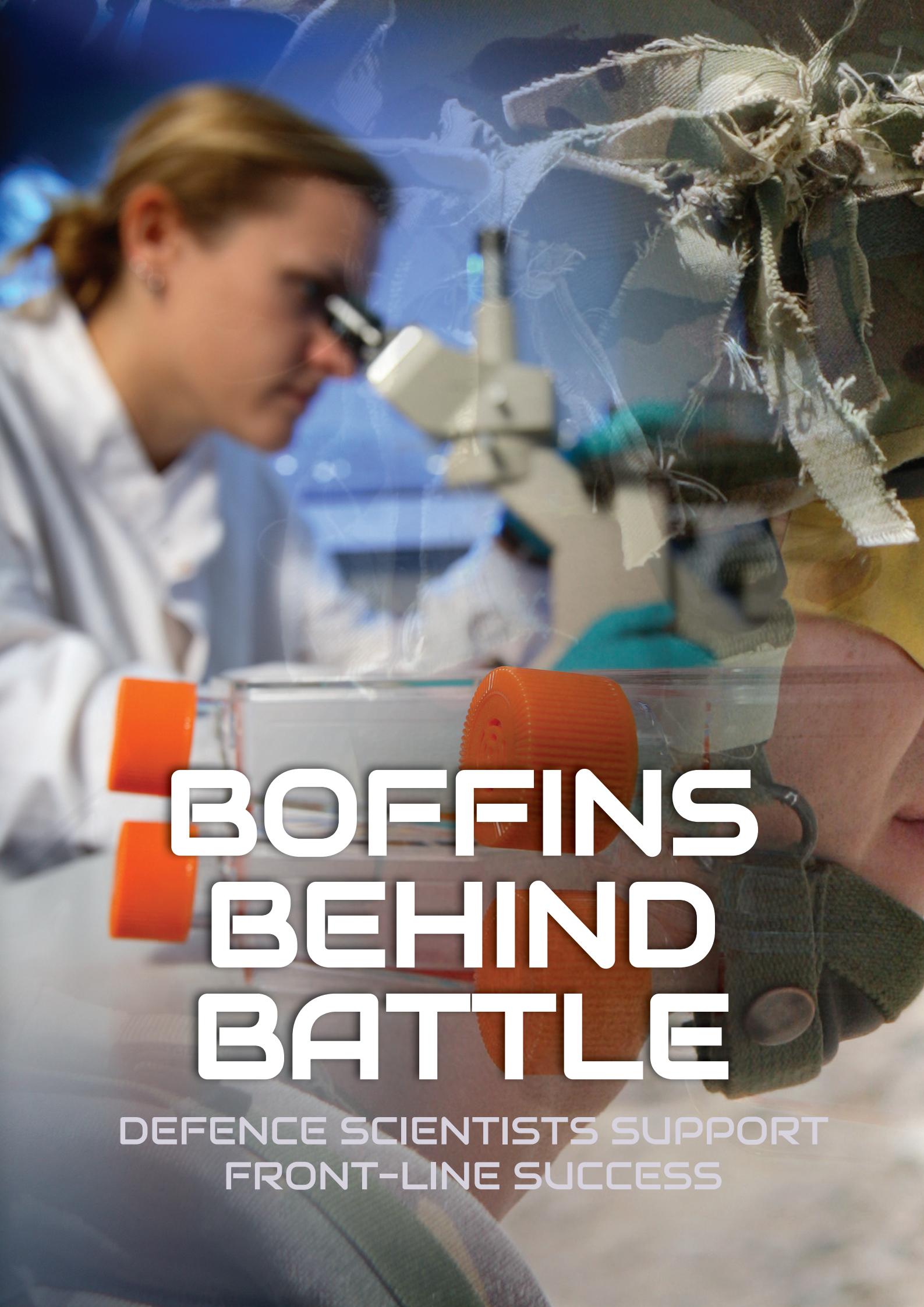
Amateur portfolio winner Capt Dave Scammell



Amateur sport winner WO1 Clive Smith



Professional portrait winner Sgt Russ Nolan



BOFFINS BEHIND BATTLE

DEFENCE SCIENTISTS SUPPORT
FRONT-LINE SUCCESS



Report: Joe Clapson

FROM behind closed doors at one of the UK's most secret locations, battlefield boffins have lifted the lid on what they bring to the ongoing mission in Helmand province.

Porton Down's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (dstl) is a fortress shrouded in mystery.

It has been working with troops in southern Afghanistan for ten years and recent examples of the kinetic kit its research has brought to the modern soldier include the multi-terrain pattern uniform and three-tiered pelvic protection system.

Geniuses inside the impressive facility work tirelessly on a range of ground-breaking and highly classified science and engineering projects which are helping to bring the British Army on leaps and bounds in the development of its equipment.

From advances in vehicle protection to research into shot detection, the team's impact on modern warfare has been undeniable.

Dr Steve Lever, principal scientist at the laboratory and a recent adviser in theatre, explained why it is crucial for the centre's experts to visit Helmand province.

"It gives you the ability to gain 'ground truth,'" the expert told *Soldier*.

"You move around and talk to the guys to get a feel for pieces of kit and to see what works and what doesn't."

Based at Camp Bastion, advisers conduct experiments on different bomb detection technology inside a purpose-built compound.

Any knowledge and updated findings are fed back to civilian colleagues in the UK to enable further analysis and exploration to be carried out.

"In the lab it's a very dry environment, with cold calculations, facts and figures but out in theatre you can see the projects coming to fruition," admitted Dr Lever.

"It's possible to see results and the impact of any advice in minutes, hours and days instead of months and years, which is what it used to be in my field."

"You can also tell those back in the UK what the advantages of certain pieces of kit are and what the guys on the ground think of it."

Unsurprisingly, much of this scientist's work in theatre has focused on defeating the Taliban's weapon of choice – the improvised explosive device.

"I have spent a lot of time testing new ideas on whether we could remove bombs with certain equipment and looking at how to quickly clear the ground of a suspect item," said Dr Lever.

Another recent fruit of the team's endeavours was the shot detection system used to locate sharpshooters.

Its introduction to theatre followed extensive "operational concept demonstrator" testing. The kit allows insurgent firing positions to be identified more easily, creating better protection for dismounted soldiers.

However, men and women at dstl insist that it is troops rather than technicians who have the light-bulb moments

of inspiration.

"We are absolutely not the brains behind the ideas – that comes from the soldiers and we just apply some scientific rigour," Dr Lever emphasised.

Charlene Gibson, the former deputy scientific adviser at Lashkar Gah's main operating base, added: "The personnel I worked with ranged from private soldiers to the Task Force Helmand commander and they were all very astute."

The white-coated academics admit that when they first arrive in the desert, Servicemen and women are sometimes sceptical as to how "lab rats" could benefit their dangerous work.

However, once it becomes clear that the "geeks" can help to defeat enemy threats, the specialists are embraced.

"We look at what troops are actually facing," said Nick Barrett, the man responsible for the delivery of science on Op Herrick.

"The impact of dstl experts has been demonstrated by improving equipment and informing operational, battle-winning decisions with scientific grounding."

"As someone who is very proud of the British Armed Forces, there's enormous satisfaction in knowing you can support them and help to make a difference."

Whether it is chemists working with bubbling bottles, physicists calculating ballistic dynamics or engineers constructing ingenious counter-IED devices, all play their part in helping to fight a determined enemy in a difficult desert environment.

"It would be inconceivable, were we to deploy on operations in the future, that we would not have this resource available to the military," said Col Colin McClean, the facility's equipment capability commander in Joint Force Support.

"Our soldiers would not be as well served if it were not for the excellent relationship we've got, the expertise dstl provides and our people's commitment to the fight." ■



3,500
Number of staff at dstl who work to support British soldiers

Pictures: Graeme Main and Tim Gander, dstl



MIX MASTERS

THE TROOPS WHO COMBINE MILITARY DRILLS WITH DJ SKILLS



**Interviews: Sarah Goldthorpe
Pictures: Graeme Main**

WHEN military personnel think back to their first posting in Cyprus, memories of sweaty battlefield drills and airless offices are often evoked.

But for Cpl Scott Clark (AGC (SPS)), life on the eastern Mediterranean island triggered a musical passion that has culminated in the gig-of-a-lifetime at the Ministry of Sound (MoS).

The Serviceman and his friend Capt Nick Burdick (RA) recently featured on the line-up for the world-famous nightclub's hard house and trance event, The Gallery.

As well as mixing their favourite tunes for hundreds of discerning clubbers, the soldiers got to showcase their talents on a stage that regularly hosts some of the globe's finest DJ talent including Tiesto, Sasha and Erick Morillo. >

>> Speaking to *Soldier* after the exhilarating experience, former airman Cpl Clark recounted his transformation from budding bedroom DJ to mainstream mixing maestro.

"While I was posted to Cyprus with the Royal Air Force I rented a pool house with four friends and we started throwing parties," the NCO explained.

"About 30 guests came to the first one but the more I played, the better I got and it snowballed from there, with people eventually driving from the other side of the island to attend."

After transferring to the Army, Cpl Clark took up a post with 16 Regiment, Royal Artillery and continued using his military skills to forge further musical success.

"It's quite a hard thing to get into," admitted the Serviceman, who has undertaken a sound engineering course at Point Blank Music College.

"There are 70,000 DJs in London alone so it takes a lot to get your name out there.

"But the Army gives you confidence. You get used to making new friends and that has made me good with music contacts.

"I am not scared of approaching people in the industry and that's probably how I have got so many gigs."

Commenting on the amazing success of the recent club night, 28-year-old Capt Burdick said: "It was like nowhere I have played before.

"You grow up listening to mix tapes and the MoS is one of those places which makes you think 'one day'.

"As in the military, your timekeeping has to be pretty much bang on. Having the courage of your convictions is also very important for a DJ."

Cpl Clark added: "I played a couple of Calvin Harris tracks and dropped some

Florence vocals, which went down really well with the crowd.

"It is a real buzz knowing that you are giving someone their night out.

"A lot of DJs are quite stuck up but I like being approachable; it's nice when people tell you that your mixing is awesome.

"If you cut the bass line and see their faces smiling, it's quite a nice feeling – but nerve-wracking too."

From getting their CDs played on late-night BFBS radio, these troops – whose repertoires range from vocal house to electro and dubstep – now have their sights set on music festivals.

But despite such ambition, they are keen to continue their commitment to the Op Herrick training cycle.

"Work always comes first," Cpl Clark emphasised. "Promoters know I am in the Armed Forces and are understanding about that. They have to be."

"I enjoy my music but it's not my life.

"Sometimes the military holds me back but I love being in the Army and wouldn't change that... even if I do get banter from the lads about being a 'superstar DJ'!" ■

Right and below, Drop the bass: Cpl Scott Clarke and Capt Nick Burdick entertain the crowds at the Ministry of Sound

DEATH-DEFYING DJ

● WHEN SSgt Paul Swain (9/12 L) lost an arm in a bomb blast during Op Herrick 14, his mixing days appeared to be over.

The DJ was on patrol in Helmand province when an Afghan interpreter he was working with stepped out of a marked safe zone and triggered an IED.

The explosion killed his colleague and left SSgt Swain with horrific injuries and on a life-support machine at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

However, little more than a year later the courageous Serviceman is back on the decks.

"I first started to DJ in 1999 and have not looked back since," the 34-year-old told *Soldier*.

"I had a great passion for music and production but felt the injuries I sustained would prevent me from any further involvement in the industry. But

it turns out that, with practice, I am still able to do it."

He added: "There are so many controls which you need to tweak, as well as mixing the songs, so I wasn't sure if I could still do it with one arm.

"One day I just decided to get the decks back up and go for it, and it seemed to work."

SSgt Swain has used his rediscovered skill to record a two-and-a-half hour dance mix at his Leicestershire home in order to raise money for military charities The Royal British Legion and BLESMA.

Due to be medically discharged next year, the enthusiast is hopeful that such perseverance will lead to further opportunities in the DJing world.

● To listen to the Fallen Souls charity mix visit www.armedianready.org



PERFECT PLAYLISTS

Looking for some festive iPod fodder? Three Service DJs recommend their top five tracks...

SSgt Paul Swain

Capt Nick Burdick

Cpl Scott Clark

1	DASH BERLIN – Man on the Run	HIS MAJESTY ANDRE – Hymn	FLORENCE & THE MACHINE – Spectrum (Say My Name) (Calvin Harris extended mix)
2	GARETH EMERY – Too Dark Tonight	AVICII – Last Dance	HOT CHIP – Flutes (Sasha remix)
3	FERRY CORSTEN – Not Coming Down	A-TRAK & ZINC – Like the Dancefloor ft Natalie Storm	JOHN DAHLBACK – Sing That (original club mix)
4	ARMIN VAN BUUREN – Mirage	SUPERSKANK – Good Time (Olivier Giacomotto remix)	DIGITALISM – Zdarlight (Fedde Le Grand & Deniz Koyu mix)
5	TIESTO – Adagio for Strings	ALPINE – Gasoline	ANTONIO EUDI – Reach the Sky (David Penn remix)

Stay support

Famous faces bring festive cheer
to Service personnel

THE great and the good of the sporting and entertainment worlds have shown their appreciation for UK troops by inundating *Soldier HQ* with Christmas messages. Here is a selection of their emails and tweets...

“Wishing all our troops a very merry Christmas. You’re doing a great job out there. Take care and stay safe.”

Laura Trott

TEAM GB OLYMPIC TRACK CYCLING GOLD MEDALLIST



“Sending special wishes during the holidays. Keep safe and know you are in our hearts and minds.”

Kimberley Wyatt

PUSSYCAT DOLL GROUP MEMBER



“Merry Christmas to all the incredibly brave Servicemen and women in our Armed Forces.”

Greg Rutherford

TEAM GB OLYMPIC LONG JUMP GOLD MEDALLIST



“Stay strong and look after each other. You are incredibly brave. The nation is proud of you.”

Bear Grylls

ADVENTURER AND TV PRESENTER



“You guys are a true inspiration to all of us back home. Keep up the amazing work. Merry Christmas.”

Anthony Ogogo

TEAM GB OLYMPIC BOXING BRONZE MEDALLIST



“Have a fantastic Christmas ladies and gents. You deserve it! It’s often said that going into the ring is as hard as it gets, but we all know that nothing compares to what you guys do. Be safe and keep your guard up.”

Ricky Hatton

PROFESSIONAL BOXER



“Merry Christmas to all the troops of the Army. Thank you for making the Olympics so special. Enjoy Christmas.”

Jessica Ennis

TEAM GB OLYMPIC HEPTATHLON
GOLD MEDALLIST



“I want to wish all you Servicemen and women all the best for Christmas and the New Year. You do a fantastic job and you’re a credit to your friends, family and country. You’ll never walk alone.”

Jamie Carragher

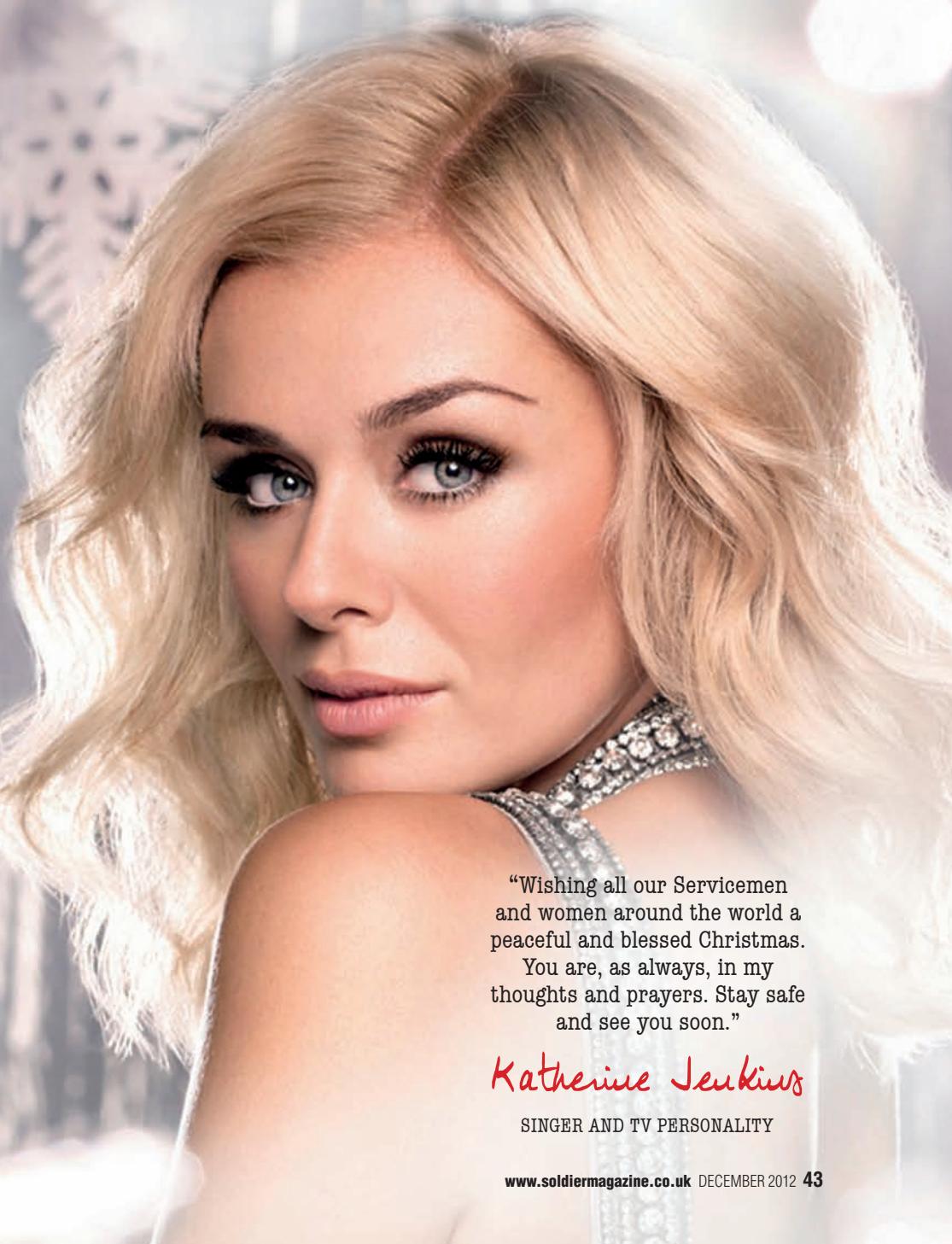
LIVERPOOL FC PLAYER



“Happy Christmas you bunch of soldier legends, wherever you are around the world. I’d now like to inspire you with some words from Churchill: ‘Oh yes’.”

Lee Nelson

COMEDIAN



“Wishing all our Servicemen and women around the world a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

You are, as always, in my thoughts and prayers. Stay safe and see you soon.”

Katherine Jenkins

SINGER AND TV PERSONALITY

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ODIN GTX



Twelve days of Christmas

Win a medley of merry prizes in the countdown to Yuletide

Food and drink



After a year of reporting on the varied and courageous undertakings of British Army personnel, *Soldier HQ* has embarked on a daring mission of our own.

Now in its fourth year, Operation Reindeer's Hoof sees the magazine gather as many prizes as possible for loyal readers.

Running on our Facebook page over 12 days from December 13,

the Advent giveaway will certainly not disappoint this year.

Goodies up for grabs range from hundreds of pounds worth of jewellery to a Butlins holiday, a cooker, a £250 Debenhams voucher, a host of outdoor kit, signed football shirts, a lawnmower and much more.

Read on to discover how to be in with a chance of winning in the daily draws. Good luck. *

Gadgets



Outdoor kit



Vouchers



Holidays and activities



How it works

1. Visit the *Soldier Magazine* page on www.facebook.com
2. Click the "like" icon.
3. Look out for notices of the day's prizes on your Facebook feed or our wall.
4. Follow the instructions to enter.
5. Readers should only send one entry per prize but you can try your luck at as many different competitions as you wish.
6. You will be emailed if you are one of the lucky winners.



www.tinyurl.com/reindeerhoof

● Among those *Soldier* will soon be penning thank you letters to are: Acorne plc (on behalf of Virgin Experiences), AKH Communications, Atlantic Online Media, Avalon UK, Bacchus PR (on behalf of Spitfire Ale), Bettys and Taylors of Harrogate, Birdworld, Bourne Leisure (Butlins), Clareville (on behalf of National Garden Gift Vouchers), Crimson Edge Public Relations Ltd, Debenhams, Democracy PR (on behalf of Jack Daniels), Disney, Eclectic Eccentricity, Edwards Harvey (on behalf of Shepherd Neame), Fayre & Square, Fridays Group (on behalf of Korg), Get the Label, Hall & Woodhouse, Lionsgate Films, Memory-Map Europe, Mowdirect, Newquay Activity Centre, Paramount Pictures UK, Pieminister, RHA, Talbot PR (on behalf of Aqua Sphere), The Bluebeards Revenge, The Seafood Restaurant, Toni & Guy Hairdressing, Tunnock's, Umpf, Whity & Co, ZPR London (on behalf of Red Lion Foods).

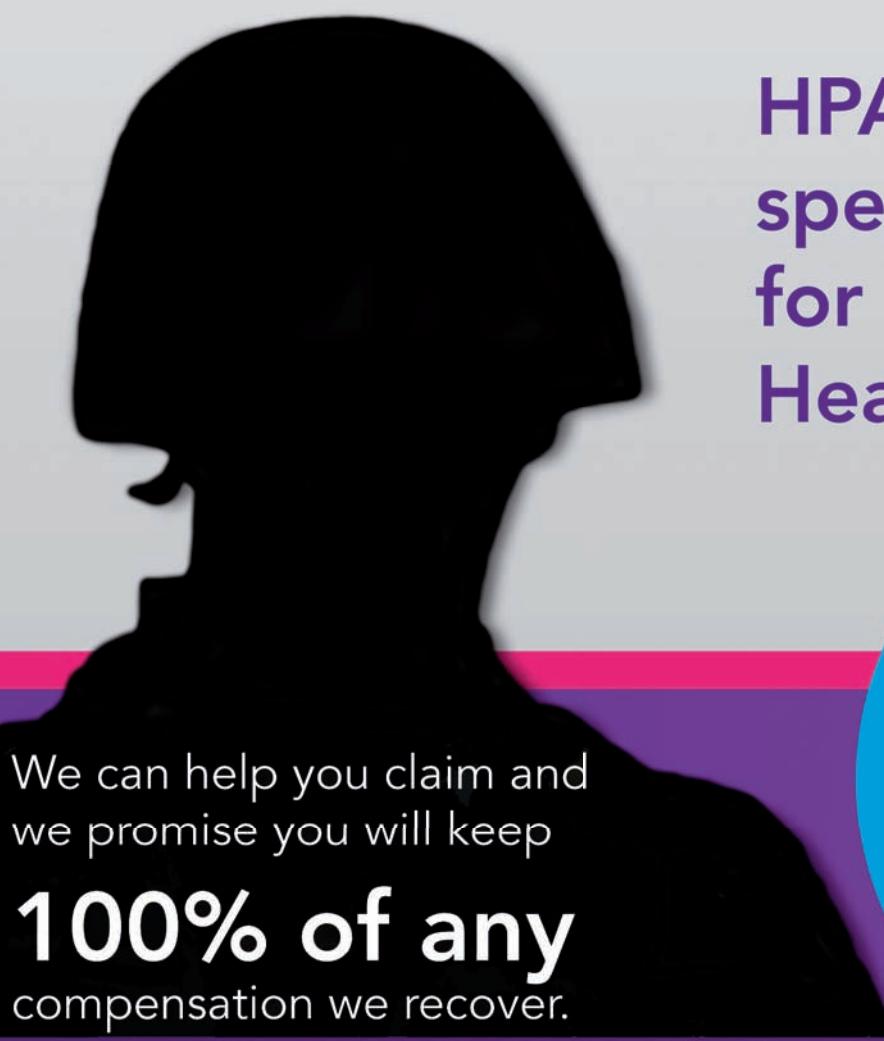
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TALKBACK

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas... but please be brief. Emails (mailto:soldiermagazine.co.uk) must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style. Before you write to us with a problem, you should first have tried to get an answer via your own chain of command.



Picture: Graeme Main

NEW NAME HITS BUM NOTE

■ I UNDERSTAND that the Territorial Army is to be renamed the Army Reserve ("Reserves round-up", November).

This means I will go from being a STAB to an ARS, and several Reservists together will therefore become ARSs.

I suggest a rethink. — *Cpl Paul Clarke.*



SUMMER SCORE SETTLED

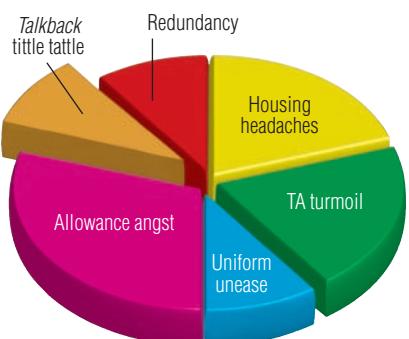
■ AS the Olympic year comes to an end, I thought I would clear up any misunderstanding about the image alleged to be Jim Fox in July's *Talkback* and later "corrected" to his teammate Adrian Parker.

The photograph (shown above) is in fact none other than Jim's arch-rival and nemesis, Soviet Col Boris Onischenko. Of all the pictures to identify as Jim!

Still the best magazine though. — *John Edwards, REME Museum of Technology.*

Slice of Service life

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



Struggle to serve from States

As a former Regular who served more than seven years in the Infantry, I believe I still have a lot to offer the British Army. I have kept fit and am fairly young and capable.

In view of the recent cutbacks and the announcement that the Service would be relying more on Reservists, I have been trying to volunteer for a deployment.

However, I have met stiff resistance on this front and am wondering what I have to do to sign up?

I admit one setback is that I currently live in the US but I am more than willing to pay my own transportation costs and actually did so in January when I flew to the UK to extend my Reserve service.

Is there a rule saying that someone who resides in another country cannot deploy as a Reservist?

Having read an article in October's *Soldier* about a part-time Serviceman now living in the States who did just that ("Reservist's inter-continental commute"), I am not sure why I'm having so many problems. — *Adam Delmonico.*

Maj Emma Ainsworth, S02 Reserves

DM(A), responds: The ability to be able to volunteer for deployments is based on many factors.



Personnel that still have a Reserve liability can be mobilised for an operational commitment. If individuals have no Reserve liability then they may re-engage for a further four years by calling 0141 224 5257 or 94561 8033.

The individual would need a UK address to which the call-out notice could be sent and must also cover their own costs to their British address and back.

The MoD will refund travel expenses in this country or provide a rail warrant for journeys to the mobilisation centre.

Understandably the Reservist would need to be of good military and medical standard. Consideration should also be given to any financial assistance.

The Reservist and employers' award may not be relevant as the earnings and employment costs are out of the UK.

Potential pause in payouts puzzle

I AM leaving the Service through tranche two redundancy and am thinking about joining the Territorial Army.

There is a DIN in existence about transferring across from a Regular to a Reservist but what it doesn't mention, and so far no one in the chain of command can tell me, is what happens to my pension and payouts in such a scenario.

Are they frozen and do they remain untouched? — *SSgt Mansel.*

Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), responds: It depends on what your commitment to the Territorial Army is as your pension benefits (including lump sum payment) and redundancy will hinge on the terms and conditions of service under which you first joined.

If you intend to complete the usual undertaking (drill nights, weekends and summer camp) up to the normal limits of circa 40 man training days per year, the payments are unaffected.

Similarly, if you join the Reserves and are then mobilised your lump sum payments and pension benefits will

remain unchanged.

However, if you enrol with the TA and then take up a full-time Reserve service appointment (including home, limited, full or an additional duties commitment) your pension and redundancy payments could be reduced. This means you would be required to repay a proportion of any lump sum received, depending on how long you have been out of service, and your monthly income stream (immediate pension for Armed Forces pension scheme 75 or early departure payment for 05) could be reduced.

This is because Treasury rules do not allow you to earn more than you did on your last day of paid Regular service.

It is complicated and depends on your circumstances but RAO staff can help you, particularly if you have a specific type of TA service in mind.

There is a re-employment booklet available on the internet which explains. Type MMP/116 into Google to find it.

- New territory for Army Reserve — page 7

Headache at home over Herrick harmonisation

AFTER returning from Op Herrick 15 I was quickly posted to a new unit that is due to deploy on Herrick 18.

It was my understanding that you had to have an 18-month harmonisation period before going on tour again but that this could be waived by the individual.

However, no one can give me definitive answers on this matter.

I have been told that commanding officers can override the rule for certain ranks and jobs, but again I do not know how true this is.

I didn't expect to be going back on tour 11 months after returning to the UK but it seems to be the old cliche of being told to man up and get on with it.

I am more than willing to do that but my other half is less than impressed. — Name and address supplied.

Col Simon Banton, Personnel Operations, Directorate of Manning (Army), responds:
Thank you for your letter. I know your

situation will chime with many other readers who have faced similar short tour intervals over recent years.

At present there is no DIN covering harmony guidelines, although there is a Land Forces policy on separated service which is in place to protect individuals.

Historically, the guidelines are a planning yardstick for the deployment of units which envisage an interval of 24 months following a six-month tour.

Separated service is a record of an individual's accumulated time away, not just deployments, and is one of the means by which suitability for a tour is assessed.

Current Army policy directs that, where possible, a harmony guideline of 415 days' separated service in a rolling 30-month (912 day) timeframe should not be breached.

This is assessed as the level that results when a Serviceman or woman has an interval of 24 months between six-month

operational tours within a programme of routine activities.

Further to that, a recuperation limit of 560 days' separated service in the same 30-month rolling period is directed.

This is calculated as the level of separated service beyond which there is insufficient time to complete those non-separated professional and personal activities which are the essential minimum to refresh an individual sufficiently to sustain future operations after appropriate collective training.

Any likely breaches of this require scrutiny and agreement at one-star level or above.

With that in mind, I recommend that you check your current separated service record on JPA and, depending on the result, discuss the issue with your chain of command to ensure that your actual and projected separated service – along with any other circumstances – are fully taken into account.

Rollercoaster ride will be remembered

IHAVE reached the last day of my military career – 24 years and a bit, or 8,771 days.

It has been a long time but, damn, it has passed quickly. What a ride on a hell of a rollercoaster.

I have met a great number of people, men and women, that have changed me and helped to shape who I am today: some good, some bad and many better than others.

There are individuals who I would die in a ditch for and others who I wouldn't do the proverbial on if they were on fire.

I have seen things that only some have had the privilege of observing and others that no one should ever have to witness in their lifetime.

I have had the pleasure to serve in many units with some fantastic

personnel whose endeavours for what is right and just have left an indelible mark on me.

I have received education when it was required; guidance and advice when it was needed and pain-related learning when necessary.

I have been to many holes on Earth but have also found beauty and realising that I was at the heart of Mesopotamia while serving in Iraq opened my eyes to the progress of man, while the beautiful backdrop of parts of Afghanistan could not hide the pain and suffering of its people.

I have visited the Benelux countries and served in Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom.

I have loved and lost and loved again, and possess a son who I would not have if it was not for the British Army.

I have sampled both sides of Kenya, the magnificent country it is, and also South Africa – a majestic experience and one I would recommend.

I have been on exercise in Canada, the USA and Cyprus and have seen service in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Croatia, Bosnia, Northern Ireland and Afghanistan.

I was fortunate enough to be in the Army during

a time of need and world upheaval which enabled me to visit those places and, in some way, leave my mark.

I have admired too many people to mention here for their leadership during times of stress, their calmness and for letting me get on with my job without too much hindrance.

I have made a great deal of friends and there have been a few losses while in the Service. I have stood at their graves and wept and always think of them on Remembrance Day.

I have been on reunions and the overriding feeling I get is that, if they could, veterans would sign up again tomorrow even though their military careers probably ended 20 years ago.

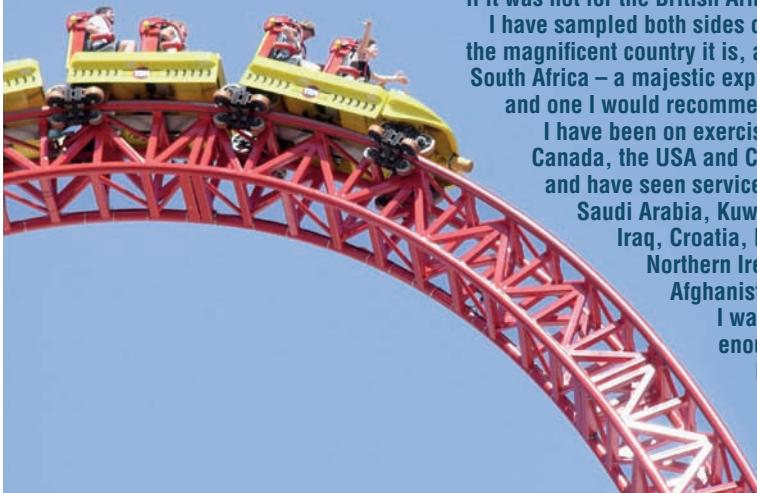
The feeling I have is of sadness but also of comradeship and I would like to thank all those I have served with.

Thank you for being my friends, comrades, confidants, co-conspirators in crime and drinking buddies.

I would also like to thank the partners, male and female, of those who serve as it is personnel who have the easy job and you the difficult one.

Without other halves we could never be as efficient as we are, especially on operational tours.

Most of all I would like to thank anyone who has taken the time to read this. Please pass it on to those you know in the Armed Forces. Thank you all for being part of the best 24 years of my life. — SSgt John Cutler, RLC.





Sinking feeling over access to Ascension

I WRITE this letter to inform readers who may be interested of the charge that the Royal Air Force is now levying on flights to and from Ascension Island.

I wish to question the morality and possible legality of charging on-duty Service personnel for these journeys – a cost brought in with very short notice early this year.

Ascension Island has long been used by Joint Services for top class adventurous training – its remoteness, topography and exclusiveness being some attributes that make it the destination of choice for many expedition organisers.

In addition, the relatively minimal expense of mounting a trip was attractive. This no longer seems to be the case.

The concession non-fare paying (CNFP) flight now attracts a cost of £220 per soldier (£900 for a civilian) which is exactly the same as that of a Service indulgence flight.

How can it be right to charge an on-duty soldier, sailor, marine or airman for a journey to carry out his or her duties?

And if a passenger is paying for a flight, should they not expect a certain level of service and recompense for misgivings such as delays and damaged baggage?

Let's face it, RAF flights are far from even economy class.

I know of at least two expeditions this year that have been cancelled due to this additional expense and one that had the

cost waived – you guessed it, an RAF trip.

To add insult to injury, diving excursions are charged £450 for boat fuel and oil.

The oil is an in-service two-stroke and the fuel is drawn from a local civilian station and receipted.

A recent expedition used £240-worth of fuel but was still charged the full £450 as well as a £200 charge for a nitrox compressor that was not functional for the entire trip.

I recognise that in these times of austerity everyone is tightening their belts but come on RAF, stop ripping us off. We get enough of that on the high street. – SSgt Ian Rockett, RE.

The Defence Environment and Safety Authority Movements and Transport Team responds: The charge associated with CNFP travel status has always existed. JSP 800 volume 2 identifies the details of this.

The ancillary expense for all CNFP passengers is levied to offset the additional cost the MoD incurs for every person that travels on a flight and will be the equivalent of the indulgence charge for the particular route concerned.

This comprises air passenger duty, the administration cost of processing a booking, his or her meals and the extra fuel that the aircraft will have to carry to cover the additional weight of the

traveller and their luggage.

The current South Atlantic air bridge is provided by a contracted charter which was put in place to fill the gap left after RAF Tristars were redeployed on Middle East missions.

As this change was to support operations, the MoD reclaims the costs of the charter from the Treasury. As such, it can only obtain the operational costs of supporting British Forces South Atlantic Islands.

The policy regarding the application and recovery of this fee was reviewed and tightened in April 2012 by SO2 passenger policy at the Defence Safety and Environment Authority, the CNFP policy owner and the Air Command deputy business manager for operations, who is the costings expert.

Recognising that this would impact on some travellers at an advanced stage of planning who could not be expected to get retrospective permission, the requirement was waived for expeditions up to mid-April this year.

The key issue is how these charges are handled. JSP 419 makes clear that travel and subsistence outgoings are covered by the unit organising the visit.

How these are funded is a matter for individual units and the adventurous training funding policy of their Service.

● Talking to the Tornados – pages 26-27

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Double subs hard to swallow

N the warrant officers' and sergeants' mess, those individuals categorised as "dining in" pay twice the subscription of those dining out.

Having asked the mess accountant, committee and my own chain of command why, no one seems to know.

All they can tell me is that the double charge is mandatory and based on Queen's Regulations paragraph 5.750.

With the introduction of the pay as you dine system (PAYD) this seemed to make little sense and was confirmed by my local contract monitor who could see no connection between the extra charge and what is received under PAYD.

Understanding this may be an old term and in fact should state "living in" and "living out", I queried our mess manager and quartermaster about whether those living in benefitted disproportionately over those living out.

Again, they could not identify any benefits since all newspapers, television sport packages and other communal facilities provided centrally by the mess are funded by all members and equally available to those living in or out.

Indeed, our accountant confirmed that the extra cash collected by this double subbing is paid into the mess general purpose fund from where it can be voted across to be spent on items not specifically related to those living in or out.

Surely if there are things paid for only by those living in for their own benefit, they should be permitted to charge those living out for use whenever they do so? This is a farcical situation.

Our presiding member would like to reduce the living-in subscriptions so that such individuals pay the same as those living

out but is prevented from doing so by this paragraph of the Queen's Regulations.

Is there not any leeway for the commanding officer, having satisfied himself that there is no obvious justification for the double charge, to authorise the equalisation of subscriptions? — **Name and address supplied.**

Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), responds:
Mess subscriptions are mandatory as detailed in Queen's Regulations and the provision ensures that all officers' messes and warrant officers' and sergeants' messes have a guaranteed income to their general purpose fund.

You are perhaps right to question the "outdated" language used in paragraph 5.750. Mess subscriptions have no link to messing or food consumed.

The term "dining in", as you have correctly interpreted, refers to those mess members who reside as livers in. That is, they occupy a room.

You should not link subscriptions with PAYD; they are entirely separate.

The solution to your question lies within your unit and not with Army policy or Queen's Regulations.

Speak to your mess presiding member or committee; it would be wholly appropriate that the greater subscriptions paid by livers in is reflected in the services and facilities on offer.

Whilst all messes are available to livers out, it is not their weekly residence and by extension they do not have the same daily access to facilities as those living in.

The additional subscription paid by dining in reflects this access to mess facilities and will remain.

One solution that you could propose at the next mess meeting is the introduction of a livers-out charge, equivalent to 50 per cent of mess subscription for livers in.

This would result in equal sums being paid into the general purpose fund by everyone and would be a local decision, requiring approval by mess members.

You may also wish to be aware that the Directorate of Personal Services (Army) is currently undertaking a review of messes.

Your comments have been passed to the desk officer responsible for this and will be considered along with all other factors during the assessment.

● Tasty prizes up for grabs – page 45

DIGITAL DOSSIER

THIS MONTH'S ELITE TWEETS

#TEDWORTH HOUSE

@J_Butterworth88

Good day at **@HelpforHeroes** Tedworth House. Absolutely amazing facilities! Shame I didn't get time to try out the ski-plex **#nexttime**

#BRITISH ARMY

@509298

Did you know that on 1st September 2012 the **#BritishArmy** had 58 generals? A mite top heavy, perhaps? What can they all be doing?

@sophie_roberson

Just seen the military parade in town, can't explain how much respect I have for our soldiers **#BritishArmy #respect**

@Kuw84

Ross Kemp: *The Invisible Wounded* made me more grateful and privileged to be a RMA Sandhurst graduate **#BritishArmy #TheBestInTheWORLD**

@BeattieDoug

#PCCElections cost £75 million. Equals the budget of a Reserve Infantry battalion - 450 men for....75 years. More for your £ with **#BritishArmy**

@MadCrazyFacts

The myth that carrots improve eyesight was made by the **#BritishArmy** in WW2 to tell the world that their pilots could see Nazis in the dark.

#BEER & BANTER

@mybeerquotes

No soldier can fight unless he is properly fed on beef and beer – John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough

@thekeithchegwin

Army officer said 'I didn't see u @ camouflage training this morning' I said 'Thank u very much'

#TERRITORIAL TALK

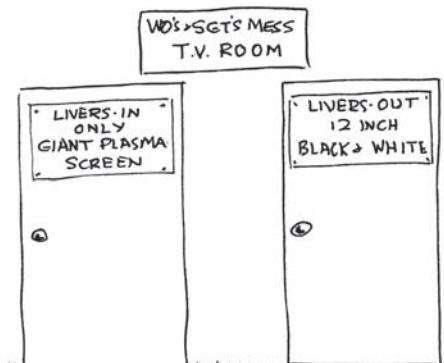
@VeryBritishDude

The TA makes those weekends on the couch all the more valuable! I deplore the name change, I'm proud to be a territorial.

@MajorPaulSmyth

Why I love the Territorial Army - and will never be able to forgive *The Office*'s Gareth Keenan <http://ow.ly/frfz>

@soldiermagazine



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Child support system fails to stack up

LIKE a large number of single soldiers, I have had many a dealing with the Child Support Agency (CSA) and the general impression is one of Service personnel being easy targets.

I have heard of individuals having to seek counselling, being on suicide watch and becoming a welfare concern for their unit as a result.

Whilst I – like most soldiers I come across in a similar position – do not begrudge paying for my child, it seems that troops are contributing far higher rates compared to our civilian counterparts.

I hand over £160 per month more than Army posters claim I should be doing at my rank and pay bracket.

I checked this on the CSA website which confirmed as much.

I have a long-term partner and two other children that aren't biologically mine who I now support.

It would therefore seem that getting married and having a mortgage would be the only solution to reduce the amount I pay to my only child but my partner and I refuse to rush into this for such a reason.

When you question the CSA they just seem to do yet another re-assessment which results in even higher costs.

Just because the expense of living in Service accommodation is slightly lower does not mean personnel have more money to surrender to this seemingly corrupt government department.

I do understand that there is child support law which must be obeyed but I feel this is an area of morale that the hierarchy needs to look at.

Surely there could be a liaison team to better explain troops' circumstances and pay statements to the CSA, factors such as mess bills, pay as you dine and travel?

The upper echelons should look at this matter before morale is affected further, good soldiers lost to civilian life and more problems created. – **LCoH Steve Henderson, Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment.**

The Department for Work and Pensions responds: Whilst we cannot comment on individual cases, the CSA collects money from parents who are required by law to financially support their offspring.

The amount of maintenance individuals are asked to pay is based entirely on their income and other circumstances provided for in legislation, which takes into account youngsters in a new household.

All parents are free to come to their own child maintenance arrangements.

■ MY husband serves with the Armed Forces and uses the CSA to assist his ex-partner with their kids.

While undertaking a review of his case, the agency took both longer separation allowance and petrol expenses which appeared on his wage slips into account and as a result his monthly payment increased.

The petrol money we get does not cover his fuel bill to get to work and we don't get longer separation allowance regularly because he is not always away.

However, when we contacted the CSA they

said that they had an agreement with the Ministry of Defence which meant they were allowed to take it into consideration.

Is this right? Longer separation allowance is supposed to help with food and phone contact. I think it's wrong that it can be used in this way. – **Lorna Barnes.**

Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), responds: A detailed and long-standing memorandum of understanding exists between the Ministry of Defence and the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (previously the CSA), which sets out elements of your salary and allowances that are included in these calculations.

In essence, anything upon which tax is paid will be taken into account.

As the longer separation payment is taxed, it is included.

The money is provided to support and improve retention by compensating those personnel experiencing separation over and above that covered by the X factor in their basic pay.

It does not allow for food, which can be claimed through subsistence allowance (day) if not available while on duty.

It is not entirely clear from your correspondence which travel allowance your husband was being paid. If it was motor mileage, this is not taxed and as such should not be considered.

If it has been factored into your spouse's maintenance calculation then you should speak to your RAO or admin office so that the chain of command can take up this case with the commission's Forces focal point.





COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: Mr G Drew, DEMSS Kineton, Southam and Mrs T Wadley, Wattisham Airfield, Suffolk.



DIARY

December 1: Rockin' Down at the Rose and Crown, Wendover, in support of SSAFA Forces Help. Rock band **The Copycats** will play a **one-off charity reunion gig**, covering classic and contemporary hits starting at 1900. Tickets cost £10 but only 100 are available. Visit facebook.com/rockindown for more information.

December 2-January 1 2013: The National Memorial Arboretum festive programme. Highlights include craft activities, guided walks, horse-drawn tours, a carol service, mulled wine, Santa's grotto and freshly cut Christmas trees. Visit www.thenma.org.uk for more information and dates.

December 8-9: British Military Tournament. To mark the Diamond Jubilee of 2012, this year's event will **celebrate the life and times of Her Majesty The Queen** at Earls Court, London. For ticket details and more information on the shows visit www.britishmilitarytournament.com

December 8-9 and 15-16: Free family activities on-board **HMS Belfast**. **Cocoa and Conversations** offers visitors the chance to learn more about the stories of the ship and those who sailed on her, while enjoying hot chocolate. 1100-1230 and 1400-1600. www.iwm.org.uk

December 17: King Edward VII's Hospital Sister Agnes Christmas carol service from 1830 at St Marylebone Parish Church, London. Readings will be led by author-actress Nanette Newman and singer Laurie Ashworth will perform solo pieces. The collection will benefit the Sister Agnes Benevolent Fund.

Until January 2013: **Warriors of the Plains: 200 Years of Native North American Honour and Ritual**. A new display at Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum offering visitors a contemporary insight into warrior societies of the past. Visit www.exeter.gov.uk/ramm for more information.

January 2-Jul 2013: The Imperial War Museum, London, will be closed for redevelopment in preparation for the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War in 2014. Visit www.iwm.org.uk for further details.

January 19-20: Free family activity on **HMS Belfast**. **History in Your Hands** is a chance for visitors to explore the ship and hear the stories behind the craft and the men who served on-board. At 1100-1230 and 1400-1600. www.iwm.org.uk

Until further notice: Other ranks – honouring the fallen. A new multi-sensory, sound-based exhibition to mark a month of remembrance and bringing to life the role of squaddies serving in the British Army. Royal Armouries, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 1LT. For more information visit www.royalarmouries.org/newsletter

Forces Pension Society: 0207 820 9988

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

Help for Heroes: 0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459; www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group): www.mutualsupport.org.uk

National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office: 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; www.ngvfa.org.uk

PoppyScotland: 0131 557 2782; www.poppyScotland.org.uk

Regular Forces' Employment Association: 0121 236 0058; www.rfea.org.uk

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion: www.britishlegion.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre: 01622 795900; www.rbli.co.uk

Scottish Veterans' Residences: 0131 556 0091; www.svronline.org

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975; www.ssafa.org.uk

The Not Forgotten Association: 020 7730 2400; www.nfassociation.org

uk4u Thanks: 01798 812081; www.uk4u.org



DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

Armed Forces' Buddhist Society: Chaplain 020 7414 3411; www.afbs-uk.org

Armed Forces' Christian Union: 01252 311221; www.afcu.org.uk

Armed Forces Humanist Association: www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Welfare Service: 01980 615975; www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx

Army Families Federation: 01264 382324; mil 94391 2324; www.aff.org.uk

Blind Veterans UK: (formerly St Dunstan's) www.blindveterans.org.uk; 0207 7235021

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association: 0208 590 1124; www.blesma.org

Career Transition Partnership: 0207 766 8020

Children's Education Advisory Service: 01980 618244; enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society: 01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Family Escort Service: 0207 463 9249

Forcesline: UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services *201; from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854.



INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at www.armynet.mod.uk

ABN 96/12: Final agreement on the overall scheme design for the new Armed Forces pension scheme

ABN 97/12: Officer accreditation

ABN 98/12: Army TLB civilian recruitment and retention allowance review

ABN 99/12: JPA smartphone app

ABN101/12: Officers' new entrants rates of pay

ABN 102/12: Pay as you dine survey

DIN 2012DIN01-224: Termination of internet access to shared services – publication suspended prior to publication by sponsor October 31

DIN 2012DIN01-222: Pensions tax – annual allowance notification tax year 2011/12

DIN 2012DIN01-220: MoD ex-gratia payments in lieu of maternity allowance

DIN 2012DIN01-219: BR3 – issue of October 2012 edition

DIN 2012DIN01-218: The risk management process for overseas visits or deployments on departmental business

DIN 2012DIN01-217: Taxable position of professional body fees and subscriptions

DIN 2012DIN01-216: Clarification of existing policy on FTRS HC/LC/ADC and NCS personnel entitlement to accommodation – transition arrangements

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DIN 2012DIN04-137: Weapon equipment – declaration of obsolete/obsolescent status

DIN 2012DIN05-042: The defence application register

DIN 2012DIN05-041: Relocation of 47 Air Despatch Squadron, Royal Logistic Corps

DIN 2012DIN05-040: The Air Warfare Centre tasking process

DIN 2012DIN05-039: Change of command for the Defence Centre of Training Support

DIN 2012DIN06-040: Return of equipment that contains radioactive material to Donnington

DIN 2012DIN06-039: JSP 426 – MoD fire risk management 2012 edition

DIN 2012DIN06-038: New version – JSP 539 – Climatic illness and injury in the Armed Forces: Force protection and initial medical treatment

DIN 2012DIN06-037: Guidance on retention and preservation of documents associated with noise-induced hearing loss

DIN 2012DIN07-158: Exercise Arctic Express 2013 – exercise instruction

DIN 2012DIN07-157: Tactical medical wing schedule of courses 2012/2013

DIN 2012DIN07-156: Award of the aircraft certificate of competence to CPOAETs

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DIN 2012DIN07-148: Transfer of EOD course loading from the Defence EOD and Search Branch to the Defence EOD Munitions and Search Training Regiment

DIN 2012DIN07-147: Joint and single Service security, intelligence, photographic and geospatial training courses for training year April 2012 to March 2013

DIN 2012DIN07-146: Space operations foundation course

DIN 2012DIN07-145: Exercise Atlantic Adventure 2013 – exercise instruction

DIN 2012DIN07-144: Civilian participation in joint Service adventurous training sub-aqua diving

DIN 2012DIN08-011: Net additional cost of military operations for Afghanistan – standing instruction (v1.2)

Continued on page 56

NO. 853

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TEN details have been changed on this photograph of the Prince of Wales presenting medals to members of 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland at Birkhall, Aberdeenshire.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 853, Soldier**,

Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by December 31. A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers.

The results will be announced in the February issue. Usual rules apply.

October's winner: First correct entry drawn at random was Mr S Smith, MoD Corsham, Wiltshire. **Runners-up:** WO1 L Jones, Blandford Forum, Dorset and Mrs T Chadwick, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire.



DIN 2012DIN08-010: Insurance arrangements for charging activities (income generation and repayment)

DIN 2012DIN09-023: The Firmin Sword of Peace Awards 2012

DIN 2012DIN09-022: The Firmin Sword of Peace Awards 2011 – results

DIN 2012DIN10-040: Army Sailing Association offshore race training week and regatta May 13-17, 2013

DIN 2012DIN10-039: Tri-Service Bouldering League 2012-13

DIB 63/12: Launch of Future Reserves 2020 consultation exercise

DIB 62/12: New contract for British Forces Broadcasting Service signed by MoD

DIB 60/12: Final agreement on the overall scheme design for the new Armed Forces pension scheme

DIB 59/12: Civil service reform: terms and conditions review

ROADSHOWS

The Army Engagement Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a drinks reception, is followed by a presentation, questions and culminates with refreshments. There will be a range of military personnel on hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 417000 or email your name and address to **apt.mod@btconnect.com** with the event you are interested in attending.

December: No presentations.

January: Blackpool; Blackburn; Manchester.

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SEARCHLINE

Former soldier Ben Mead has set up **Military Roots**, a social group for ex-Servicemen and women in Eastbourne and surrounding areas. Open to those who have served in any branch of the Armed Forces, the organisation aims to bring together like-minded people, who may be missing the camaraderie of military life. For further information contact info@militaryroots.co.uk or visit www.militaryroots.co.uk

Mr C Todd would like to find a friend called **David Hadden**, born January 26, 1947, in Rushden, Northants. He was serving in Detmold Germany with the 9th/12th Royal Lancers from 1974 to 1977. Mr Todd was with 1 RHA at the same base and time. If anyone has information please contact Mr Todd on 07531 781455.

After nearly 50 years of loyal service, **The Princess Mary's Hospital, RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus, closed its doors to all patients on October 31**. Throughout this time a number of presentations have been made to the hospital by individuals and units which now need to be rehomed. If you would like your gift returned please contact Maj Nick Nicholson on military 94120 5586 with all the relevant details before December 31.

Holocaust survivor Agnes Grunwald-Spier, author of *The Other Schindlers*, is seeking help. **Research for her next book on betrayals in the Holocaust has led her to the word "Ratweek".** Can anyone explain the origin of this term? Those with personal information on the Belgian traitor Prosper de Zitter – or Desitter – or with stories of betrayal of Jews in the Holocaust are also asked to get in touch. Email agnesgrunwaldspier@gmail.com

A private investigator is seeking **Russell Cooke or Thomas Thaw** on behalf of a client.

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The individuals are believed to have served with the British Army in Kuala Lumpur until 1961 before returning to the UK. Anyone with information on the men should contact steph@scisco.org or 07538 829340.

Ex-Serviceman John Halsted is cycling the route of one of the **1945 death marches** – from Sagan in Poland to Bad Orb near Frankfurt in Germany. He is looking for UK soldiers and veterans, including those who have been injured or discharged, to take part and a charity to be the willing recipient of funds raised during the 640km trip. Anyone interested should email him via books@abelapublishing.com

The Rotary Club of Upper Eden is inviting Service personnel to take part in the **Yomp Mountain Challenge** on June 2, 2013. The charity fund-raising event features a choice of three courses (6.5 miles, 11.5 miles or 23 miles) across the fells of Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria. Visit www.yomp.org for more information or to register.

Information is sought on **Col Dick Morrison, who was born before 1919 – probably in Wales.** He served in the Regular Army during the Second World War and afterwards. His last known address was in Dover, Kent. Anyone with details on the officer is asked to contact dshaw980@yahoo.co.uk

Gilbert Van Hecke would like to trace some **soldiers who helped to liberate the village of Vlissegem in Belgium during the Second World War.** The first names are Jim, Tom and Ralf. If anyone has any information please contact Mr Van Hecke, Residentie, Casa Lucca, Felix Timmermanslaan 12/aap. 00-02, 8421 De Haan, Belgium.

Tony Levy, ex-Royal Signals (1972-1981), is trying to locate the **commemorative wall plaque** he was presented with in recognition of his time served as a permanent staff instructor on Exercise Snow Queen. The former sapper is happy to pay any reasonable expenses incurred in returning the item to him. Contact 07860 715603.

Annika Hofmann from Germany is looking for **George Matthews** who was based in the town of Schleswig in 1945 and perhaps also 1946. Anyone with information is asked to email annikahofmann@outlook.com

Independent social worker and former casualty key worker Sandra Knox is **researching the needs of soldiers who are struggling to come to terms with their injuries, emotions or illness.** Any Service personnel or relatives who can help by telling her what their family required during such experiences are asked to email sandra@onecontinuum.co.uk

Clive Slade is looking for information about a **troop ship arriving in the UK from India between 1945 and 1946**, carrying a serving member of the Armed Forces who was suffering from polio and who had been nursed for the journey in an iron lung. He believes this was a first for such a medical case, his father being one of the nursing staff. Please contact Mr Slade on candvs4649tontrav@hotmail.co.uk

Geoff George is researching his late uncle **James (Jimmy) George** who died several years ago in his 80s. Born and bred in Cardigan, West Wales, James served in the British Army during the Second World War and was also a boxer. Do you know any more? Email gefgeorge@hotmail.com

HOME TRUTHS

A PERSONAL view from Catherine Spencer, chief executive of the Army Families Federation. Log on to www.aff.org.uk for more information



Shifting role for Service spouses

AT the generally predictable commanding officers' designate course I was caught off guard by the question 'in today's world what is the role of the CO's wife?'

As we push towards ensuring Army spouses can access employment and training more easily, the role of the commander's partner – and the expectations placed on them by the Service and its personnel – is an interesting point to consider.

The new employment model's aspiration to have more of us living in our homes, which may not be near the soldier's workplace, will make face-to-face contact with the Army more difficult.

The financial need for partners to make up the difference in decreasing pay packages will also play its part.

I took a seven-year career break while being a stay-at-home mum. I followed the flag and threw myself into Army life.

I may now be back on track – thanks to lucky postings, an amazing au pair and dogged determination – but financially speaking my time away from work was a disaster.

In a world where two incomes are crucial, the idea that any spouse can drop everything to help with the social needs of the military isn't realistic.

If the commanding officer has a husband, do we expect them to undertake this role? And what if he too is a serving soldier?

However necessary and useful such a duty is, a rethink is required to take account of the dispersed Army and the modern family. The combined

pressure of work and children means that, for many, playing the traditional supportive role previously expected is just not an option.

As more spouses seek to follow their career and not their soldier, organisations like the Military Wives Choir will become key. That is one of the reasons why the Army Families Federation presented the group with our Community Award.

The great thing about this project is that it's so inclusive, with everyone welcomed no matter what their motivation.

It offers a modern version of the coffee morning support network of yesteryear without such responsibility being a burden. The use of social media may create other ways for the military to reach families.

For those who do have time to spare, organisations such as Home-Start, SSAFA and Victim Support offer good volunteer opportunities and the AFF is developing its own scheme.

If the job of a commanding officer is the most difficult in the Army, getting the role of his wife right is an equal challenge.

Spousal employment, scattered allocation of units and the greater importance of the TA means that it is high time to ensure the wellbeing of families does not centre on the notion of "buy one get one free". ■

On song: Organisations such as the Military Wives Choir are playing a crucial role in the lives of Service spouses Picture: Sgt Adrian Harlen, RLC



Childcare still called for

TALK of stability, withdrawal from Afghanistan and rebasing almost had me believing that Service partners would have a couple of years of near-civilian life – until, that was, my husband returned to his unit.

As far as I am aware, his formation is not due to deploy and it has been in Tidworth (and is likely to stay there) for years.

However, life is utterly unpredictable and despite now working 15 minutes from home I see less of him than when he was based two hours away at the MoD.

He is at his desk at 0700 or out on exercise and therefore his ability to help with childcare over the school holidays is doubtful.

I am well aware this is a Service-wide issue and the Field Army in particular is used to irregular hours.

However, it makes me realise that while Army 2020 and the new employment model may paint a picture of stability, there is no guarantee of any greater degree of predictability.

My standard leave allocation does not match school holidays and it doesn't look like my soldier will be around to share the burden.

It seems I am destined to spend a fortune on holiday camps for a while longer yet.



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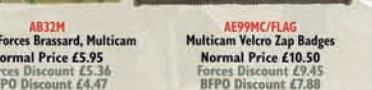
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reviews

PLOTTING A COURSE: DECEMBER'S DELIGHTS

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VIVACIOUS VIEWING



THE VICTIM out now

THIS Thai horror is a supernatural, ghost-crime film with English subtitles and if you blink, you'll lose the plot. The main character, Ting, finds herself employed as a crime scene re-enactor. As she attends each location she starts connecting with actual victims and things begin to get scary. Although the movie is well put together there are some major twists early on which if missed will ruin the whole feature. It is very much in the mould of *The Grudge* with regard to effects and camera angles but is worth a watch and does keep you guessing.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



THE RAID out now

IT is difficult to describe how gratuitously violent this film is. A rookie SWAT team is stranded in a Jakarta drug baron's tower block and must fight to the death to extract. My Indonesian isn't great but the furious pace of the action made the subtitles less of a chore. The building is full of wrong'un's, tooled up with automatic weapons, machetes or multiple levels of black belt. The martial arts genre has come a long way from the cheesy choreography of **Bruce Lee** and the frantic pace of this slickly-directed film doesn't allow you to pause for breath.

Maj Neil Johnson, AAC



WE ARE THE NIGHT out now

JUST about every horror movie released these days focuses on vampires but if you like that sort of thing, this one is for you. The heroine is a young lady called Lena (**Karoline Herfurth**) who makes a living as a small-time crook. She attends a rave, meets a 200-year-old vampire called Louise, is bitten and turns. What follows is non-stop partying and a battle between the police and her new fanged friends. Decent acting, a cracking soundtrack and an offering of lots of remarkably sexy female vamps make this title well worth a watch.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



HIJACKED out now

WATCHING this movie from director **Brandon Nutt** is a truly forgettable experience. All credit to **Randy Couture** for doing the best he could with a poorly written script and unoriginal plot. An abundance of inconsistencies – glass decanters on the plane tables just before take-off, for instance – make it implausible. This is very simple, low-budget, straight-to-DVD fodder and if you want anything more, maybe it's time to get back on the **Scorsese/Tarantino** bandwagon. Nutt should return to the drawing board.

James Alston, civvy



[REC] GENESIS out now

A SPANISH zombie film from director **Paco Plaza** which is not really worth watching. For some strange reason the movie tries to bring comedy into a series that started out as serious and terrifying. This just doesn't work. It is widely accepted that the first two episodes in the planned four-part saga were genuinely frightening and excellently put together, so watch the earlier offerings and wait until the fourth film is released to find out whether the makers can redeem themselves by going back to a successful formula.

James Alston, civvy



WIN... BRAVE

SET in the magical Highlands of Scotland, this masterful animation with a first-class voice cast follows the heroic journey of the headstrong Merida, daughter of King Fergus and Queen Elinor. Chaos is unleashed when the youngster defies an age-old custom and is granted an ill-fated wish by an eccentric witch. *Soldier* has teamed up with Disney Pixar to offer a copy of the Blu-ray to five lucky readers. To have a chance of winning, tell us where the movie is set. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Closing date: December 31

Interview: Joe Clapson

AN eye-opening feature showcasing the inspirational efforts of athletes at this year's Olympic Games has hit the shelves in time for Christmas.

First is a goosebump-inducing film which takes viewers behind the scenes with 12 first-time Olympians as they prepare for the biggest sporting show on Earth.

Director Caroline Rowland has captured the personal experiences of the elite competitors, providing a remarkable insight into the sacrifices they made to achieve greatness.

Through unprecedented access, viewers are introduced to Kenya's David Rudisha, who broke his own world record in what has since been described as the greatest 800m race of all time, Team GB's wonder-cyclist Laura Trott and British 200m sprinter James Ellington, who failed to reach the final at the Games.

Speaking to *Soldier* about his involvement with *First*, Ellington said: "I received a lot of publicity when I tried to gain sponsorship by auctioning myself on eBay and from that I think the film-makers thought I had an interesting story."

"The cameras followed me during a few training sessions, while I was eating and then actually at London 2012."

The 27-year-old (pictured right) added: "This is a title for everyone – anyone aspiring to go further in their career, whatever that is."

"It's about people achieving their dreams and all those featured have worked hard to finally get to their first Olympic Games."

Far from giving a rose-tinted view of London as a universal site of success, the movie also delves into the agony of failure.

"I underperformed a lot this year," the sprint specialist conceded.

"I wasn't complacent but I probably felt the pressure was off once I'd qualified and now I know that wasn't good enough."

"For me, the Games was a real wake-up call to show that you can never take your eye off the ball; maybe I needed London before Rio in 2016."

Despite the setback, Ellington remains as hungry for triumph as he appears in the documentary and is now focused on the future.

"My goal is to get a medal in Brazil as I see no point just aiming for the final," he said.

"I'm hoping Usain Bolt might have gone by then – it's a slight hindrance having the fastest man in history in my event!"

The gripping footage also showcases the impressive talent of Irish boxer Katie Taylor, swimmer Missy Franklin, gymnast John Orozco and sprinter Christophe Lemaitre.

"*First* proves that it doesn't matter where you have come from or what you've been told, if you believe you can make it you can," Ellington concluded. ■

OBVIOUS

PICK OF THE MONTH: FIRST

AGONY AND THE ECSTASY

DIRECTOR SHEDS LIGHT ON
REALITY OF OLYMPIC SUCCESS

OUT NOW
ON DVD

Games

DECEMBER'S
SELECTION
BOX

PICK OF THE MONTH:

BACK IN BLACK

SHOOTER EMBRACES THE FUTURE IN LATEST
INSTALMENT OF HIT FRANCHISE



DECEMBER'S
FESTIVE
FANFARE

PICK OF THE MONTH:

STRIKING THE RIGHT CHORD

SINGERS OPEN NEW CHAPTER IN SUCCESS STORY

TUNES FOR THE TROOPS

Interview: Becky Clark

LITTLE more than a year since their story of resilience and hope won the hearts of the nation and secured the Christmas number one, the ladies of the Military Wives Choir are continuing their assault on the charts.

In the space of 12 months the singing spouses have notched up a chart-topping debut album, received a Classical Brit Award and seen their ranks swell to 800 members.

Now, reunited with choirmaster and mentor Gareth Malone, they are hoping their second offering, *Stronger Together*, will match the success of their earlier releases.

Recorded over 20 days and a distance of 4,500 miles to include vocalists in Germany and Cyprus, the collection features renditions of classic hits such as *Right Here Waiting* and *When Will I See You Again*.

New numbers *Counting the Time* and the album's title track complete the set list, which Malone said was chosen to reflect the highs and lows of life as a military partner.

"There are songs about homecoming, missing people and leaving, but also about being in the choir," he told *Soldier*.

"They didn't wish to make an album that was downbeat but rather something that reflected the strength they've gained through this project.

"We wanted to write a song that expressed the sentiment that the ladies were all giving me, which is that this has been extremely positive for them. So the track *Stronger Together* is a big anthem. It's about the experience they've had singing together."

From its humble start, the choir has spread around the Forces community and more than 50 groups have registered with the newly-formed Military Wives Choir Foundation.

Set up to provide support to the rapidly-growing network, the scheme was launched at London's Wellington Barracks, where 650 members gathered to film the *Stronger Together* single – a shoot that broke the world record for the biggest music video in history.

Despite suspecting the project would be popular, Malone described its remarkable growth as "hugely gratifying".

"The success of this venture rests on the support that we have in this country for soldiers at the moment," he explained.

"Their stock has never been higher in the public's mind so we're a part of that and it's been a real honour."

Stronger Together is on sale now. For every copy sold a £1 donation will be made to the Military Wives Choir Foundation. ■

The Abbey Road Sessions by Kylie

THIS album features 16 radically reworked tracks that span **Kylie Minogue's** incredible 25-year career. Recorded at London's legendary Abbey Road Studios with a band and full orchestra, it is clear from the outset that, stripped of high-end pop production, the emotional resonance of these songs stands strong. With this type of record the end result can go either way, but there was never any doubt that this was going to be one of her best efforts to date. An absolutely brilliant offering from start to finish, which you can play over and over and just gets better each time.



Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

Bad Intentions by Dappy

SOLO album *Bad Intentions* is **Dappy's** first release since the split of hip-hop band **N-Dubz**. The rapper and singer-songwriter was quick to announce he would be producing a record after the group revealed it would be taking an indefinite hiatus, stating "I want to do the unexpected and I want to break barriers". The bad news for Dappy is I'm not sure what barriers have been broken here and that is exactly what I expected from him. This is a real middle-of-the-road offering, not good but not too bad. If you're a massive fan you'll love it, if not I wouldn't bother.



Cpl Adam Jackson, 3 Para

House of Gold and Bones Part One

WITH three solid releases already behind them this was a make-or-break moment for **Stone Sour** and they have responded with their best work. Opening with fan favourites *Gone Sovereign* and *Absolute Zero*, they have returned to heavier times and are easily surpassing their previous efforts. Melodic track *Taciturn* shows that **Corey Taylor** can still bang out an incredible ballad in what is one of his best efforts in an illustrious ten-year career. Tracks such as *Tired*, *RU486* and *Influence of a Drowsy God* also shine and with the album's second chapter imminent, it is easy to see why some are saying 2013 could be Stone Sour's year.



Pte Stephen McManus, 1 Yorks

Halcyon by Ellie Goulding

IF, like myself, you were expecting the new album from **Ellie Goulding** to be packed with gentle offbeat tracks, think again. As an artist she hasn't quite settled into a genre yet and this record is proof of that. Featuring a blend of dubstep and synth, it is a very mixed offering that may not be to everyone's taste. It is hard to escape the feeling that Goulding hasn't really found where she wants to be and sometimes puts a little too much into the songs. However, there are some really good tracks including *Anything Could Happen* and *Dead in the Water* that make *Halcyon* worth a chance in anyone's library.



Sgt Craig Backhouse, Coldm Gds

Until Now by Swedish House Mafia

HAVING recently announced their split, this superb compilation from **Swedish House Mafia** has been released to accompany the trio's farewell tour. Boasting a blend of original material and remixes including the smash hits *Miami to Ibiza* and *Atom/Leave the World Behind*, *Until Now* ticks all the boxes for those seeking heady beats and pulsating rhythms. Snippets from **Coldplay** and **Florence and The Machine** are thrown into the pot as the dance supergroup create a euphoric soundtrack to the live shows they have become famed for.



Richard Long, Soldier

18 Months by Calvin Harris

THE release of third album *18 Months* signifies a firm breakthrough into the musical big leagues for **Calvin Harris**. This offering has spawned six hit singles to date and the Scottish star has been a firm favourite on radio playlists throughout 2012. His success has been aided by an impressive roll call of vocal talent that includes **Rihanna** and **Dizzee Rascal** and his dance-by-numbers approach has yielded consistent, if not spectacular, results. While this offering lacks variation, it still proves enjoyable and will be welcomed by those who crave a more mainstream feel to this genre. Look elsewhere for a harder edge.



Richard Long, Soldier

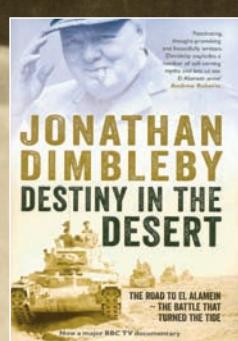
DOOKS



PICK OF THE MONTH:

TURNING THE TIDE

BROADCASTER RE-EXAMINES EPIC
ENCOUNTER AT EL ALAMEIN



Exploding myths: Jonathan Dimbleby's *Destiny in the Desert* is out now in hardback

Main picture: The National Army Museum

Interview: Becky Clark

THIS year marked the 70th anniversary of the British and Allied victory at El Alamein, famously described by Churchill as "not the beginning of the end, but perhaps the end of the beginning" of the Second World War.

But the significance of the 1942 encounter between Rommel and Montgomery compared to the titanic battles fought on the European and Russian fronts is subjective.

In his new book, *Destiny in the Desert*, broadcaster and writer Jonathan Dimbleby argues that the confrontation was far more than a sideshow to the wider conflict.

"Essentially I wanted to explain why the campaign was pivotal to the story of the Second World War and not peripheral, as some have assumed in the past," explained the author.

"A bit like in a soap opera, there are scenes in London, others in Rome and some on the battlefield. I tried to link the grave decisions being made on war and peace with the extraordinary demands placed on individuals on all sides."

Writing the title, which was accompanied by a BBC documentary, proved to be both a personal and a professional journey for Dimbleby.

His father, Richard, was the BBC's Middle East correspondent and his journal from the conflict provided the initial inspiration for the project.

"His diary vividly described the heat and the cold, the flies and the misery of life in a very 'unbeautiful' desert," said the 68-year-old.

"You can create a powerful impression for yourself of those long days of awful fear and boredom and the unpleasant conditions.

"I suspect they didn't think as much about fighting for the great cause that Churchill was so eloquently articulating as 'how do we get through the next day, and the one after?'

"That mixture of danger and tedium probably isn't very different from what soldiers endure in Afghanistan at present, although in the Second World War it was clear that you were fighting for the survival of your country, while today the motivations are rather more complicated," added the writer, whose son-in-law is an Army officer.

While those fighting in 1942 coped heroically with unimaginable hardship, the book offers a less favourable view of the decision makers – in particular questioning Montgomery's enduring status as the hero of El Alamein.

Described as a "psychopath" by Eisenhower and more charitably as "disagreeable" by Churchill, Monty had a huge advantage in troops and equipment by the time he went into battle. Victory was all but assured, yet he chose to disparage the contributions of his predecessors, most notably those of Gen Claude Auchinleck.

"There's no doubt Montgomery had the capacity to inspire, but in order to promote himself he cruelly denigrated Auchinleck, claiming he had been about to retreat further – so gross a libel that his memoirs later had to remove the unfounded allegations," explained Dimbleby.

"That, I'm afraid, was his character; so vainglorious, so self-promoting that he was prepared to do down a fellow officer to achieve his status. But 'to the victor belong the spoils'."

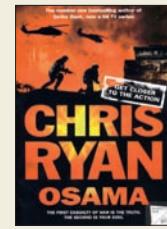
In a genre awash with accounts of El Alamein, *Destiny in the Desert* offers the layman a thought-provoking and readable version of events while providing scholars with plenty of fodder for discussion. An obvious stocking filler. ■

RECONNOITRING READING

Osama

by Chris Ryan

IDEAL for conspiracy theorists, this latest offering from **Chris Ryan** sees protagonist, Joe Mansfield and his family caught up in a terrorist plot that starts on the night Osama



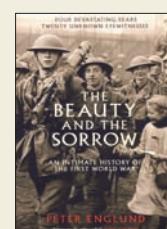
Bin Laden is killed. I was hooked from the first page. My children were neglected and my Open University assignment abandoned until I'd reached the conclusion, which departed from the usual 'home in time for tea and medals' format. Without wishing to spoil the ending, if Joe should appear in a sequel to continue his mission, I would not hesitate to pick up a copy.

Sgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps

The Beauty and the Sorrow

by Peter Englund

THIS is a fascinating insight into the First World War through the words of the people who experienced the conflict rather than from the historian's perspective. The title would make a great coffee table book; one to pick up and read a few pages of when you have ten or 15 minutes to spare. Its structure also means you don't have to digest it in strict order but can dip in and out instead. I can't help but think that history lessons at school would have been a lot more enjoyable if texts like this had been included on the curriculum.

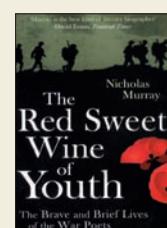


Rick Wilson, civvy

The Red Sweet Wine of Youth

by Nicholas Murray

THE trouble with this book is that it is neither poetry, nor history. **Nicholas Murray** has rewritten the fascinating story of the brief lives and collected works of the Great War poets, a tale that has perhaps been told too many times before. Well-researched, to the point of having too much information crammed into it, the title is accessible to the interested reader, but unless you have a burning curiosity about the early lives of **Sassoon, Owen** and their lesser-known contemporaries, I would advise you to move on to something else.



Tpr Dominic Kirby, R Wx Y

Warlords

by Kimberly Marten

AMERICAN author **Kimberly Marten** provides an academic review of the effects of warlords in areas of instability. Using Pakistan, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Iraq



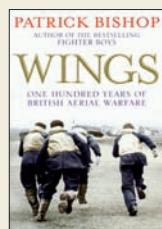
as case studies, she develops a number of hypotheses as to how these leaders arise and operate. The conclusion is no surprise: warlords are bad in every respect. It also reveals how sponsorship of tribal commanders by state powers can backfire. Any gains in short-term security create resentment elsewhere. A useful reminder of what can happen in ungoverned space.

Lt Col Andy Gladen, RE

Wings

by Patrick Bishop

PATRICK Bishop has a well-deserved reputation as an aviation historian. This book follows on the slipstream of his previous bestsellers, *Fighter Boys* and



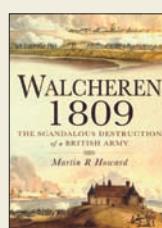
Bomber Boys. As with his earlier works, the tempo and content of his latest offering is excellent. I was engaged from the first page onwards and thoroughly enjoyed every chapter, from the initial days of the Army's Royal Flying Corps, to the modern Royal Air Force. If I have one criticism, it is that there are not enough photographs. A few maps would also add to what is a very good book.

Maj Mike Peters, AAC

Walcheren 1809

by Martin Howard

THE Walcheren expedition was one of the British Army's worst disasters of the Napoleonic Wars. Nearly 40,000 troops sailed in a powerful fleet to attack Antwerp but became bogged down on the island that gave the tragedy its name. Enemy action killed 106 men, disease some 8,000. **Martin Howard**, a hospital consultant with a long-standing interest in the era, is the ideal historian to discuss this catastrophe. He has consulted a mass of primary and secondary materials and the eye-catching cover is one of his own illustrations. Warmly recommended.



Dr Rodney Atwood, military historian

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WEATHERPROOF, rugged and lightweight, this device from Memory-Map has a 2.8-inch colour touchscreen and high sensitivity GPS receiver. Capable of displaying full Great Britain 1:50K Ordnance Survey maps, it can be used as an in-car satnav and has a range of accessories including additional mapping and a golf application.

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THIS gadget is billed as Garmin's biggest and toughest handheld navigator. The versatile unit boasts a four-inch touchscreen that offers wide-angle views of the way ahead, a barometric altimeter and compass. Routes can be shared via wireless data transfer and a built-in digital camera allows you to capture key locations on your trip.

ADVENTURER 3500 £380

MEMORY-Map's *Adventurer 3500* comes ready to use out of the box with a large 3.5-inch touchscreen and a high waterproof rating. Pre-loaded with Ordnance Survey Landranger 1:50K mapping, it is the ideal aid for planning routes. New owners get a free subscription to www.trailzilla.com to share their adventures online.



GARMIN ETREX 20 £169.99

COMING in slightly cheaper than its sibling, the *eTrex 20* is the ideal tool for those keen to sample the hi-tech treasure hunt known as geocaching. Download data from www.opencaching.com and let it guide you on the trail. The unit has a user-friendly interface, is lightweight, waterproof and can be operated in gloved hands.

PLAN YOUR ROUTE

SOLDIER DISCOUNT

THE good people at Memory-Map are bestowing some festive cheer by offering readers a discounted rate on the two devices featured in this issue. The *Adventurer 2800* can be purchased for £179, while the *Adventurer 3500* is available for £259. Call 0844 8110950 or visit www.memory-map.co.uk and quote "Soldier".



Top 10

Review: Richard Long

AS a complete novice in the world of GPS systems it was somewhat difficult to know what to expect from Garmin's latest addition to the fold.

The *Fenix* breaks the mould by coming as a wristwatch, as opposed to the usual handheld devices on the market, and this makes it the ideal companion for mountaineers, hikers, trail runners and outdoor enthusiasts.

With so many functions to pack into the impressive unit you could be forgiven for expecting this navigator to be bulky and cumbersome. However, it is anything but.

True, it is slightly bigger than your average watch but it sits comfortably on the wrist and a lightweight design ensures it is not a burden.

While obviously smaller than its pocket-sized rivals, the *Fenix* still packs a punch courtesy of its almost endless array of features.

An altimeter and 3D compass provide accurate directional data and a barometer indicates any upcoming weather changes and provides precise temperature readings.

The display boasts a bright LED backlight to help users at night and vibration and tone alerts can be set to mark significant checkpoints.

But it is as a navigational tool where this system comes into its own.

If you are expecting to glance at the watch and discover detailed Ordnance Survey mapping you are going to be disappointed, but this really is not a problem.

The *Fenix* is compatible with Garmin's free route-planning software meaning trips can be organised in detail on your computer.

The programme allows you to create a series of waypoints along the designated path which can then be uploaded to the portable device.

This works superbly in the field as the watch guides you in the right direction and counts down the distance remaining on each leg. If you run into any difficulties such as thick fog, a trackback function allows you to safely retrace your steps.

With your route complete, the *Fenix* provides a detailed breakdown of your efforts including total distance covered and elevation reached.

At £349.99 it doesn't come cheap, but as a rugged wristwatch that combines traditional clock, date and timer capabilities with the tools you need to tame the wilds it certainly represents value for money. ■

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SOLDIER SPORT

ARMY BOXERS TESTED BY SCOTTISH STARS IN SERVICES SHOWDOWN

PICTURE: GRAEME MAIN





Line breaker: Army wing LCpl Ben Seru (RE) created two tries for the Combined Services but his efforts failed to prevent a 31-29 defeat to Crawshay's Welsh

Forces falter on Welsh frontier

Rugby stars squander 19-point advantage in remembrance showpiece

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

THE Combined Services saw their hopes of glory in rugby union's annual remembrance match dashed by just two points as the Crawshay's Welsh XV celebrated victory in Pontypridd.

Despite leading 19-7 at the interval, the military men slipped to an agonising 31-29 defeat at a windswept Sardis Road to suffer their third successive loss in the showpiece fixture.

The early exchanges pointed to a positive outcome for the Services as Royal Air Force hooker Darrell Craig crashed to the line inside the opening five minutes, leaving fullback Cpl Ceri Cummings (REME, pictured right) with a simple conversion chance.

Crawshay's were then dealt a hammer blow from the restart as Army wing LCpl Ben Seru (RE) collected the ball and broke clear out wide.

The speedster was tackled deep in rival territory but with a host of marauding teammates in support the ball was swiftly moved across the field, where a grateful LBdr Sam Speight (RA) was on hand to cross in the corner.

Seru found himself in the thick of the action once more on the half-hour mark as his searing pace saw him break through opposition lines before offloading to LCpl Peceli Nacamavuto (RE) for an easy score.

Cummings kicked the extras to extend the lead but the Welshmen opened their account in the dying embers of the first period as fullback Joe Nellany sprinted to the line for a converted try.

The fightback continued after the interval when skipper

Lee Evans punched his way through the Services' defence to create space for teammate Sean Higgins to touch down.

Dorian Jones then slotted the extras before Cummings stemmed the tide with a well-struck penalty.

With a host of replacements joining the fray the contest lost a certain degree of momentum but Crawshay's closed the gap further with their third try of the evening in the 59th minute.

Having been camped in the Services' 22, the ball was worked wide to the left where wing Owen Broad ghosted home.

Jones continued his accuracy with the boot from the resulting conversion and put his side into the lead for the first time with a penalty





Pictures: Shane Wilkinson

on 64 minutes.

However, Royal Navy scrum half POAET Dave Pascoe fired an immediate response as he danced his way to the line but Higgins struck the decisive blow just minutes later as he rounded off a sweeping passing move to score.

The Services chased hard in the closing stages but they failed to create a clear opening as Crawshay's held firm to claim a famous win.

Speaking at full-time, assistant coach SSgt Axel Rees (REME) said: "We are really disappointed. After going 19-0 up we made a lot of changes and we wanted to get everyone out on the field.

"It is the remembrance game and the crowd were entertained but you have to credit Crawshay's for coming back the way they did.

"At half-time we decided to make some substitutions and there may have been a slight feeling that we had the game won.

"I thought the Army lads did well. We had some last-minute fallouts, LSgt Matt Dwyer (WG) had played for Ospreys and LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) was with Bath, but that gave others an opportunity to shine.

"With it being an international week Crawshay's were able to call on some Premiership players so we did well to take it as close as we did."

History makers: The Royal Engineers beat The Wanderers 7-1 in a replay of the 1872 FA Cup final

Sappers sink old foes

THE Royal Engineers re-wrote history with a 7-1 victory over The Wanderers in a replay of the very first FA Cup Final at The Kia Oval.

In the original match in 1872 the sappers slipped to a 1-0 defeat but the military men emphatically gained their revenge 140 years later as they raced to a 6-0 lead at half-time.

Skipper LCpl James Hubbard started the goal rush after ten minutes and his strike set the tone for a memorable night at the famous venue.

"It feels fantastic to win," he said. "This has been

140 years in the making and to open the game up with the first goal was particularly nice. There were a lot of nerves coming out on the pitch. To score first took the pressure off the whole team and it gave us confidence to pass back and forth and really enjoy the game."

The 1872 tie was played at The Oval in Kennington, London, which was used as a general sporting arena.

The Royal Engineers were an officer-only team at the time and were highly praised for their innovative use of passing in an era when most sides relied solely on dribbling tactics.

"Passing the ball and moving it around is still the way we like to play football," added Hubbard. "It's a team game and these sports are a big part of the Army.

"The engineers have quite an extensive history in the game and this was a prestigious match to play in."





Holding on: The Australian Services weathered a sustained spell of second-half pressure to claim a slender 13-10 victory over the Army women in Aldershot

Tourists triumph on Army turf

Report: Richard Long

Pictures: Graeme Main

A TRY inside the opening three minutes helped the touring Australian Services Rugby Union team to a narrow 13-10 victory over the Army women.

Having already defeated the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy on their autumn trip, the visitors made the perfect start to the contest as Cpl Emma-Lee Wood sprinted clear on the right wing to score under the posts and put the Reds on the back foot.

With howling wind and driving rain engulfing the Army Rugby Stadium, both sides struggled for momentum but the hosts battled their way back into the match through the superb Cpl Dani Phan (Int Corps).

The Servicewomen forced a scrum deep in opposition territory and the ball was switched infield for the hard-running centre to crash to the line following several strong phases.

But the Australians fired a rapid response after the home team were punished for an offside offence. A quick break saw the play spin wide to the left, where Pte Brae Grant danced through the defence to score.

The Army fought hard but struggled to create any clear scoring opportunities and their rivals stretched their lead with a well-struck penalty on the stroke of half-time.

The second period started in quiet

fashion as the elements continued to be a factor but the contest was reignited when Capt Rebecca Homer (RLC) was sin-binned for a high tackle.

Instead of pressing home their advantage, the Australians saw their

opponents roar into life and skipper Cpl Sarah Mitchelson (RLC) reduced the arrears with a well-worked try from a swiftly taken penalty.

The score created the backdrop for a grandstand finale but the Army failed to post further points as the visitors clung onto their slender lead.

Speaking at full-time, Army coach Capt Glyn Barraclough (RLC) said he was delighted with his side's showing in what was his first game at the helm.

"I am very pleased with the performance, but the result is a little disappointing," he told *SoldierSport*.

"The players worked hard in training and took a lot of what we did in practise out on to the park. They did well.

"We were up against a very strong and committed Australian team who have been together for three weeks and were playing their third fixture of the tour.

"This was my first game as head coach and I can only take positives from it; there are no negatives.

"The weather was pretty bad and there was some rustiness among some of the squad members, which comes from not playing week in, week out.

"The team was based on the Inter-Services group from last year but come January, when we face the Scottish development side, we hope to have a few new faces involved.

"The Forces competition is our priority this season but we also want to perform to the best of our ability in the other games as well." ■



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FROM THE TEAM

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Racers reflect on track debut

Interview: Richard Long
Picture: Graeme Main

THE Army sports car racing team is looking to put more drivers on the grid for 2013 following a successful debut campaign.

Having competed against their rivals from the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy this season, the soldiers are hoping to double their number as the discipline continues to reap the benefits of full sporting status within the Service.

Unlike other track events, the winner is decided by consistency of performance as opposed to out-and-out pace, making it highly attractive to a wide-ranging audience.

"There are some really quick cars out there but the best thing about this is the fact that two vehicles which are totally different can compete," team secretary WO1 Mark Saunders (REME) told *SoldierSport*.

"Parity is created by a clever system of taking the fastest lap and dividing it by the average lap time to get a

percentage score. Whoever gets closest to 100 per cent is the winner.

"If you have a fast car you are in danger of catching the traffic at the back, but those going round in something not so quick can have a clear lap. Consistency is the key."

Saunders' season was disrupted by mechanical problems as he had to rebuild the engine on his Sierra Cosworth RS500 (pictured), but the racer made up for lost time once the action got under way.

He said: "This is our first year and it has been really good, we've done quite well for ourselves.

"All motor disciplines are now recognised as Army sports which is great and allows us to compete at different events while serving.

"We had three dedicated guys on the team but next season we are looking at six or seven.

"There are people out there who take race cars to track days so we need to get the message across so they can join the fold.

"Our aim for 2012 was to promote what we do and it has been very good from that point of view. Hopefully guys will ring up wanting to get involved."

Sports car racing is seen as a stepping stone to other disciplines and Saunders believes it is the perfect way to welcome newcomers to the pit lane.

"They can progress from novice level to events such as the Britcar 24-hour race," he explained.

"Circuit racing is the pinnacle of what we do but our mission is to give serving soldiers an opportunity to get involved in motorsport for the first time.

"If you are a brigadier it is easy but for a full screw or sergeant it costs a serious amount of money.

"We can offset some of the expense and now it is recognised as a sport we can help with travel bills as well.

"I know there are guys in the Army who have race cars so we need them to come forward."

For more information on the sport and how to get involved contact WO1 Saunders on military 94222 2197. ■





Pole position: The Army team celebrated Inter-Services glory in their first season of competitive racing

Karting kings hit top spot

ARMY karters capped a superb first season on the track by lifting the Inter-Services championship.

The squad competed in five races during the course of the year to triumph over the Royal Air Force and an emerging Royal Navy team.

With a hard-fought campaign behind them, the soldiers are now looking forward to getting back on the grid in 2013 when securing further bragging rights over their military rivals will again be the number one priority.

"We race for two to four hours at each event and it can be very competitive," said Sgt Craig Czornyi (REME), the outfit's 2iC and mechanic.

"At the racers' brief we are told to take it easy and enjoy ourselves but as soon as we get on the track all that changes.

"There is a varying amount of talent on show, we have some good guys and so do the RAF. The Navy have only just started out; they came in for the last race and were very tough.

"This was our first full campaign. We

did half a season in 2011 and began this year with a few issues but we finished really strongly.

"There were just three of us who started the Army set-up and we also formed the 11 Training Battalion, REME team. It has grown from there and now we want to progress even further.

"Next season we would like to defend our Inter-Services crown and we are also looking to compete at the Le Mans 24-hour karting event."

With the team aiming high for 2013 the search is on for emerging talent to join the ranks.

"We are always looking for new members and we will be holding trials in March for any up-and-coming racers," Czornyi added.

"If they come along as novices but prove themselves to be good enough we can try to find a place for them on the team.

"A background in the sport is preferable but not essential."

For more information visit the squad's Facebook and Armynet pages.



SPORT SHORTS

AN Army sergeant who swam her way into the record books after becoming the first female soldier to cross the English Channel unaided has been presented with a top award.

Sgt Amy Baker (AFC Harrogate) completed the 24-mile challenge in 18hrs 35mins and has received the Director General's Commendation, which recognises the exceptional achievements of personnel working at Service training establishments.

Her efforts raised £4,000 for ABF The Soldiers' Charity and a further £4,000 for the special care baby unit at Harrogate and District Hospital.

MIXED martial arts stars Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para) and Bryan Creighton (2 Lancs, pictured) will be tested in an explosive night of action at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena this month.

Having claimed an emphatic victory over Andrew Punshon in his last bout, Marshman will face Xavier Foupa-Pokam in a middleweight clash on December 1.

The fight is included on the card for the British Association of Mixed Martial Arts (BAMMA) 11 show, which also sees Creighton locking horns with Nathan Greyson.

The soldier has a successful background in Thai boxing and scored a win by majority decision at his first MMA contest in July.

"I am honoured to be fighting on the biggest show in the UK and I promise to raise the bar," he said.



ARMY swimmers return to the pool this month as part of the Combined Services squad that will square off against the Civil Service and British Police in Aldershot.

The triangular tournament will see athletes go head-to-head in water polo, diving and swimming at the end of a successful year for the soldiers.

Capt Alex Hardy (RE) completed the triple crown at the Inter-Services open water swimming championships as well as a solo swim across the English Channel in a time of 10hrs 20mins and the Zurich Lake Marathon in 7hrs 30mins.

The Reds suffered a defeat against the Royal Air Force at the Jersey relay challenge but in the pool the Army's water polo team continued to progress and downed the Royal Navy 12-9 to take their first win at the Inter-Services for a number of years.

The divers swept the board yet again, while the women's swimming team dominated the field.



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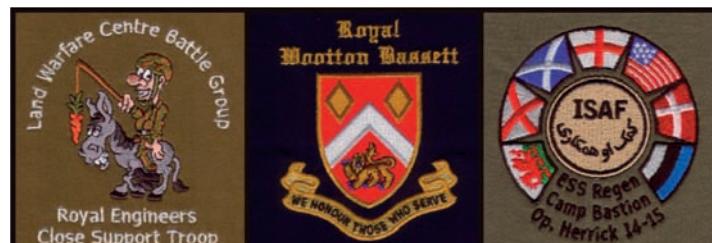
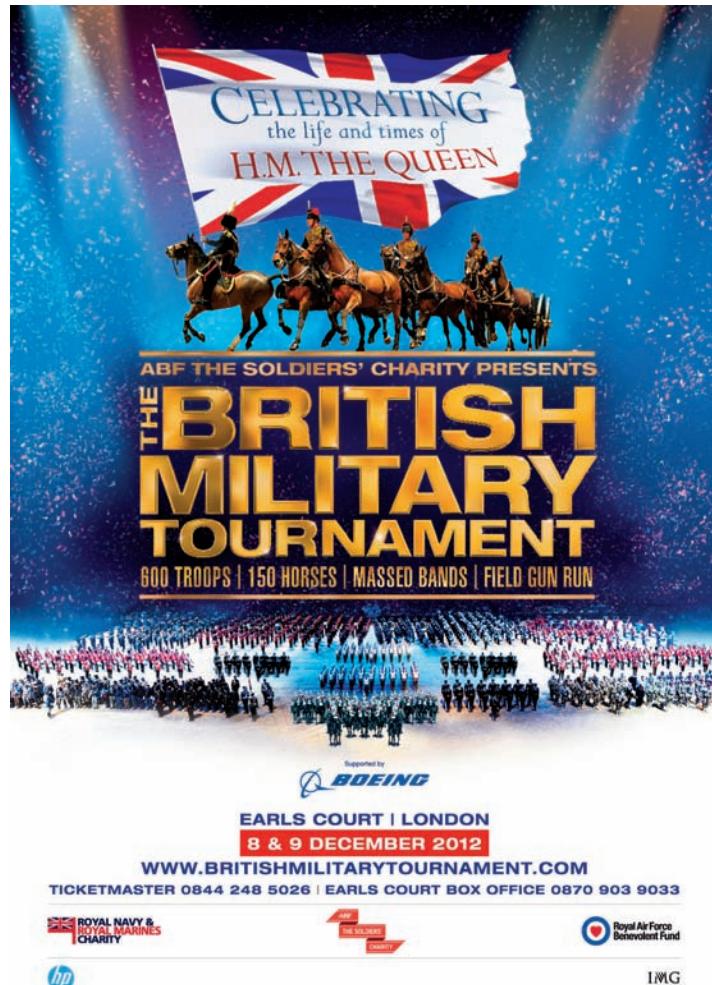
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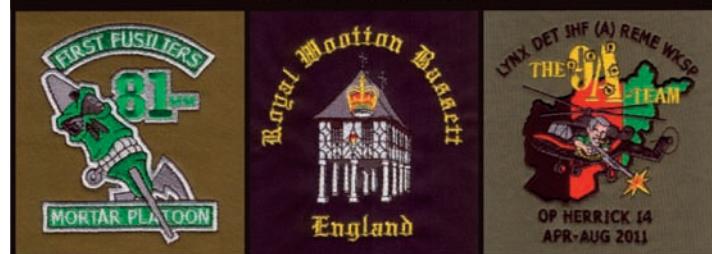
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Scots shade Services showdown

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

AN Army-dominated Combined Services team fell agonisingly short in their boxing clash with a hard-hitting Scotland squad at ATC Pirbright last month.

The Forces fighters trailed their international opponents 3-1 at the interval before the outstanding Gnr Jimmy Randall (7 Para RHA) emphatically floored his rival to fire the military men back into the contest.

But the classy Craig McIntyre killed any hopes of a comeback as he used his height and reach advantage to pick off Rfn Bradley Heeley (Rifles) and seal victory via a unanimous judges' decision.

The result gave the Scots an unassailable lead but the setback failed to deter Spr Kristian Touze (RE, pictured above), who produced a blistering display in the final bout of the evening.

Four-time Scottish champion Mark McKeown proved to be a formidable opponent for the Army ace, who was subjected to a flurry of blows as soon as the bell sounded.

Touze suffered a cut in the second round but held firm and traded shots with McKeown in a frantic display of boxing that thrilled the crowd.

The Serviceman maintained the pace in the final period and was awarded the

win by majority decision – much to the disappointment of the Scottish team.

The evening started in promising style for the hosts as Spr Tommy Leigh (RE) defeated rival skipper Stewart Burt.

Leigh shaded a tight opening round and built on his advantage to take the bout via a unanimous decision.

Former Team GB fighter Aston Brown was too strong for Spr Shane Saddler (RE), who received two standing counts that ended his hopes of victory.

Brown made an electrifying start but the Army man weathered the storm and worked his way back into the contest with some decent shots.

But the second round proved to be the turning point as Saddler was knocked down before being stopped again following a brutal attack.

The sapper mounted a spirited comeback in the latter stages but Brown held firm to square the contest.

Army big gun Spr Adam Whitfield (RE) failed to hit top form against Scott

McCormack and his lack of fluidity proved costly as his opponent took the win via a majority decision.

Scottish champion Connor Law matched McCormack's effort against SAC Adam Watson (pictured below) before Randall took to the ring for the fight of the night with James Dickie.

After a tight first round, the Serviceman sent his opponent to the canvas with a succession of well-directed blows. Dickie returned to action following a standing count but Randall delivered a second stinging assault that saw the referee end the contest prematurely.

Speaking after his team's 4-3 defeat, Randall was full of praise for the Scotland squad. He said: "They more than proved their worth in what were some evenly fought contests."

"For me personally it was a great win. I had a slow start and was edging on the side of caution but I knew I had him in the second round when I knocked him down.

"It has done my confidence the world of good and this is a great platform for the Army lads to build upon ahead of the Combined Services." ■



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A BRACE from Sgt Keith Emmerson (RAPTC) steered the Army to a resounding 3-0 win over Middlesex in the opening match of the Southern Counties Cup. The winger fired past the keeper from the edge of the box midway through the second half before sealing victory with a close-range effort following a neat cutback from the byline. Star striker Sig Sam Agar (R Signals, pictured) set the Reds on their way with an astute finish from a one-on-one late in the first period.

Army tested on Asian tour

THE Army cricket team has returned from a three-match series in Pakistan, having become the first side to tour the country since 2009.

A strong Reds squad was assembled for the trip and the players were in buoyant mood following their Inter-Services triumph in July.

However, the Pakistan Army proved to be formidable opposition and the team's meticulous preparations paid dividends as they secured a 3-0 win over the visiting soldiers in some highly competitive fixtures.

The tour made headline news in the cricket-obsessed country with large crowds watching the games, which were also broadcast live on television.

SSgt Dan Webb (HQ DIC, pictured) and LBdr Sherwen Govender (RA) were the pick of the Army's batsmen, while the bowling honours were shared between skipper LCpl Jacques Prinsloo (RE), LCpl Jay Boynton and LCpl Clive Kyangungu (both REME).

The highlight of the tour was a Twenty20 fixture against a Pakistan Cricket Board XI at the Pindi Stadium – a venue that has been deprived of test cricket for the past four years.

The hosts were skippered by Umar Gul and included eight other international stars in their side.

To redress the balance the Army were loaned Imran Nazir, Azhar Ali and Shoaib Malik but they slipped to a narrow defeat in a superb game.

Babar Azam top scored for the PCB XI with an excellent 62 not out and Aizaz Cheena and Yasir Arafat maintained the pressure with the ball. But Prinsloo took the man-of-the-match award thanks to a spell of 3-18 from four overs, while LCpl Russell Emmanuel (LD) hit a quick-fire 39.

The week-long tour was staged as a defence diplomacy exercise to enhance the relationship between the two armies. ■



SPORT SHORTS

■ **MARKSMEN** from the Gloucestershire Army Cadet Force produced a near-perfect performance on the ranges to be crowned Inter-Services UK national champions.

The side won six out of seven matches and brought home eight trophies as they defeated outfits from across the country.

Team manager Lt Natalie Berry said: "They coped extremely well with the pressure of performing at national level, especially as there were several matches that were only introduced this year.

"They completely dominated the whole competition and I am extremely proud to be in charge of such a dedicated and hard-working group."

■ **ICONIC** British boxing brand Lonsdale is continuing its support for UK personnel by becoming the official equipment and apparel supplier to the Army team.

The squad will use the kit throughout the season and similar deals have also been announced with the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.



Lonsdale managing director Ian Campbell said: "The coming together of these two institutions allows us to give something back and shows our appreciation of the outstanding commitment to our country these men and women demonstrate."

■ **EARLY** entries are being sought for next year's RAF Akrotiri International Festival of Rugby.

The ten-a-side competition will take place from May 27 to 31 and organisers hope to invite up to 16 male teams and six female sides.

For further information or to register an interest contact Steve Williams on 07961 891449 or via theoldgoat@ntlworld.com

■ **A SUCCESSFUL** haul at Rutland Water saw the Army celebrate its first win at the Inter-Services fly-fishing championships in six years.

The soldiers triumphed over the Royal Air Force by just 4lbs, while SSgt Del Spry was crowned individual champion after he landed four fish that weighed in at 10lb 6oz.

The victory capped a terrific year for the team as they also won group two of the Association of Major Fly-Fishing Clubs and will compete in the top flight next season.

Anyone interested in joining the set-up should contact Capt Simon Elson on 01622 767222 or visit the squad's website www.soldierpalmers.co.uk

Soldiers chase global gold

Iron Man athletes set for Hawaiian adventure at world championships

Interviews: Richard Long
Picture: Graeme Main

ARMY athletes LCpl Becky Hoare and WO2 Glyn Painter (both REME) have booked their place at the toughest endurance race on the planet after hitting top form at this season's Iron Man Wales.

The duo will jet to Hawaii in October for the sport's world championships, which boast a 2.4-mile rough water swim followed by a 112-mile cycle ride and full marathon.

Hoare (pictured far right) qualified for the punishing event after completing the Welsh course in a time of 11hrs 41mins in what proved to be a sensational Iron Man debut.

The 22-year-old's effort saw her win the competition's under-24 age category and she was also crowned Army champion.

"My aim was just to finish the race," the super-fit Servicewoman told *SoldierSport*.

"I would have been over the moon with a time under 13 hours so to perform as well as I did was a total surprise. I literally couldn't believe it.

"It was my first Iron Man



and I was going in blind. I had done all the training but it was still a massive shock to the system.

"The aim was to do the race to see how I got on. There are two competitions in Britain each year and I was looking at the Bolton leg in 2013 as a means of qualifying.

"To book my place at the world championships so early is fantastic. I now want to have a consistent year without any injuries and work towards my training programme for Hawaii."

Hoare only started her triathlon career after joining the Army but soon sought a new challenge that would push the boundaries of her endurance.

"I had always done running, swimming and cycling but triathlon was a chance to put them all together," she explained.

"The Iron Man is more demanding. Anyone can race for a couple of hours but for 12, 13 or 14 is something totally different."

For Painter (pictured left), the world championships represent unfinished business as an injury forced him to walk 20 miles of the marathon in the 2009 competition.

He suffered further setbacks a year later but a third-place finish in his age category in Wales saw him book his spot at the 2013 showdown.

"I didn't really put a lot of pressure on myself ahead of the event," he said. "If you tell people you are going to race and qualify you have to go out and do it."

"A lot of things can go wrong in this sport. I have now got a complete year to rest and then get ready. Next season is all about one race."

"I took a full month off after Iron Man Wales. I have just done a small duathlon but the real training will start in January. We will have a nine-month programme before we head off to the world championships."

"I did not perform last time and knew I could do better but nothing is a given out there in Hawaii. This year's race had some tough conditions in terms of heat, humidity and winds. You have to go with an open mind, prepare well and hope it all comes together."

"I would like to be in the top 20 for my age group and in the top 100 overall. That would be a great achievement. One of the Army guys did the course in 10hrs 1min last year and that is another target."

"I have had nearly as many seasons out injured as I have competing."

"I have had surgery on my back and if it gets catastrophically bad you have to ask if it is all worth it."

"I have got lots of injuries to manage but at the moment things are good."

HAWAII'S TRIPLE THREAT



THE Iron Man World Championships are now in their 34th year and the race begins with the 2.4-mile Waikiki rough water swim.

Competitors face a mass start and currents can be a factor so pre-race practice in the bay is strongly advised by organisers.

Water temperatures are around 79 degrees Fahrenheit and athletes can expect an emotionally charged opening leg with enthusiastic spectators and the sun rising over Mount Hualalai.

HAVING completed an energy-sapping swim, racers take to the saddle for the 112-mile around O'ahu bike stage.

As cyclists make their way from Kailua-Kona to the turnaround in Hawi they can be subjected to intense winds that hit the exposed western and northern coasts of the island.

Heavy blasts may blow entrants across the road and disc wheels are not permitted. Gusts may subside during the gradual climb to Hawi but pick up again en route to transition.

WITH two punishing stages behind them athletes face the prospect of the 26.2-mile Honolulu Marathon before finally completing their challenge.

The course takes runners through the town of Kailua-Kona before climbing the Palani Road towards Hawaii's natural energy laboratory.

Spectators line the streets but competitors can expect less cheer from the weather. Unless cloud cover or nightfall spares them, they should anticipate high heat and humidity.



final word



At the end of another eventful year for Service personnel, we asked members of 251 Signal Squadron what has defined the British Army during 2012

INTERVIEWS: JOE CLAPSON
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



LCpl Matthew Vine

I think we have proved how versatile the British Army is, even through times of change and restructuring. The Olympics, operations in Afghanistan and ceremonial duties such as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee have all demonstrated that we are one of the best militaries in the world. The Games was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I was very impressed with our work.



LCpl Peter Hiron

Britain's sense of patriotism has defined 2012 with notable events including the Olympics, Jubilee celebrations and the Queen's birthday. Every time I went to London I was surprised how the public responded to us in such a positive way. Thousands of people cheering and families with children asking for pictures outshone talk of redundancies.



Cpl Martin Connarty

In 2012 Service personnel have shown the public just how adaptable we can be to the external demands placed upon us. A few guys from this unit have been made redundant but we have carried on with our role. I watched the Olympics in plain clothes and it was brilliant to see how civilians reacted to soldiers. I was surprised to discover how positive people were towards those in uniform.



Cpl Egan Ridguard

Even with the recent redundancies we have coped well, working on operations, the Diamond Jubilee, the Olympics and day-to-day duties. This has proved to the world that we are a flexible and very professional army. Personally, what sticks in my mind is Exercise Bruno Rock, where our unit tried tunnel warfare, learnt about the Second World War and enhanced our military skills.



Sig Dan Lightfoot

This year has been about bridging the gap between the Forces and the general public. I deployed on Op Olympics after being asked to step up at short notice and I think people appreciated our work. With the Diamond Jubilee also a feature, 2012 has been the year of the Union flag. The relationship between soldiers and civilians has become much closer.



LCpl Oliver Kent-Smith

The last 12 months have been much about pride and remaining very busy, with numerous ceremonial events, the Games and our own exercises. Moving forward we can take a lot from these experiences. Op Olympics stands out as particularly memorable because I met the likes of Mark Cavendish and Prime Minister David Cameron, who shook my hand and said thanks.



LCpl Paul Eldridge

What sticks out for me is the Queen's Muster parade at Windsor for the whole Armed Forces. It was a privilege to be selected and to see the crowds turn out. To be received so well was very nice. Redundancies have also been a big part of the year and we have lost personnel in this squadron. With troops now leaving service, 2013 will be a case of tightening up and stretching our resources.



Sgt Ryan Evans

I returned from Afghanistan just in time for the Olympics and my troop was involved, which was great to see. There was so much pride and the guys will never get the chance to work on a similar event again. The redundancies have impacted on us considerably as a high-readiness squadron because there is reduced flexibility until the Reserves are asked to step up.

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