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pages

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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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Cover picture

Fast lady: Winter Olympic hopeful Cpl Adele Turner, 29 Regiment RLC, in action at the Army-run British National Nordic Ski Championships in Ruhpolding, Germany. A former cross-country skier, Turner currently represents Great Britain on biathlon's Europa Cup circuit. More on Page 31.

Picture: Graeme Main

Special pay section

YOUR new scales, allowances and charges, plus a look at the APPRB recommendations and an interview with the next chairman of the independent body

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"A Company, mate? No problem . . . just follow the trail of used batteries." – Bowman trials, Pages 4-5

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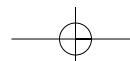
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Ironing out Bowman

Next generation communications kit should be ready on time... just

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

BOWMAN, the secure tactical voice and data communications system set to revolutionise the way UK Armed Forces go about their business, was given a serious once-over by military users during an open day on Salisbury Plain.

Although it is expected to come in on time, trials by infantry soldiers and tank crews have identified glitches that are being addressed.

Officers representing almost every arm, along with personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force, gathered at Copehill Down where troops from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment had been putting prototype equipment through its paces.

While the system is set to be a huge step forward in battlefield communications,

teething problems will have to be rectified before the end of this month. Bowman's in-service date is March 30.

General Dynamics UK, the Bowman prime contractor, is set to convert more than 20,000 mobile land platforms and install the system in three types of aircraft, warships and HQ buildings, and oversee the training of more than 73,000 personnel.

When Bowman goes live, it will provide a tactical communications system integrating digital voice and data technology to provide secure radio, telephone, intercom and tactical internet services in a single, modular and fully integrated system.

The first Army brigade, 12 Mechanized, should be converted to Bowman by September and ready to go to war with it by June next year.

Col Robin Vickers, late Scots DG, Deputy Director Tactical Command and Battlespace Management (Land) Equipment Capability, said the contractor had a big job to do in a very short time.

"General Dynamics UK has made an immense effort under difficult circumstances to support what is going on," he told the audience. He warned that there

were difficulties ahead. "There is a serious challenge in bringing this kit into service and special thanks should go to all ranks of 1 R Anglian in preparing for the trials. They have been gathering evidence on the equipment, both good and bad, so we can see where our efforts should be focused."

While soldiers agree Bowman is a huge advance over Clansman, the trials did raise some negative points.

"There is still a lot to do and the open day focused on what has been achieved and what still needs to be done," said Col Vickers. "Issues raised with man-portable equipment from this and earlier trials are being investigated with a view to resolving them before the equipment is used operationally."



Contact: Pte Jason Tower uses the Bowman 355 ADR (Plus)



Pte Jason Tower

SGT Julian Batten, one of the 1 R Anglian soldiers who trialled Bowman, described the voice communications it provided as superb.

"They are crystal clear and you can send grids without encoding."

He was confident that familiarity with the on-board computer in his Saxon would come with experience, but thought training could be improved. "Initial training in the classroom is on computers, but hands-on would be much better."

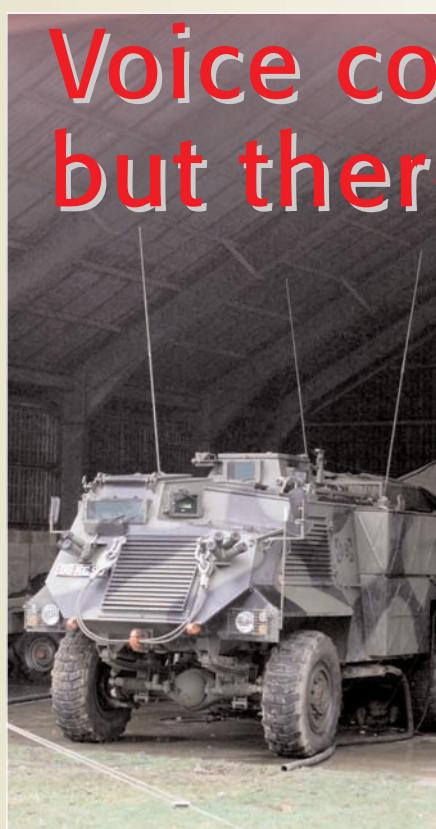
For soldiers on foot in urban environments, voice communications had been good, although there had been complaints that radios were affected by cold and wet weather. Troops had found that if a section commander or 2i/c was taken out of the battle, his replacement had to take the fallen man's webbing because the radio was wired into it.

Pte Jason Tower, of B Company, 1 R

Anglian, trialled the man-portable kits. "The voice communications have been fantastic," he said. "My main problem is getting through batteries. Once they die I have to take all the kit off, take the radio out, replace the battery and put it all back on. By then my platoon commander could be some distance away."

"We were told that battery life was about 12 hours – in cold weather I found it was down to about four."

Soldiers trialling Bowman had identified problems with cables, which could become snagged and had caused system failures during the trial, there was also a problem with the VHF manpack antenna, which had got in the way, snagging on door frames and narrow gaps, and was also prone to breaking.



Voice comms superb, but there are snags

Wymann's bugs



Getting the point: The P Bisa system display in Challenger 2 includes a pointing device



Testing time: The P Bisa system in the commander's crew station of Challenger 2

New system's a bit of a SQUEEZE in Challenger

WHILE infantry soldiers continued to work on their systems, the Armoured Trials and Development Unit (ATDU) at Bovington was on course with its trials.

Maj Richard Chitty, LD, SO2 Comms ATDU, said the unit had been testing prototypes of Bowman and its Platform Battlefield Information System Application (P Bisa) in armoured vehicles for some months.

"P Bisa hardware will ensure our three battle-winning pieces of equipment, Challenger 2, Warrior and Scimitar, all have a navigation system fitted with a driver's display."

"We were lucky with Challenger because Vickers had already made space for a navigation system, so the box and processor went into a slot not previously used. We did encroach on the driver's space with a display screen. To compensate we are hoping to remove the analogue speedometer and put the speed readout on to the navigation screen."

Installation and removal of Bowman radio is not easy: cabling on the front is said to be unclear and messy and, cru-

cially in the confined spaces within armoured vehicles, encroaches on precious crew space. Crew training should iron out problems.

Maj Chitty said the unit was going through a series of assessments with Challenger 2 as part of the installation design and certification process. "We conducted a static assessment with the help of QinetiQ to look at crew positions to see if the location of the kit affected the ability of the platform to fight effectively."

Tank crews had driven their Challengers with Bowman fitted before giving their evaluation.

"We will be running through some 48-hour battlefield missions to test the platform against operational scenarios."

Maj Chitty said the Bowman software trialled by tank crews was compatible with Challenger's fire control computer but not all its electronic systems. Full functionality was expected to be available by the summer.



Maj Richard Chitty

REME officer first with the Knowledge

New distance learning package will enhance first command

Lt Stewart Barker REME, the first Army officer to complete Military Knowledge 1 (MK1) successfully, celebrates with a bottle of champagne presented by Capt Ray Watts RN, leader of the team responsible for developing the new distance learning educational package for young officers.

The Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, was tasked in 2001 to produce a package which would provide an understanding of battle-group capability to enhance young officers' first appointment in command and provide the necessary grounding for the Junior Officer Tactical Awareness Course (JOTAC).

Based on tried and tested Open University distance-learning methods the package owes much to the way the Navy teaches young officers to understand how a ship's warfighting capability is delivered.

Using a book of questions and activities, they work their way from one part of the ship to another until they have successfully understood each part and how it contributes to the overall fighting effectiveness of the ship and other units of the fleet.

The Shrivenham team set about creating a virtual tour in workbook format, explaining the fighting power of a battle-group by examining its physical components, its



Picture: Steve Dock

organisational and equipment capability, and its conceptual component. It is delivered in six teaching modules.

The package was issued in September

to 2,000 officers, 600 units, 200 late-entry officers and 100 Royal Marines officers.

Lt Barker was the first officer to complete the course successfully.

Troops can get cover for Iraq

MEDIA reports that soldiers sent abroad on peacekeeping missions are being denied cover by the insurance industry are wide of the mark.

At least three companies offer policies specifically tailored to meet the needs of Servicemen and women on operations, including tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Naafi Financial's Personal Accident Insurance offers immediate and worldwide accident and life cover for serious injury, critical injury, burns, disablement and death. It features 15 levels of cover up to £150,000 in units of £10,000 and there is no restriction on availability. All levels of cover are available to new and existing customers.

The policy includes full cover for death resulting from terrorism, NBC agents, nuclear war (except between the four major powers; Iraq is covered), and immediate cover for war.

Trinity Insurance has an inexpensive Personal Accident policy, available to all occupations and trades within the Armed Forces without exception. It provides instant cover for all peacekeeping duties anywhere in the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

Trinity Insurance, in common with Naafi Financial, offers immediate cover for those deploying abroad.

PAX also covers existing policy-holders for war risks although new policies taken out under the scheme will not apply for six months.

How to contact them:

- Naafi Financial 00800 0001 02 03 (free from UK and Germany); 0044 1722 342 245 from rest of world, or www.naafi-financial.com
- Trinity Insurance Services 0044(0)1243 817777, or www.trinity-ins.com
- PAX 0800 212 480; 0044 20 8662 8126 (abroad) or paxinsurance@ars.aon.co.uk

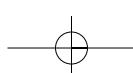
Buildings named after EOD heroes

TWO new accommodation blocks in Carver Barracks at Wimbish, Essex have been named after Royal Engineers killed on operations.

Both were members of 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), which is based there.

SSgt Jim Prescott CGM died in May 1982 while attempting to neutralise an unexploded bomb in HMS *Antelope* during the Falklands War, and Cpl Barney Warburton was killed when he tried to dispose of a large improvised personnel mine in Stari Vitez, Bosnia in March 1994.

Family members and former colleagues watched as Maj Gen James Shaw, GOC Theatre Troops, formally opened the new blocks, which will each house 72 junior soldiers in en suite single rooms with shared communal areas.



M62 bomb wreath



We will remember: **Col John Ewbank**, Regimental Colonel of the Royal Signals, lays a wreath at the Hartshead Moor service station on the M62 in memory of the victims of the IRA coach bomb in February 1974 which claimed the lives of 12 soldiers and family members.

Cpl Stephen Pountney played the *Last Post* at the simple ceremony to mark the 30th anniversary, which was attended by members of the families and representatives from the regiments who lost soldiers in the atrocity.

Picture: Chris Barker

March manoeuvre



This is the life: The Mayor of March, Cllr Bernard Keane, centre, tries out military equipment with the help of Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force members. The event was organised by the Army Careers and Information Office in Peterborough and involved Regulars from the Royal Anglians, Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery, 9th/12th Royal Lancers and Royal Logistic Corps recruiting teams.

Four killed on ops in Iraq and Afghanistan

FOUR soldiers on operations – one in Afghanistan and three in southern Iraq – have died since the end of January.

Pte Jonathan Kitulagoda, 23, a member of the Exeter-based Rifle Volunteers, was killed in a suicide bomb attack on January 28 while serving with the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul.

Four other soldiers were injured when the car, packed with explosives, detonated near their vehicle.

Pte Kitulagoda came from the Plymouth area, where he was a student.

Lt Col Ian Blewett, CO of the Territorial Army unit, said: "Jonathan, who played a full and professional role as a TA infantryman, was a popular and committed member of E (Devon and Dorset) Company. Together with his fellow soldiers, he volunteered for duty in Afghanistan, helping the efforts to bring peace and help ordinary Afghans forge a better society."

Rfn Vincent Windsor, 23,



Pte Kitulagoda



Rfn Windsor



Spr Thomson

was killed in a road traffic accident in Al Amarah on January 21.

From Oxfordshire, he was attached to the 1st Battalion, The Light Infantry from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets.

Lt Col Harry Emck, CO 2 RGJ, said: "Vincent was enormously popular and likeable, very down-to-earth, and with a great sense of humour. He will be sadly missed by all his colleagues and comrades."

Spr Robert Thomson, 22, a single man from West Lothian, was killed in an accident in Basra on January 31. He was serving with Paderborn-based 35 Engineer Regiment.

Last month Cpl Richard Ivell REME, 29, a vehicle mechanic serving with 2 Close Support Regiment RLC, was killed in a crash at Shaibah Logistics Base. From Doncaster, he was married and had three children.

A spokesman said his death was the result of an accident on the base.

His death brought to 59 the number of British personnel killed in Iraq.

Lotto to fund return of heroes to battlefields

A LOTTERY-funded scheme has been launched to enable Second World War veterans to revisit the battlefields on which they saw service 60 years ago.

Called Heroes Return, the project will draw on millions of Lotto pounds to send old soldiers back to destinations in France, North Africa and the Far East over the next two years.

War widows and widowers will also be

eligible for funding for remembrance visits. The scheme was set up with the support of the Confederation of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations, whose chairman, Maj Gen Michael Sheldar, welcomed it as "wonderful opportunity" for veterans.

To find out more about funding, veterans should ring the Heroes Return free hotline on 0800 169 2277.

IN BRIEF

- A contract worth £347 million over 35 years to provide catering and support services at Colchester Garrison has been awarded by the MoD to Sodexo.
- For her "exceptional" commitment to the unit and its sol-



diers, Sennelager-based 12th Regiment RA has presented its typist, **Mrs Rosheen Clemens**, left, with a special bonus award.

• **Maj Simon Kirby**, of 26th Regiment RA, received on behalf of British Forces in Iraq a British

Picture: Cpl Gary Wort RAF



Sand-runners: More than 400 Service men and women deployed in Iraq were buffeted by 40mph winds as they completed a 13-mile half-marathon to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Relief and three deprived schools in the Basra area.

LCpl Nick Westhorpe, whose idea it was, said he was "gobsmacked" by the

level of support he got from units. Although everyone was a winner, the first runner across the line was SSgt Rob Goldsmith of 16th Signal Regiment in a time of 1hr 22min. First woman home was Lt Tara Kane, also of 16 Sig Regt, who finished in 1hr 48min 45sec.

● More Telic reports in Pages 22-23

Families' future at heart of the debate

A DEBATE on what the future holds for Army families is expected to be a highlight of the Army Families Federation's biennial conference at the Guildhall in the City of London on June 16.

The conference gives families the chance to voice their views on life with the Army – and share them with the people who make the policy decisions they live with.

Delegates will be updated on current issues and concerns raised on education, employment, special needs and housing, and will hear from guest speakers including Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon; the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Mike Jackson; and the Adjutant General, Lt Gen Sir Alistair Irwin.

The debate on the future for families



will be chaired by Edward Stourton from BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme and will take up most of the afternoon.

Representatives from all the relevant Army and defence branches and agencies, including the Defence Housing Executive, the Service Families' Task Force, Service Personnel Policy, Service Children's Education, and Director Personal Services (Army), will be there.

Tickets cost £6 for Army spouses and those funding themselves, and £10 for delegates, who can reclaim this from their organisation. For full details on how to book, see the March issue of the *AFF Families Journal*, or contact AFF Central Office on 01980 615525.

● Sue Bonney's Home Truths – Page 81

Business Forum Award at a ceremony held in the British Embassy in Kuwait City. The honour marked the part played by UK Armed Forces in the reconstruction of Iraq.

● Volunteers are wanted to abseil down the outside of the **Union Jack Club**, close to Waterloo Station in London, to raise

funds for the Childhood First charity for abused, neglected and disturbed youngsters. It costs £20 to register for the abseil and the charity will be expecting a pledge of £50 on the day from those who take part. For details of the event on March 25 and 26, call Siwan on 020 7928 7388 or send an e-mail to s.stephens@peperharow.org.uk

Sandhurst gearing up for musical spectacular

MORE details of the spectacular *Music on Fire!* event at Sandhurst on July 9 and 10 have been announced.

Organised by Maj Sir Michael Parker, who masterminded the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations outside Buckingham Palace, the concert will be the highlight of the Army Benevolent Fund's 60th anniversary celebrations.

Staged in front of the Royal Military Academy's famous Old College building, the show will feature massed military bands, an orchestra, pipes and drums, a choir and a host of celebrities.

A picnicking audience of 13,000 on each of the two nights will be taken on what is promised to be a "melodic and magical" journey through the 20th century. Special effects, projections, pyrotechnics and fireworks perfected for the Buckingham Palace celebrations will be put to dynamic effect.

Sir Michael said: "The use of fire will be depicted in a wide range of ways, from the Burning of Moscow, the Blitz, Guy Fawkes celebrations to the war in the Far East, when Apocalypse so nearly happened. None of it too serious, and all great fun."

Music will range from popular classical to contemporary themes. The *1812 Overture* will end the first part of the 2½-hour show.

For more details or to book your tickets, call the box office and credit card hotline on 020 8675 3582 or visit the event website at www.musiconfire.com

● **Soldier** has a set of family tickets – worth £80 – to *Music on Fire!* to give away. Look out for your chance to win them in the April issue.

Presenting the Army at a venue near you

THE Army Presentation Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its roadshow.

Presentations start at 1830 with a reception and end with a buffet and the chance to meet and question the military hosts. Call 01276 417000 or e-mail your name and address to apt.mod@btinternet.com

Mar – 16 Stornoway; 18, Kirkwall, Orkney; 25, Gt Yarmouth; 29, Basildon; 30, Kettering. **Apr** – 1, Luton; 6, Peterborough. **May** – 10, Catterick; 11, Pontefract; 12, Harrogate; 13, Rotherham; 24, Aberdeen; 25, Edinburgh; 26, Kelso; 27, Dumfries.



Stack of cash: The warrant officers and NCOs of the Household Cavalry Regiment have presented the Make a Wish Appeal with £10,000 in £1 coins collected over the past two years.

Pictured with about £2,500 of the spoils is WO1 (Regimental Corporal Major) Leslie

Kibble, centre, who was behind the fundraising. He is flanked by Carole Pallant and Peter Jacobs of the charity. Many games and horserace nights went into raising the money, as did a Derby Day collection and a £1 "charge" for anyone attending mess meetings.

Picture: Steve Dock

Apache's £1m pilots on course for lift-off

IT will take a year to train each pilot for the Army's Apache helicopter force – at an estimated cost of £1.15 million per head.

When he gave the figures in a Parliamentary written answer on February 10, Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said the first phase of the training – a 26-week basic conversion-to-type course at the School of Army Aviation, Middle Wallop – was still in progress. Its cost was estimated at £600,000 for one pilot.

Qualifying pilots then progress to a conversion-to-role course, also lasting 26 weeks, at Dishforth and Wattisham. Run by the Air Manoeuvre Training Advisory

Team (AMTAT), it will cost an estimated £550,000 per head.

The Army expects to achieve initial operating capability in August and a task force capability based on 9 Regiment AAC during spring 2005.

In answer to a separate Commons question, Mr Ingram said 25 Apache Mk 1 helicopters valued at £27m each – all accepted and paid for – were currently being kept at RAF Shawbury in Shropshire.

"Each Apache in storage is fully maintained and supported but is not used operationally for training purposes from RAF Shawbury," he added.

Squadron's 30-peak target

A four-man team from **24 Training Support Squadron, 1 RSME Regiment** is planning to scale the 30 highest mountains in Britain in ten days, starting on May 14. The big climb is in aid of Demelza House Children's Hospice, a haven in the South East for youngsters unlikely to reach adulthood. Contact LCpl Mark Watson on 94661 ext 3214 or 0779 398 8014. See also www.demelzahouse.org

Stewards wanted for Lord's

REGULAR Army personnel on annual or terminal leave are wanted as seating stewards for two Test matches at Lord's Cricket Ground this summer. The dates are May 19-24 (New Zealand) and July 21-26 (West Indies). Subsistence and food allowances will be paid by the MCC, as will a travel allowance. NCO ranks should contact WO1 (SSM) I Kemp AGC(PS) on 94261 2317 by March 19.

Indefatigable Charlie just kept on going

CHARLIE Hankins, who died last month at the age of 83, was one of the most celebrated residents at the Royal Star and Garter Home in Surrey.

The former Black Watch soldier, who lost both his legs at the age of 22 during a fierce battle in the Western Desert in 1943, was a tireless fundraiser for charity, twice pushing himself from Land's End to John o' Groats.

His many daring projects, recorded in the pages of *Soldier*, included paddling down the Thames on a makeshift raft, tandem parachute jumping and sub-aqua diving.

After the war he worked as a toolmaker to support his wife Violet and three daughters, and for a time ran his own engineering business.

Charlie moved into the Star and Garter at Richmond in 1969 after a life-saving operation to remove a bullet from his chest. It had lodged there since 1943.

Of the battle near Tunis, he recalled: "I was hit by mortar fire and one leg was blown right off. The other leg fell off as I tried to make my way downhill to safety.

"I also had gunshot wounds in my chest, and my right eye and left hand were badly injured. I was 22 years old and didn't think much of my chances."

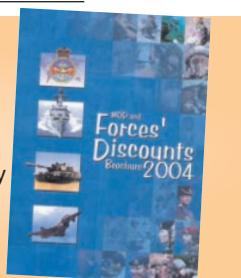
Charlie, who was a Scottish Command boxing champion with the Black Watch before the war, never allowed his artificial limbs to prevent him from leading an extraordinarily active life.

Footie in green jackets?

JUNIORS at Beaufort United FC in Kirby, near Mansfield, are playing in strips bearing the name of The Royal Green Jackets. The link began a year ago when recruiter Sgt Paul Wright saw the team while leading a Keeping the Army in the Public Eye (KAPE) tour.

Have we got a deal?

THE 2004 MoD and Forces' Discount brochure, which contains thousands of special offers negotiated for Service personnel and their families, is now available. Any suggestions for new discounts should be sent to **ps10a-cc@defence.mod.uk** or tel 020 7218 9382.





Under Big Ben

A digest of what's being said on Army matters in Parliament

Reservists deployed to 19 countries

IN the past two years British reservists have served in 19 overseas countries.

The number of volunteer, Regular and sponsored reserves mobilised rose from 1,720 in 2002 to 9,550 in 2003.

They were posted or deployed to Germany, Turkey, USA, Canada, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Afghanistan, Cyprus, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo and the Falklands. On January 21 this year, nearly 1,000 Territorial Army members were serving in the Gulf region alone.

Defence minister Lord Bach said in a written answer that most reservists supporting operations had been mobilised for up to eight months.

The 1998 Strategic Defence Review set a TA manpower target of 45,000. Latest available figures show that the strength in December, 2003 was 37,750, including 3,920 mobilised reservists.

Permission to leave early: About 270 commanding officers have been told that individuals who have already given notice to terminate their engagement before September 30, 2004 may be given the option, though not compelled, to leave sooner if this is acceptable both to the individual and the unit.

Technical moves: Training at the Army Technical Foundation College, Arborfield, will cease with effect from August this year and the establishment will close in March 2005.

Under plans by the Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA), students will be transferred principally to the Army Foundation College at Harrogate, where a technical stream will be introduced.

Service doctors: Latest available figures show that on October 1, 2003 the Defence Medical services had a trained strength of 414 doctors, 241 below the required number.

Suez Medal: By February 6, nearly 4,000 Canal Zone clasps had been issued by the single-Service medal offices. So far about 33,000 applications have been received.

And I quote . . .

• Faced with such a wide range of challenges in Iraq, I must pay tribute to the courage, professionalism and steadfastness of those who have served or are currently serving in Her Majesty's forces. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families at this difficult time, never forgetting those who have lost loved ones. **– Bishop of Southwell,** making his maiden speech in a Lords debate

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Terriers get own major general

RECOGNITION of the wide-ranging role of the Territorial Army in conflict and peacekeeping operations around the world is reflected in the creation of a two-star post to head Britain's reserve soldiers.

Brig the Duke of Westminster, currently the TA's most senior officer in the post of Director Reserve Forces and Cadets, is to become the first Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets) in the rank of major general.

Defence Minister Ivor Caplin said the function of the new structure was to improve the integration of part-time soldiers into the Regular forces.

There was a determination in the MoD to improve the way in which the Department represents their interests.

"This appointment demonstrates that reservists are fully integrated and prop-

erly valued at the highest levels of defence," said Mr Caplin. "It is also a recognition of the importance of Reserve Forces, which have become a major component of forces on Operation Telic and in the Balkans."

Although the date of the Duke's appointment and promotion has not yet been confirmed, it is expected to be announced by the end of this month.

He will report directly to the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff.

His former post will be assumed by a Regular one-star officer, who will act as his deputy.

It is the first occasion in modern times that a reserve officer has filled a two-star appointment. The post covers the reserve forces and cadets of all three Services, and candidates from all three may be considered.



Rank: Brig the Duke of Westminster with his major general's slide

Picture: Chris Fletcher

You'll have to tell your boss you are in the TA

FROM the beginning of next month, new recruits to the volunteer reserve forces will have to agree to their units contacting their employer about their membership.

The same rules will apply to applicants for re-engagements.

Purpose of the new procedure is to ensure that bosses are aware of those employees who are members of the Territorial Army, and to provide them with information about training and call-out liabilities. As a safeguard, reservists will

have a right to submit cases to their commanding officers if they believe that they have good reasons for not having their connection with the reserve forces disclosed.

Each appeal will be considered on merit.

Behind the measure is a determination by the MoD to enable businesses to be in a better position to plan for the absence of part-time soldiers on their staffs. It will also keep them better informed of their rights and obligations.

IN BRIEF

- Service paddlers at level four and above are wanted for an expedition in France this summer. No alpine experience required. Contact Lt Col Kev Halus, HQ 107 Bde, BFPO 808, so1rcta107bde@aol.com by Easter. River leaders, chefs, drivers also wanted. Application forms can be downloaded at www.awesomes.co.uk/jaskm

- The Suez Veterans Association are due to dedicate their site at the National Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire on March 13. The site, initiated and paid for by members of the association, is in memory of all who served in the Suez Canal Zone between 1939 and 1956. For more details, contact Harold Heath on 01785 660900.



Getting to know you: LCpl Kath Carberry, R Signals, meets Embera Indian children

Signallers on jungle duty with Blashers

THREE soldiers from 10th Signal Regiment have returned to the UK from a scientific expedition deep in the jungles of Panama.

Capt Abby Parkinson, OC Operations Support Troop at 238 (London) Signal Squadron, Cpl Mark Johnson-Birks and LCpl Kath Carberry joined former Royal Engineer Col (Retd) John Blashford Snell on his Bahia Pina trip sponsored by the Scientific Exploration

Society. The three London-based Territorial Army soldiers, who raised funds towards the cost of the expedition, helped carry out an archaeological survey of the remote Bahia Pina area bay and surrounding jungle, got involved in medical support and education programmes with the native community and mapped and marked the boundaries of what will become a nature reserve.

Bolivia expedition needs YOU

A 32-strong team of British and Bolivian military personnel and civilians under Col Blashford-Snell is looking for team players with IT, communications and logistics coordination skills to take part in a nine-week expedition to Bolivia between May and July.

They also want someone to lead a recce, support and community aid group to oversee land-to-river resupply

in the last month of the Kota Mama V expedition, which is continuing the quest to explore South American rivers. They will try to navigate the 300-mile long Rio Grande gorge in inflatables.

Interested individuals should contact Lorna McGregor at the Scientific Exploration Society on 01747 854898. More details at www.ses-explore.org and www.kotamama.com

● **Welbeck**, formerly the Army sixth form college, has opened its doors to Royal Navy and Royal Air Force students. The college is to relocate next year to a new £38-million campus at Loughborough. Students go on to take sponsored engineering degrees at Oxford, Cambridge, Southampton, Newcastle, Northumbria, Loughborough and Aston.

● Army dentist **Capt Matthew Novak** RADC, attached to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles in the Gradska area of Bosnia, visited several schools in remote villages to treat dozens of children, many of whom had never before seen a dentist.

● The **Band** and **Corps of Drums** of the

Double-edged sword



Accolade: Two Wilkinson Swords of Peace were presented to Cyprus-based units by **Air Chief Marshal Sir Anthony Bagnall**, left, during a parade at RAF Akrotiri. One went to the air base, the other to the Cyprus Services Support Unit, whose commanding officer, **Lt Col Steve Watkin RLC**, said: "It's wonderful that such a young unit has been given such a prestigious award." The CSSU raised thousands of pounds for local charities, cleaned up beaches polluted by an oil spill and fostered good working relationships with the Cypriot community on the island. Picture: Cpl Will Craig

Royal finale for Welsh Gunners

SOLDIERS of the 22nd Regiment RA – the Welsh Gunners – fired a royal salute at Cardiff Castle on February 6 to mark the regiment's passing into suspended animation.

They will be posted to other Royal Artillery units, including Newcastle-based 39th Regiment, which is already actively recruiting in Wales through a team working out of Raglan Barracks in Newport.

The Welsh Gunners formally paraded for the last time at a ceremony at their barracks in Kirton-on-Lindsey in December.

Territorial Army soldiers with C (Glamorgan Yeomanry) Troop, 211 Battery, part of 104th Regiment RA(V), usually fire royal salutes in Cardiff, but the honour of marking the Queen's Accession was given to the 22nd Regiment.

The suspended animation as part of the reshaping of the RA was announced in 2002.



Noon guns: Several hundred spectators gathered to watch soldiers of 105th Regiment, Royal Artillery (Volunteers) firing a 21-gun salute to mark the anniversary of the Queen's Accession to the Throne. Despite a gale, the salute went off with precision. Picture: Mark Owens

War pupils had top-class care

BRITAIN'S education ombudsman has given top marks to the quality of support provided during the Gulf War for pupils attending Service schools overseas.

David Bell, the Chief Inspector of Schools, praised the high level of commitment to students while the parents of many of them were away from home on active service.

Eight primary and two secondary schools run by Service Children's Education (SCE) were inspected in the lead up to and during the Gulf War.

In his report for Ofsted, Mr Bell commented: "I am delighted to be able to report that Ofsted inspectors found overseas Service children's schools shone when it came to the high level of commitment they gave to the care and welfare of pupils during the Gulf War period."

The report found that standards in Service Children's Education (SCE) schools were improving and pupils' achievements in core subjects was generally at least satis-

factory. Rita Carvoso, head of Marlborough First School in Germany, said: "It is excellent that Ofsted has recognised the skill and expertise in SCE schools. It was wonderful to see every branch of the SCE team marshalling resources and pulling together to support parents and children in any way we could."

Maj Gen John Moore-Bick, GOC UK Support Command, Germany at the time of the conflict, said: "The knowledge that support, advice and encouragement is both readily available, and willingly offered, to families back in Germany makes a significant contribution to a soldier's morale, his peace of mind and his ability to remain focused on the job in hand."

SCE primary schools inspected were: Sir John Mogg, St Andrew's, Weser, Mountbatten, Oxford, William Wordsworth (Germany); and Ayios Nikolaos (Cyprus). The secondary schools were St John's in Cyprus and Windsor in Germany.

Special needs break for siblings

SSAFA Forces Help's summer holiday for siblings of children with special needs is from May 30 to June 5 at Fairthorne Manor near Southampton. The 24 places are being sponsored by military insurance specialists Towergate Wilsons and the closing date for

applications is April 30. Siblings should be aged eight to 12. Contact Heidi Dudley on 020 7463 9234 or heidi.d@ssafa.org.uk

Names for SSAFA awards for in-Service volunteers should be in by April 16 to Pakana on 020 7463 9343 or pakana.c@ssafa.org.uk

Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● The parents of Fus Kelan Turrington, 18, who was killed in the Gulf War, are raising cash for sick Iraqi kids. In an amazing act of compassion, Curly and Ann Turrington have set up a fund to restore a school and a clinic. – *Sun*

● A case brought against the British Army for allegedly killing and maiming hundreds of Kenyan tribesmen with munitions left over from training exercises collapsed after claimants agreed to an out-of-court settlement for a fraction of the £40 million they were demanding. They settled for £500,000 after an investigation by *The Times* uncovered that most, if not all, the claimants were bogus. – *Times*

● Scientists have created a plant that can locate landmines by changing colour when it comes into contact with explosives. The plant, *arabidopsis thaliana*, or green wall cress, is cheap to produce and can grow from seed in six to eight weeks. The genetically-modified plant turns red, right, when stimulated by the presence of explosives in the soil. – *Sunday Telegraph*



● A part-time soldier serving in Iraq flew back to the UK for a day to sack a bar manager who was running his pub. He had been phoned by the brewery to be told the manager was running up debts. Sgt Maj Rob Richie, RLC, spent 24 hours sorting the problem before flying back on the 4,916-mile round trip. "I could have lost my business," he said. "It shows the compassion of the Army." – *Daily Mirror*

● The BBU Team Challenge is being covered by *Soldier* magazine and *The Observer*, two of the more gung-ho publications on the market. – Will Buckley reporting for *The Observer* on the Army's nordic skiers in competition at Ruhpolding, Germany.

● Former Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith's training for the London Marathon on April 18 involves five-mile runs in his old Army boots. – *Daily Mirror*

● Police are on the alert after the theft of imitation military badges used on ITVs *Red Cap* series. The fake ID cards were snatched in a break-in at a studio where props for the series are kept. – *Daily Mirror*



Sign of the times:
Sfor's Multi-National
Brigade (NW), above,
will become a task
force with one multi-
national battle-group

Harvesters: Sgt
Bhim Pun, B Coy, 1
RGR, and his team
search for weapons
near Bugojno, left

Transformed

AT the end of the war in 1995, Nato's commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina was 60,000 troops. Over the past nine years the security situation has improved and local authorities have played an increasing active role.

In 1999 the force was 33,000, in 2002 it was down to 16,000 and by June this year the force will be about 7,000 personnel.

More than half a million soldiers have served in the Stabilisation Force (Sfor) which has policed the return to something like normality. Currently there are 27 troop-contributing nations.



New approach: Lt Col Craig Lawrence

Reports: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Mike Weston

CHAMELEON-like may sound like an odd comparison for the Nato-led Stabilisation Force (Sfor) in the Balkans but, just like the slow-moving lizard, one of the international force's most notable characteristics is its ability to adapt to the constantly changing needs of its surroundings.

In light of the improving security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nato has announced plans to downsize Sfor from 12,000 troops to about 7,000 within the next four months.

UK troops, part of the Multi-National Brigade (North-West) are leading the way into a new phase of the mission.

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, supported by a squadron of the Household Cavalry Regiment and Full-Time Reserve Service soldiers, make up a large percentage of the newly-formed multi-national battle-group and are at the cutting edge of Sfor's latest adjustment to taskings, troop numbers and military locations within their area of operation in the Republika Srpska.

If it succeeds, this template will be repeated across the country. The new approach will allow a more flexible military presence and focus efforts on the most critical areas.

Although Britain's troop commitment will remain at just over 1,000 for the immediate future, numbers of the overall international force are set to reduce by almost a half and several military bases will close.

Sfor's three multi-national brigades are about to become multi-national task forces, each of about 2,000 troops. Should the situation deteriorate and reinforcements be required, Nato's appositely-titled Over The Horizon Force (OTHF) is capable of deploying to the area within hours.

Battle-group HQ for UK forces has moved from Mrkonjic Grad to Banja Luka – all three rifle companies will be colocated there. Six new monitoring, observation and surveillance teams (dubbed MOSTs) set up in houses throughout the area to be the eyes and ears of the task force.

Despite its downsizing, Sfor is valued and needed. Large amounts of weapons, ammo and ordnance remain in private hands, endangering life and slowing progress.

Crime and corruption deter levels of foreign investment required for Bosnia to proceed towards European integration.

By supporting local authorities, police and the army, Sfor helps the country take responsibility for its own security.

Lt Col Craig Lawrence, CO, 1 RGR said: "I command a new multi-national battle-group of 650 people, with a Dutch company, a Chilean platoon, a Bulgarian platoon, and three Australian ops officers alongside British and Gurkha soldiers.

"We now have this muscular, poised multi-national battle-group, centrally located in Banja Luka, able to swing out anywhere in the country.

"This new approach will allow us to reduce the force levels in the country but still remind people that Sfor can surge out quickly and accurately to conduct precision operations in their area.

"I can now deliver more capability, more effectively, and in a more focused way."

Grim harvest

Illegal weapons hold back Bosnia's drive to peace and prosperity

HARVEST time in Bugojno, a rural town of 20,000 people on Bosnia's inter-ethnic boundary line within the Federation has absolutely nothing to do with gathering the fruit of the fields.

Carcasses of derelict houses scar the beautiful landscape and men smoke restlessly on street corners and in coffee shops. There is little employment, few opportunities to make a living.

Official figures suggest 95 per cent of displaced persons have returned to Bosnia, but Bugojno is an area which appears to defy optimistic statistics.

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles conduct a systematic search of the town and surrounding villages, going from door to door to hunt for illegal weapons, ammunition and explosives. This is Operation Harvest Plus.

Alerted by a well-planned media campaign, local people are expecting a knock at their door and most cooperate with Sfor troops.

Searches turn up small arms, grenades, ammunition, explosives, detonator, anti-tank mines and mortars.

"Every operation we conduct moves towards the end-state that sees Bosnia and Herzegovina become a peaceful and viable country on course for European integration," said Maj David Wombell,



Making note: Cpl Dilbahadur Pun, above, C Coy, 1 RGR, records details of weapons discovered in a hen house near Kopic during Op Harvest Plus

Systematic: Sgt Bhim Pun, above right, briefs his team of Rfn Min Ghale, Rfn Kesh Thapa and LCpl Nar Gaha, B Coy, 1 RGR, on the correct route

Bleak prospects: The village of Vesela, right, on the outskirts of Bugojno

the battalion's 2iC. "There are two types of people here – those who were handed a weapon, grenades and ammunition in 1992 and told to become the home defence force; and those who have deliberately hoarded weapons, possibly for revenue, power or a desire to return to war.

"There is no rule of law here as we

understand it. There are extremists, criminals and parallel power structures working against us to generate wealth for themselves.

"If these extremists move towards law and order, if they go towards European integration, they will lose their power and money.

"They represent one per cent of society but they are preventing progress."

A fear remains that without Sfor, conflict could spark again.

Lt Col Craig Lawrence, CO 1 RGR, said: "We're providing a safe and secure environment by removing weapons, and showing Sfor resolve and capability by surging into areas and providing a vehicle for information-gathering to identify those involved in extremist activity.

"Local police have had their powers hugely curtailed following changes to the criminal procedure code. They can't search houses or people, take photography or listen to telephone calls or do any



Black art works for Gurkhas



MEDIA operations, a nettle long regarded as a black art within military circles, has been well and truly grasped by the UK battle-group as a means of informing and communicating with local communities before, during and after search operations.

"The single biggest lesson I'll take away from this tour is the value of media ops," said Lt Col Lawrence. "It really works... it changes perceptions and it means that the population goes from being ambivalent towards Sfor to being very supportive."

Media ops:
Lt Tek Gharti

"The press is reasonably compliant and genuinely keen for a story. Effective media operations means we help them put across the messages we want publicised."

Media operations officer Lt Tek Gharti said: "Media ops plays a crucial part. Without informing people, we can't do anything. We have distributed thousands of leaflets, posters and magazines and used the local television, radio and newspapers.

"When 1 RGR arrived, people were unsure of who we were. We used media ops to explain that we are Gurkha soldiers from Nepal, that we are part of the British Army, here to help achieve a safe and secure environment by removing weapons and ammunition.

"The results have been significant."



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"We have been using our resources to help them so we can go to the prosecutor with enough evidence to lead to an arrest and prosecution; to bring these characters down for criminal activities such human trafficking, drug smuggling and weapons.

"This is the first time we have worked



Keeping track: LCpl Tara Tiliya, left, checks on the progress of his search team during Op Harvest Plus

this closely with the police in Bosnia and our efforts will make a huge difference.

"We are demonstrating to the population that we are not here just to sit in our camps to wait for something to go wrong, we will help shore up local authorities."

Getting the MOST out of new Sfor

SMALL teams of British troops have been making the most of a new concept of soldiering in Bosnia.

Monitoring, observation and surveillance teams (predictably shortened to MOST) are providing sensors across the country and will enable troop numbers to decrease.

Lt Col Craig Lawrence said that eventually the only Sfor presence permanently on the ground would be in the form of MOST units.

Maj Howard Simms, 1 R Irish, who commands the new units, said: "Most is the Serbo-Croat word for bridge and these teams act as a link between Sfor and the local community and authorities.

"Our mission is to gain a comprehensive, up-to-date situational awareness of the western Republik of Srpska to enable our task force HQ to trigger focused operations if required."

Overt, uniformed and self-sufficient, the teams live in the community. Each observes and reports on political, military, economic and social development in its area. Through regular contact with mayors, police, teachers and local people, they keep an eye out for activity that could affect the country's stability.

"The boys will go to local coffee shops and restaurants and meet mayors, chiefs of police and teachers," said Maj Simms. "The main benefit of the concept is continuity. The teams will be based in local houses, getting to know the area and building firm relationships with people. They will become the much more approachable face of Sfor."

● AS 1 RGR approaches the end of its Op Oculus tour, observers have remarked on the close affinity between Gurkha soldiers and Bosnians – mountainous homeland, rural economy, subsistence living and close-knit families.



Mixed bunch: MOST soldiers provide the eyes and ears on the ground. Back row: Cpl Bishnu Thapa, Cpl Dalprasad Khadka; front Capt James Francis (Royal Australian Artillery), Cpl Matthew Hawkins, Cpl Manbahadur Garbuja

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A chronic case



Check-up: LCpl Tricia Gleave, a combat medical technician with 4 GS Regiment, examines 15-year-old Farzad during a temporary clinic

Why Afghans cannot afford to become ill

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

GIVEN the chronic shortage of health-care in northern Afghanistan it is fortunate that the British Army medical centre at Mazar-e-Sharif has time to help local people.

"Apart from day-to-day illness, our soldiers are fit and healthy, so our primary role isn't very taxing," said Lt Col Robin Simpson, medical officer for the UK Provincial Reconstruction Team.

"The biggest risk to them in the north is from road traffic accidents. The roads are dire, the traffic doesn't know which side to drive on and travelling at night is a particular danger."

With a well-equipped ambulance, the only one in the area that works, the unit has the resources to collect soldiers by road if they are injured.

Medical centre staff take every opportunity to help Afghans, who have little or no access to medical care.

"There are so many aspects of life in the northern provinces that need every form of assistance they can get. I try to get involved in all the projects I possibly can but it's difficult to know where to start,"



Lt Col Simpson

said Lt Col Simpson. "We are very isolated here. The hospitals provide a low level of secondary care and are not the sort of places I would be happy to send any of my soldiers to."

They have no sterilising facilities, monitors or anaesthetic machines and wards are primitive. This means their staffs cannot deal with serious conditions.

"Doctors are well aware of what treatments should be available, but they don't have access to them," said Lt Col Simpson, who is pressing for a new hospital for Mazar-e-Sharif and awaiting funding approval for the project.

He lectures at the city's medical school, once used by the Taliban as a base and completely ransacked. "The microbiology department has one microscope which doesn't work properly and class sizes are 120. There is no access to the internet and the library is made up of 20-year-old copies of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

"We are looking at the possibility of getting internet access for the medical school, which would make a huge difference."

It is a steep learning curve for 21-year-old LCpl Tricia Gleave, a combat medical technician with 4 GS Medical Regiment, who volunteered for Afghanistan soon after returning from Op Telic 1 in June.

"I see conditions I have only ever read-about. It's been a real eye-opener. We run

clinics from the back of a vehicle and help in anyway that we can. At one clinic we worked with American doctors, vets and a dentist and treated more than 1,000 men, women and children over a two day period.

"The vets dealt with about 3,000 animals and the dentist pulled out 40 teeth. We were asked to visit a local school to treat three children and ended up treating all 38 and the teacher.

"I met a boy who was deaf because of an ear infection. It's so sad when you meet people suffering from chronic illnesses which, if treated early, would have been relatively simple to cure."

Cultural awareness is vital in this Islamic state. "The men always like to be treated before the women and those higher in society expect to push in," said LCpl Gleave. "We don't operate like that."

A lot of women want to see her when they notice the red cross on her arm band.

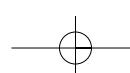
"Women are generally not allowed to speak to men or be examined by male doctors. As a result many die during pregnancy and childbirth."

AFGHANISTAN'S health system is among the poorest in the world. Illness in this country of 28 million people is something to be endured, not cured.

Access to even basic healthcare is something most can only dream of.

For those whose only form of transport is a donkey or days of walking over ground littered with landmines, seeing a doctor is not an option.

Life expectancy is just 47 and one in four children die before the age of five.



It's a lottery

Troops nip trouble in bud as desperate Iraqis look for work

Report: Jonathan Turner

TROOPS from the 1st Battalion, The Light Infantry and The Queen's Royal Hussars quickly restored calm and confidence when a major new employment creation initiative attracted thousands of desperate job-seekers.

More than 11,000 people turned out to register for the chance to win one of 2,500 manual labouring jobs created by the Coalition Provisional Authority in Maysan province, southern Iraq.

Registration for the "lottery" took place at the stadium in Al Amarah, a city in which recent violent protests over unemployment had left six people dead.

Despite initially chaotic scenes when the gates opened and the crowd surged forward, the troops ensured the registration passed off peacefully.

Each applicant was enrolled with their food ration card and the name of their village. Details were entered in a specially-



Desperate: Some of the thousands of Iraqi men who queued to register for the jobs' lottery, above

Pictures: Cpl Gary Wort RAF

Watchful: British troops keep a eye on the crowd of 11,000 Iraqis who turned out to register for jobs in Al Amarah, right

designed database which then assigned the jobs randomly – and fairly.

Maj Johnny Scott, QRH, praised the troops for their professionalism in handling a very awkward position. "I think everyone did very well in dealing with what was a potentially difficult situation,"

he said. "Unemployment is definitely the biggest problem people face in this area.

"They are quite willing to queue for hours for the chance to get a job so they can feed their families. The vast majority here are on-side and want to help us create a more stable environment."



World Cup shirt boosts RMP fund



Appealing: SSgt David Forsey helps Tamzin to display the rugby shirt

RED Cap star Tamzin Outhwaite donned her Royal Military Police uniform to launch the auction of an autographed England Rugby World Cup shirt to raise funds for the families of nine military policemen killed in Iraq.

The event, held on the web-based eBay site, raised £5,539.

"Having played the role of Sgt Jo McDonagh in *Red Cap* for such a long time I have come to know personally a number of soldiers in the Royal Military Police," said Tamzin. "When I heard the news that members of the RMP had been killed in Iraq I was shocked and appalled.

"I am therefore extremely happy to do what I can to support this worthwhile

appeal on behalf of the families who lost loved ones in the Gulf War."

SSgt David Forsey RMP, serving in Lisburn, Northern Ireland, who has already raised £10,000 for the families, was the man behind the auction. He was given the shirt by the Military Police Association of Australia, representatives of which paid a visit to the England team's World Cup hotel and had no difficulty in talking all 26 players, including fly half Jonny Wilkinson and captain Martin Johnson, into signing the shirt to raise money for the RMP families, who include eight children.

● Donations can be sent to Lt Col J H Baber, Rousillon Barracks, Chichester PO19 4BL (cheques payable to "RMP CBF").



Prince drops in on the 'Palace'

THE Prince of Wales made a morale-boosting visit to British troops in Iraq.

He flew to Basra for his top-secret trip and met soldiers working in and around the southern city.

The Prince flew by Chinook along the Shatt-al-Arab waterway and landed in the Al-Sarraji Palace compound, now a military operational headquarters.

He met members of The Royal Regiment of Wales, the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment and the Army Air Corps, of which he is Colonel-in-Chief. He was greeted by, among others, Maj Gen Andrew Stewart, the GOC.

CSgt James Wilson said: "It's an honour to have him come and find time to speak to the boys."

Prince Charles thanked British troops for their work in Iraq when he met more than 200 soldiers from 2 Para. He described them as a "remarkable bunch of people" and presented the Wilkinson



The Prince of Wales with 2 Para soldiers at Saddam Hussein's former palace in Basra

Picture: Cpl Gary Wort RAF

Sword of Peace to the regiment for its peacekeeping efforts following the conflict in Afghanistan.

The Prince said: "I was enormously impressed by what you managed to achieve. I hope you feel there is some sense of reward for the difference you managed to make for so many people who live in Kabul."

While at Al-Sarraji Palace, he also met senior leaders of the Iraqi community.



Desert heart: One of the cards

From Poland with love

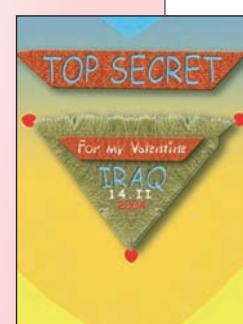
POLISH printers brightened up Valentine's Day with a gift of 12,000 cards specially produced for British soldiers serving in Iraq.

The free cards, which were distributed to troops via Naafi's Efi shops in southern Iraq, were a present from Marian Dreszer and his staff at Delta Graphix, Poland's biggest greeting card manufacturers.

Produced in eight "military" designs, they were dispatched to the Gulf from the print factory at Tarnów, 230km south of Warsaw.

Managing director Marian said the idea came from his 300-strong workforce, many of whom are handicapped. Similar cards were also given to the 2,500-strong Polish contingent serving alongside UK troops in the Multi-National Division Centre-South in Iraq.

Lt Col Ian Watts, the British Military Attaché in Warsaw, travelled to Tarnów to thank the printers. He said the cards had been sent with the best wishes of the workers and their hopes for a speedy and safe return for all British soldiers currently on operations.



Eyes in the sky



Watchkeepers: Thales's 180 (above left) and 450 drones (bottom) Northrop Grumman's Firescout (above) and Air Ranger (left centre) are in the frame to provide the Army with a state-of-the-art battlefield surveillance capability (see story below).

Important aspects of the programme include the provision of images to commanders day and night in all visibilities; an image reference library so that "pictures" of an area of interest can be compared over time to see what has changed; the capability to multi-task the UAV during flight; and the provision of remote terminals so that users can view real-time imagery.

It is envisaged that Watchkeeper UAVs would be controlled by the click of a mouse from ground stations. Rather than being "flown" by ground-based pilots they will carry out automatically all their aerial manoeuvres to reach the locations to which they have been sent. The operator clicks a mouse on the co-ordinates on a laptop and the UAV goes there.

Areas the MoD will be looking at closely include the recovery of the air vehicles and the potential for using several simultaneously to harvest and exploit data from the battlefield.



As reported in these pages (June 2003), the main contenders for the MoD's £850 million Watchkeeper contract are Thales UK and Northrop Grumman. The programme is said to be on schedule

to achieve an initial operational capability in 2006.

Watchkeeper is inextricably linked with Bowman communications system and the Royal Air Force's Sentinel Airborne Stand-Off Radar project in delivering what is described as the UK's "future network-enabled battlefield".

MoD scientists are currently looking beyond Watchkeeper towards the possible arming of UAVs and controlling them from aircraft and ships.

Battle-winner Phoenix silences critics during the battle for Iraq

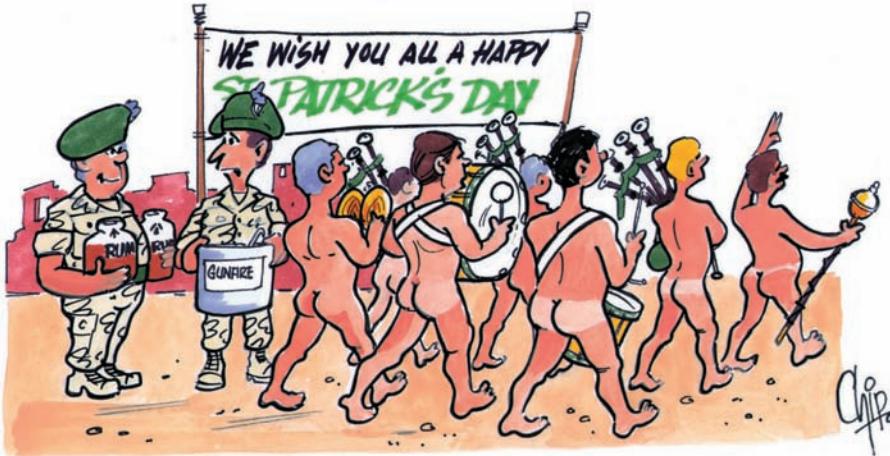
PHOENIX, the Army's unmanned reconnaissance air vehicle, was recognised by senior commanders as one of the top five battle-winning equipments deployed by British Armed Forces to the Gulf, **writes John Elliott**.

According to Col Kevin Harvey, leader of the Defence Procurement Agency team behind the MoD's unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) programme: "Phoenix has had its critics in the past but it really came into its own during Operation Telic because of the timeliness and quality of imagery and information it provided to commanders."

Col Harvey told *Preview*, the journal of the DPA, that his team was working closely with soldiers of 32nd Regiment, Royal

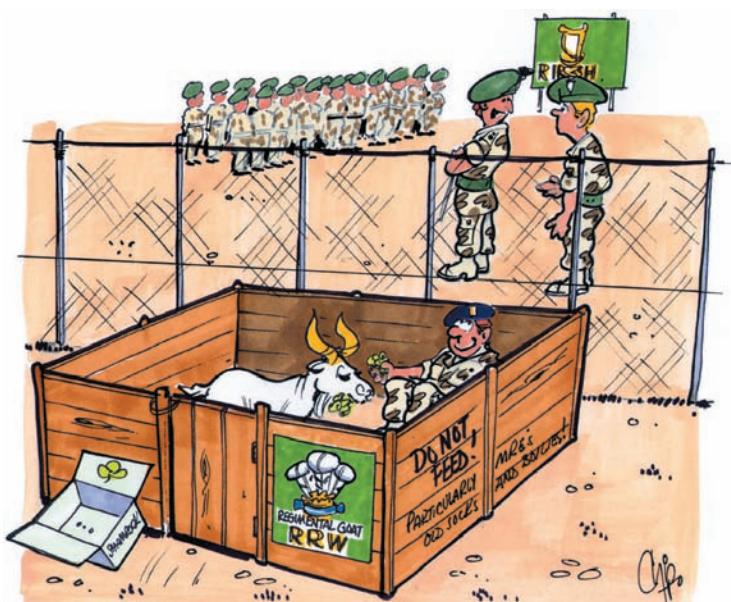
Artillery, who used Phoenix in southern Iraq and blazed a trail for the MoD's Watchkeeper UAV programme. Originally procured to find targets for the Royal Artillery's Multiple Launch Rocket System, Phoenix found a new role as a key surveillance and acquisition tool for British commanders in Iraq.

This role – known as Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) – pointed the way ahead to the UK's ambitious Watchkeeper, said Col Harvey. "Phoenix itself will begin to be subsumed within Watchkeeper from late 2006."



Chuckle with Chip

"I'm afraid that when I told the Drum Major not to bother with uniform for *Reveille*, he took it rather too literally!"



"Don't be silly . . . why on earth would anybody nick it?"



"So the goat's rations include a daily cigarette, and these 20,000 are all for his personal use, eh?"

Proud to be . . .

(a gentle poke at those 'national' days)



"LCpl O'Brien says you can poke your tea, Sergeant Major . . . he'd like a nice cappuccino instead!"



"Even Saddam wouldn't have tortured people like that."

CLM leading

Watch out for a new leadership training programme for NCOs and WOs

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

THE old-style Education for Promotion (EFP) programme familiar to NCOs and warrant officers is to be binned.

This spring new Command Leadership and Management (CLM) courses developed by the Directorate of Individual

Training (Army) at Upavon will become mandatory at various levels of NCO promotion.

According to Maj Jonny Ormerod, QRH, SO2 CLM Policy, the change will bring more consistency to in-barracks training. A spin-off will be greater access to civilian-recognised personal qualifications, up to degree level.

"The skills taught on these new courses will enhance the abilities of NCOs and WOs and so have a positive effect on the lives of those they command."

Maj Ormerod said the need for change had arisen because although training standards for operational leadership continued to be high, there were concerns



Maj Jonny Ormerod

about the quality and availability of command leadership and management training applicable to other environments, notably in barracks.

"Some corps had been running centrally controlled courses in which the whole range of CLM training objectives were covered well, others had not. A comprehensive approach, sharing best practice, was required across the Army."

The Hay Report, published in 2000, stressed that improvements in leadership and management would make the biggest single difference to retention in the Army.

"But the driving motive is to improve the quality of in-barracks leadership and management," said Maj Ormerod.

Course objectives, delivered at AECs and within Arms and Services cadres, include application of leadership and management principles, how to manage and develop subordinates, effective communications with superiors and subordinates, information management systems and management of information technology, performance of in barracks duties, leading individual and team training, and defence knowledge.

'The driving motive is to improve the quality of 'in-barracks' leadership, management'

The new training regime will be mandatory for all NCOs on promotion to lance corporal, corporal, sergeant and warrant officer class 2. It will be progressive: experience gained on one course will be relevant to the next. Soldiers will receive training on promotion – not before it – so resources will not be wasted on those who may not be promoted. A team from the directorate visited units across the Army to gather best practices. Maj Chris Allender, AGC (ETS), who is responsible for CLM training design, led the search.

He said: "Some corps required leadership training at team commander level, others did not. We have tried to strike a balance because until now some people seemed to be getting a better package than others. "You can't beat formal instruction delivered by experts, followed by realistic assessments, to make sure you understand what you have been taught."



WO2 Mark Taylor



Maj Chris Allender

Team member WO2 Mark Taylor RGBW was also involved in the final design. He helped pilot a Private-to-LCpl cadre for the King's Royal Hussars. "They were very happy with things, feeling it was pitched at the right level. They are now given enough information for the rank they are in and to progress to the next level," he said.

On the first rung

HERE's what seven soldiers on the first step of the promotion ladder thought about the CLM course

LCpl Ashley Shaw RLC

"I can use a lot of it, such as form-filling for passports and IDs, man management and other duties. I would definitely take the opportunity to take up the civilian qualifications. The management skills could make me ready to take on a supervisory role when I eventually leave the Army."



LCpl, Michael McGee RLC

"I have picked up a lot and some of the management skills will be useful. If a private soldier came to me with a problem I would now know what direction to point him in."



LCpl Geordie Coulthard PWRR

said participants had left the course reaching the same standard, whatever their cap badge. "Each part of the Army has a different training emphasis," he said. "As an infantry JNCO, we are there to lead and instruct. The RLC, for example, do things differently, to the Infantry."



ing the way



Raising the stakes: More cohesive training for command leadership and management training

Raising standards for all

ALTHOUGH qualifications are a positive benefit of CLM, the new regime should improve educational standards for all soldiers.

"The entry standard for JNCO Part 2 is basic skills level one in literacy, broadly equivalent to GCSE English," said Maj Jacqui Davidson, AGC (ETS), one of the planners.

"Education centres are working hard with those identified as candidates for promotion to make sure they have the qualification and if they haven't got it, to give them the opportunity."

The needs of Gurkha and Commonwealth soldiers are also being taken into account.

"Accreditation with civilian qualifications is the icing on the cake of CLM," said Maj Davidson. As a guide, JNCO, SNCO and WO CLM courses have been linked to civilian qualifications that roughly equate to GCSE, A-level and degree level respectively.

Individuals can study for a professional qualification up to degree level. There are also NVQs and higher education certificates.

LCpl Gemma Cox

RLC "This is a relaxed course although learning about being a leader is a little intense. There is a lot to take in. When I get my next stripe I will use it more."



LCpl Phil Bushell RLC

"I am in my 17th year in the army and have seen a lot of initiatives come and go. I think CLM is a good idea and that everyone who gets a stripe must complete this course. It will prevent anyone who is incompetent slipping through."



Cpl Jamo James PWRR

looked forward to a chance to gain qualifications recognised in civvy street. "I think soldiers will take that aspect up," he said. "It is very useful for the day when we eventually leave the Army."



LCpl Kirk Williams PWRR

took part in the pilot programme. "While some elements had been covered before," he said, "others were new to me and very good, like getting information off the internet. We all got different things from the courses, depending on our skills. We also gained an understanding of what goes on at a higher level."



Corps of Experts



A little-known 'unit' of skilled civilians regularly helps Army

Report: Ray Routledge

Pictures: Mike Weston and Les Clarke

IF you have a leak, send for a plumber. If the lights won't work, call an electrician.

But what do you do if the entire city you are responsible for has no water or power? If you are the British Army one option is to call for a member of the Engineer and Logistic Staff Corps RE (Volunteers).

Not heard of it? You are in good company, even though this tiny corps of civilian specialists has been around for 139 years.

It formed in 1865 to help the railways move troops round the UK in the event of an invasion. The railways were made up of a dozen different companies and needed guidance in case large numbers of troops had to be moved quickly.

Today the corps, which has strong links with the Royal Logistic Corps, offers expertise in roads and bridges, airports, water and sewage, petrol and oil engineering and communications.

Its engineers and experts often deploy on operations, said Maj Mark Johnson-Ferguson, Royal Engineers, SO2 Infrastructure Engineer Support at HQ Land Command in Wilton. The corps gives the Army access to 60 of the country's leading experts, drawn from top-level engineering and logistics companies. Some have served in the military; most have not.

They offer a spread of assets both as individuals and as leaders of large firms.

"Through our contacts we identify a company or individual who can help," said Maj Johnson-Ferguson. For example, before Op Telic the MoD consulted a hydrologist on what would happen if Iraqi forces damaged dams and lock gates and how they could be repaired.

There was also a fear that the oil infrastructure could be booby-trapped. A corps member flew out and identified key

installations to be secured and how to make them safe.

Corps members hold commissions in the Territorial Army but receive no pay and wear no uniform.

"We pay them a stipend of £60 a year, a nominal amount to cover for their time attending council meetings. If they send people to lend their knowledge, or even deploy, the company usually bears the cost," said Maj Johnson-Ferguson.

When British sappers arrived in Kuwait on Op Telic they found the port lacked facilities to berth roll-on, roll-off ferries. Ships were already loading at Marchwood military port near Southampton, so the situation had to be resolved rapidly. A Staff Corps member contacted a Dubai company, which built and installed the docking link in time.

Maj Johnson-Ferguson, Royal Engineers, SO2 Infrastructure Engineer Support at HQ Land Command in Wilton. The corps gives the Army access to 60 of the country's leading experts, drawn from top-level engineering and logistics companies. Some have served in the military; most have not.

With PowerGen colleagues,

he has deployed to Pristina, Kabul and Basra, sometimes just hours behind lead troops.

"The Army needed help with a very old power station in Pristina," Les said at his West Berkshire home. "Many pylons were down and although the Royal Engineers could put them up again they didn't know which ones. I went out a few days after the Army to assess what was needed to get the lights on. That was my first job with the MoD."

His next was in Afghanistan in 2002, to advise on the repair of broken power lines. In the UK engineers use high compression joints to ensure good connections; in Kabul they were splicing cables with salvaged jubilee clips.

Les also helped the Afghans draw up a plan to get two old oil-fired Russian-built stations working.

Last year he flew to Basra following criticism of slowness by the British Army in restoring the electricity supply, even though it had been erratic at best under Saddam's regime.



HQ Land: Maj Mark Johnson-Ferguson



Enjoyed life with the sappers: Les Clarke



Power talks: Les Clarke, on the phone, advises Iraqi engineers on how to restore electricity



Contact drills: Members of Sphinx Battery brush up their patrol skills, above Recce: Possible OP sites for battery patrols are explored from the air, left

Sphinx eyes up Basra

Why specialist unit couldn't go home

AS the dust settled on Operation Telic 2 and units of 19 Mechanized Brigade went on leave, gunners with 4/73 (Sphinx) Battery, who had served alongside them, remained behind to provide a surveillance and reconnaissance capability for 20 Armoured Brigade throughout Telic 3.

The need for its specialist skills in southern Iraq became clear during 19 Mech Bde's first weeks in the area. Tensions in the area rose as temperatures climbed above 50C and humidity edged past 80 per cent. Flashpoints erupted, committing troops to static containment tasks.

Intelligence-gathering was hindered as few soldiers remained to provide "eyes" on areas of interest during these tense times. But the solution was close at hand, with 4/73 (Sphinx) Battery already in-theatre as the recce element of 40th Regiment RA. All that was needed were a few adjustments to its structure and equipment holdings.

The battery had already picked out observation post sites in Basra, allowing for the rapid planning of discreet observation tasks in key areas of the city. Patrols quickly began their work, providing vital OP capability to support battle-group



Long range: The Sharp Shooters zero their L96 sniper rifles

operations and gather important pattern-of-life intelligence.

In 40C heat soldiers from Sphinx Battery spent up to seven days at a time in urban OPs. Their recce and reporting skills were also used by the brigade, which tasked them to reinforce intelligence and help refine targets for future operations.

The patrols' ability to produce high-quality intelligence was enhanced by the procurement of specialist photo equipment, allowing them to take high-resolution images from long range. Technical training was provided in Iraq by experts from the Defence School of Photography.

With threat levels high, the need for patrols to respond rapidly and precisely was crucial.

Thanks to its embedded instructor,

4/73 Battery boasts nine qualified snipers who, for the first time, are equipped with the L96 rifle. The Sharp Shooters are now operational within the patrols, while the upgrading of the battery's forward air controllers to "combat-ready" status further raised the unit's capability.

The battery also managed an ice-climbing expedition in the Italian Alps between roulements to Iraq, while preparations are going on for a deployment to Belize later in the year.

The battery runs two selection courses a year. They are already filling up with soldiers of all capbadges who want to join. Part of Yorkshire-based 5th Regt RA, it is the only truly all-arms gunner unit to provide a patrol-based surveillance and target acquisition capability. It recruits from all three Services.

● **Soldiers: If you want to join or find more, ring 94731 ext 5639/5640 or write to 4/73 (Sphinx) Bty, 5 Regt RA, Marne Barracks, Catterick, Richmond DL10 7NP.**

Little Eagle set to conquer big world



Globe-hopper: WO2 Barry Jones in his autogyro and inset



World flight back on the drawing board

LYNX pilot WO2 Barry Jones's attempt to fly round the world in an autogyro is back on course. His plans, which had to be aborted when war in Iraq became imminent a year ago, have been dusted down for take-off this month.

Last year WO2 Jones, of 9 Regiment AAC, proved his James Bond-type micro-aircraft by breaking the world distance record for an autogyro – 585 miles from RAF Culdrose in Cornwall to Wick in Scotland. Now he has his eyes set on something a little longer: a little matter of 25,000 miles in all.

As reported in *Soldier* (Feb 2003), Expedition Global Eagle will last about three-and-a-half months and take in 25 countries. The autogyro – made famous in 1967 as Sean Connery's Little Nellie in the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice* – is the last remaining class of aircraft yet to circumnavigate the globe.

The aircraft is supported in flight by a combination of unpowered rotating horizontal blades and forward propulsion from a conventional propeller. WO2 Jones, who dreamt up the project, will follow the route taken by Brian Milton in 1998, when he became the first person to

fly a microlight around the world. The 11-man Global Eagle team also hopes to raise money for the Dyslexia Institution, the NSPCC and the British Red Cross September 11 Appeal. WO2 Jones is a dyslexia sufferer.

The 36-year-old pilot has been in the Army since 1984 and has served in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Germany and the Balkans. His team of 11 soldiers is responsible for building the aircraft, route-planning, logistics and sponsorship and charity liaison.

The expedition has the backing of Gen Sir Michael Walker, Chief of the Defence Staff, who is its sponsor.

Weather permitting, WO2 Jones, who is a flying instructor based at Dishforth in North Yorkshire, hopes to begin the record attempt this month from the start-finish point in Farnborough.

"Expedition Global Eagle is a fantastic project," he said.

"If it is successful, we will be creating a world record and making aviation history.

"We are trying to raise money for three very deserving charities, and being dyslexic, I want to use the expedition to show dyslexic children that they can achieve whatever their goals are if they really want them."

He aims to cruise at about 2,000ft and reckons his longest stretch will be the 457

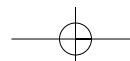
miles of icy sea between Greenland and Iceland. He has linked up with schools all over the UK and visited many to tell pupils about his mission.

WO2 Jones was in the news last year when, to launch Expedition Global Eagle, he broke the single flight world record of 543 miles, held for 30 years by Wg Cdr Ken Wallis RAF, who invented the machine.

www.globaleagle.co.uk



Flight fantastic: WO2 Barry Jones in the cockpit of the autogyro with the Global Eagle team and, top, airborne in Yorkshire



Let's get pers

Army messages on personnel issues are not getting through to soldiers. Who says so? Col Max Marriner – Colonel Personal Services 4 (Army) – is in a unique position to make an assessment

IT is apparent from the correspondence pages of *Soldier* that the Army's messages on the way various personnel developments are being taken forward is not getting through to soldiers, says Col Max Marriner, Colonel PS4 (Army).

So we asked him to take stock of current personnel issues and look into his crystal ball at policies in the pipeline.

"I think it is very important that we recognise from the outset," he said, "that the Army's accompanied service policy is markedly different to that of the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

"The RN and RAF deliver platforms – ships and aircraft – to the operational theatre while the Army delivers formed bodies of men and women. We might say 'you fight platforms, we fight people'.

"I think all soldiers would agree that unit cohesion is fundamental to operational success and, in the early years, we see it as vital that soldiers are encouraged to live and work within a tight community to deliver that operational capability.

Fact: We are different from the RN and RAF, we want different things from our people and we put policies in place to support those fundamental differences.

"The Army wants its soldiers – married or single – in, or very near to, unit lines when they are at regimental duty. I think it is also important that we should be clear



Taking stock: Col Max Marriner



sively proven by Op Telic. "Families and partners living close to the deployed unit were better informed and supported during the deployment, than those separated from it.

Group support is a very powerful argument for continuance of the military community – but it comes at a price.

"I fully recognise that there are some absolutely grim estates out there but we are trying to get this turned around. If you look at the new builds in Tidworth or the housing being upgraded in Germany

Bill will empower same-sex couples

IN Col Marriner's view the matter of unmarried part-

ners in long-term relationships is a major issue, and one with far more importance to a potentially larger part of the military community.

It is estimated that 30,000 personnel across the three Services are in a partnership.

The Government is currently run-

... but not heterosexual partners

ning a bill through Parliament which will give legal status to same-sex partners. But it will not include heterosexual partners because they have the option to marry.

"Now, while I wait for the howls of derision to die down, could I stress that this is Governmental policy and

therefore the MoD cannot – even if it chose to – adopt an alternative position," he said.

"So, from the spring of 2005 we can expect to see same-sex partnerships receiving official status and therefore, potentially, access to the gamut of allowances and housing as they apply to married Servicemen and women now."

sonal . . .



under Project Puma you will get a flavour of the future.

"I welcome the contributions on the letters page of *Soldier*, which provide really useful feedback direct from the ground. But I counsel those who write to ensure that they engage their unit admin staff as well.

"We produce a wide range of allowances to encourage accompanied service while at the same time attempting to give the single soldier more support. In this latter regard, I am conscious there is more to do."

Single soldiers and living out

If a soldier wishes to apply to live out (after his first year in barracks after training) he or she would do well to get hold of a copy of AGAI 53 from the squadron or company office, urges Col Marriner.

"I recommend it, as well, to all who live in. And let's also note that, if the Army cannot provide Service living-in or married accommodation, we will provide it for you from the local market."

It's your life so make sure you know what you are entitled to

COL Marriner strongly encourages all *Soldier* readers to acquaint themselves with the allowances available to them.

"Regimental administration officers and the unit chain of command have a key role to play in ensuring the information, in the form of AGAIs [Army General and Administrative Instructions], DCIs [Defence Council Instructions] and other publications, is made available to all ranks," he said.

"My staff and I find that there is much more to each case than first meets the eye. I find that some who write to *Soldier* don't



"The girlie supplement is a great idea to encourage them to read the notice board."

understand the regulations and are often entitled to allowances, but were unaware of them or how to claim for them.

"The key is to discuss issues with admin staff. They in turn can discuss the issue with my staff in PS4(A) if necessary.

The stark fact is that more effort by some to understand the regulations, and enquire if they are unsure, will often reap dividends.

"Remember, if you don't ask you certainly won't get. It's your life and your package and you have both a right to know and an obligation to find out what you are entitled to."

Why Army encourages accompanied service

THE issue of house purchase and, in particular, Long Service Advance of Pay (LSAP), is driven by the Army's operational requirements.

"In context," said Col Marriner, "LSAP is an advance on the terminal gratuity of £8,500 and is repaid in monthly instalments. If more than £5,000 is taken it is taxable, and there are very clear constraints on how it may be used.

"For example, it is buy-to-live, not buy-to-let. The Army has already agreed to reduce the LSAP qualification point downwards and the Over-37 package will also move to an earlier point in service.

HOUSE PURCHASE

"This package comprises a series of allowances that I strongly urge readers to acquaint themselves with.

"But – and here we come back to the Accompanied Service Policy – the Army wants its people accompanied for the vital early-years period of regimental duty, so for the time being these packages will not be lowered below the 30-year threshold.

"Whether or not LSAP is a substantial retention tool remains to be demonstrated, but it must not be seen outside the context of the operational requirement the Army places on its people."

Manage your money



Credit Action Director Keith Tondeur, will be pleased to answer, in confidence, specific questions addressed to the Editor.

Do you know where your cash goes?

OVER the course of recent months Credit Action has received several approaches from Army personnel and families who were starting to get into a mess with their money. None were in serious debt but they were heading in that direction. Some had become aware they were spending more each month than their income and that the situation was getting worse because they were paying more and more interest.

One wrote: "I always seem to have run out of money before the end of the month and have to borrow for seasonal spending at Christmas and for holidays. What can I do to avoid this?"

The key thing is to budget. What this means is that we all need to know exactly what money we are receiving through our pay and benefits and where we are spending it. Because credit is so widely used it can be easy to drift into a habit of spending more than we have. We need to stop this before it gets us into serious difficulties.

WRITE IT DOWN

The best way to budget is to get every spending member of the family to carry a notebook round with them and write down EVERYTHING you spend your money on. Newspapers, sweets and DVDs add up over a month to a tidy sum.

This isn't the most exciting thing to do, but a little discipline now could save a lot of heartache later. Once you have done this bring the lists together and put them into categories such as food, petrol, clothing and so on. Then add regular bills such as electricity [remembering to divide quarterly bills by three and annual bills by 12], and put in a regular sum each month to allow for birthdays, Christmas and holidays.

MONEY GUIDE

How does your spending look now? Are you surprised by how large some of the amounts are? Is your spending greater than your income? Does your spending actually reflect your priorities? If you would like to know more about budgeting the Army has a money management guide which will help you. You can also get further advice at www.creditaction.org.uk

I encourage you to do this. Debt can quickly and easily spiral out of control and cause much pain to those caught in it. Prevention is much more painless than cure. If this exercise shows you are already building up levels of debt please contact the Credit Action/CCCS debt helpline (see below). Free and confidential help is a phone call away.

0800 591084 or www.creditaction.com

Degree of SUCCESS

Blind ex-sapper earns international business honours with help from Army's charity

DESPITE his vision being severely impaired, ex-sapper Gerry Sherlock has completed a four-year degree in international business, thanks to help from the Army Benevolent Fund.

Gerry, a Royal Engineer for nearly ten years, left the Army in 1978 and launched into a career in building services management. While working in Cairo in 1993 he contracted meningitis and nearly died.

Despite fears that he would not survive, Gerry, now 51, pulled through but was left with severely impaired sight and poor balance, making it difficult for him to walk without help.

"When I came out of hospital I had to embark on a long rehabilitation," he explained. "I'd been in a coma and on a lot of medication but I wanted to get my life back on track and to start to work again, so I enrolled on a computer skills course at the Royal National Institute of the Blind College at Loughborough.

With his new-found skills, he did some voluntary work teaching disabled children. But getting a permanent job was a bigger hill to climb.

"In my eyes and those of my doctors I'd made amazing progress, but to get a job, I needed to further my education. I really relished the challenge to learn more and push my boundaries so I enrolled on a BA Honours degree in international business at Southampton Institute.

"I knew it was not going to be easy and some hurdles were bigger than others. I even had to get medical clearance from my doctor before I could be accepted on the course," said Gerry.

"I couldn't follow notes and diagrams on the whiteboards, which was a real problem in lectures, so I had to buy £7,000 worth of textbooks so I could do most of my studying at home after normal working hours. This posed another hurdle as textbooks are designed for those with good sight."

Gerry needed a table-top CCTV to be able to read his text books and swot up on course material, but the cost of this was beyond him and his family, especially since he had already spent thousands on the books.

He approached the Royal Engineers Association for help and they coordinated a grant from the ABF towards the cost of the equipment. The CCTV works by enlarging text and displaying it on a monitor.

Gerry said: "It's a very simple piece of kit, but without it I would not have been able to complete my course, and without the financial help I received from the Army Benevolent Fund, I wouldn't have been able to buy it.

"Thanks to this equipment and the tireless support of my family, I now have letters next to my name and I am back in communication with the world."

Gerry is looking for a job so he can put his knowledge and experience to use. He is determined and ambitious, but so far has been unsuccessful in his search.

He said: "Being registered blind means that on paper I am not an ideal candidate for many employers. I hope that once people meet me they will understand what I can bring to an organisation. I don't want sympathy, just a little empathy. In an ideal world I would like to return to building services management or work with children."

Simon Brewis, Director of Grants and Welfare at the ABF, said: "Mr Sherlock is a very deserving case and we shall follow his future progress. He has our admiration, not only for how he fought for his life, but for the way in which he has strived to accomplish his degree despite all the odds."

For more information about the Army Benevolent Fund visit www.armybenevolentfund.org



Fresh start: Gerry Sherlock



DAME VERA LYNN

Smiling through

Sixty years on, the original Forces' Sweetheart recalls bush rats in her Burma basha – and flies in her soup

Interview: Chris Horrocks
Portrait: Graeme Main

DAME Vera Lynn ushered us into the large drawing-room of her Sussex home, hustled off to the kitchen and reappeared with a pot of warming coffee and a plate of shortbread biscuits.

Outside, the stunning view of open countryside looked inviting even in the chill February air, though the swimming pool waited for more balmy days.

"Do you like my cat?" she enquired as she reached to pour the coffee, flashing the disarming smile that has warmed the hearts of millions of devoted fans over 80 years and more. The pet in question turned out to be a tea-cosy, depicting a well-fed tabby, keeping the pot warm.

A far cry from the fly-blown soup and bush rats of Burma 60 years ago, when the much-loved Forces Sweetheart selflessly withstood great personal discomfort to ensure the soldiers fighting in such appalling conditions were not, in her heart at least, the "Forgotten Army".

To reach Burma at all, the plumber's daughter from the East End – who had

never flown before and was a reluctant traveller at the best of times – endured a marathon haul through Europe and Asia.

The first leg of her debilitating odyssey, to Gibraltar, took seven hours in a Sunderland Flying Boat rigged-out as a troop carrier, complete with metal seats.

It was then that she discovered she was prone to travel sickness, which troubled her all the way to Burma – via north Africa, Cairo, Basra, the Gulf, Karachi, Bombay, Chittagong and by the Arakan road to her final destination.

As if that was not enough, the harrowing experience included an emergency landing on the Dead Sea during a storm. "It wasn't very dead," she recalled, with an ironic giggle.

The 27-year-old singer, who had been voted Forces Sweetheart by newspaper readers in 1939 and was to go on to sell millions of records, become the first British artiste to top the US hit parade, star in three films and seven Royal Command Performances, host several TV series and be made a Dame of the British Empire, found herself, apart from nurses in the hospitals on the way, a lone woman in a world of battle-scarred men.

"It didn't concern me where I was being sent or where I was going," she said. "All I knew was that I was going to see the boys and entertain them and talk to them – which was just as important as actually singing to them."

"I was at Kohima when the Chindits came out of the jungle. They asked me to go to the camp where they had arrived, not to entertain but just to walk around and talk to them, which I was happy to do. Then they said, 'Oh, you'd better not come today, you'd better come tomorrow. They have got to be de-loused'."

There was none of the "I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here" about this pop idol of 60 years ago. She was determined to share the same conditions as the men.

"I'd put up with anything, really," she said. "I knew what the boys were having to put up with, so why shouldn't I share it? If you go into a wartime situation you should be prepared to accept whatever's going – otherwise, don't go."

"I slept on a stretcher on one occasion,

balanced between two wooden kitchen chairs, all by myself in a shed. I was accommodated mostly in grass huts with a camp bed and a bucket of water. That was my shower.

"I didn't have a bath for weeks. It was heaven when on my way back later we got to a camp where I actually had a bath. Ah, bliss!

"I remember so well sitting in a big grass hut with the boys



Out of the jungle:
The 27-year-old
Vera Lynn with British soldiers in Calcutta
after her 1944 visit to the troops in Burma

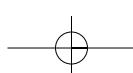
Picture: Imperial War Museum

for a meal. When they brought the soup it was smothered with flies. You had to scoop it out with a quick movement of the wrist to get a spoonful of soup without flies.

"At night the basha in which I slept was alive with bush rats – little squirrel-like creatures with fuzzy tails. Fortunately we had nets to keep them off."

Golden milestones

- 1917** Born Margaret Vera Welch, East Ham, March 20. **1924** First public appearance as singer. **1932** Became vocalist with Howard Baker's Orchestra.
- 1935** First radio broadcast with Joe Loss Orchestra. Hired as vocalist by pianist Charlie Kunz. Made first recordings. **1937** Joined Ambrose Orchestra.
- 1939** Voted most popular singer in newspaper poll and named Forces Sweetheart. **1941** Married musician Harry Lewis, later to become her manager. Started six-year run of popular radio programme, *Sincerely Yours*. **1944** Appeared in Armed Forces stage revue. Travelled to India with ENSA and toured Burma on her own.
- 1947** Returned to show business after short retirement and birth of daughter, Virginia. **1948** Appeared regularly on US radio show; US top ten hit with *You Can't Be True Dear*. **1952** First British artist to hit No 1 in US hit parade with *Auf Wiedersehen*, selling 12 million copies worldwide. **1954** Number one in British chart with *My Son, My Son*. **1955** TV series on Rediffusion; others followed on BBC. **1969** Appointed OBE. **1975** Made Dame of the British Empire; voted Show Business Personality of the Year; won Ivor Novello Award.



Dame Vera Lynn, 60 years on: "If you go into a wartime situation you should be prepared to accept whatever's going – otherwise, don't go."

Dame Vera, now widowed, has never forgotten "her boys" – and is still closely associated with the Burma Star Association. She sang at all but three of the organisation's 50 Royal Albert Hall reunions and is an honorary holder of the medal. She also helps the Royal British Legion and other charities for whom, even at her advanced age, she will gladly "do her bit".

"I don't think that just because the war is such a long time ago, you should forget

all about it. And anyway, as I always say, it is not just for the elderly or the veterans, it is for the young people too. There's going to be a need for the Legion in the future, the way things are going."

In her gracious senior years – she is 87 this month – Dame Vera still exudes that magical beauty and charm, blended with the common touch, which lifted the spirits of millions before, during and after the Second World War.

Sadly, our heart-warming encounter

with this rightly revered lady was over all too soon. We said our goodbyes, went to the car and as we prepared to pull out of her driveway we turned briefly and there she was, standing at the front door, waving and smiling that enchanting smile.

It was almost as if she were saying farewell to "her boys", 60 years ago.

And on the road back it seemed only natural for us to break into a few bars of *We'll Meet Again*, one of Dame Vera's greatest hits.

They risked death to listen in

DURING the Second World War Vera Lynn hosted the radio programme *Sincerely Yours*, in which she sang and read messages from loved ones to Servicemen abroad. Some MPs said it was "too sentimental and would make the boys homesick".

Others thought differently. The star received 1,000 letters a week. Her mother took charge of it, and with the help of a young girl secretary, all mail was answered, with small gifts and photographs enclosed.

"The programme kept them in touch with what was going on, you know," Dame Vera recalled. "That's why

people in the occupied countries used to listen to it secretly, in fear of being shot if they were caught, because they were forbidden to listen to the BBC.

"They said it gave them hope and courage all the while they could still hear me broadcasting from London giving the news and talking to the men."

"Of course, I wasn't aware I was talking to any of the occupied European countries because I didn't know they were listening, not until after the war."

In gratitude, the Dutch people made the singer a Commander of the Order of Orange-Nassau.

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PAY SCALES, ALLOWANCES AND CHARGES



Military salary increase conforms with Government's target rate of inflation

Report: John Elliott

MEMBERS of the Armed Forces are to get a 2.8 per cent pay rise from April 1. The increase is in line with the Government's target rate of inflation.

The 2.8 per cent increase applies across the board, with the exception of privates and lance corporals and their equivalents on pay range 1 (lower) and pay range 1 (higher level 1 only), who will receive a 3.2 per cent increase.

The independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body says in its 2004 report* that Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon "delivered a clear message on affordability" in oral evidence to the board.

"Excessive" pay bills would divert resources away from the vital areas of equipment and training and could impair the Services' ability to deliver operational capability, which, in turn, could undermine motivation.

Mr Hoon had stated that the MoD would have to balance funding for operational commitments, personnel and equipment. "In this context," says the report, "any award in excess of the Government's target rate for RPIX [retail price index] of 2.5 per cent would divert resources from other elements of the retention package.

"The Secretary of State recognised that pay was an important indicator of the value attached to personnel but, he argued, accommodation improvements, military training and exercises,

equipment, managing separation and specific measures to improve retention in critical shortage areas were also important.

"Overall, he concluded, a balanced package for personnel was important in the current funding and operational climate."

Recognition of the need for broad comparability with civilian earnings enabled the AFPRB to "recommend salary levels that are fair to Service personnel and to the taxpayer who ultimately funds them."

Although military and civilian jobs could not be compared like-for-like, a raft of issues were considered, including overtime, the value of company cars, the relative value of the military pension, the X-factor, and working hours.

Despite operational pressures, the MoD had been able to keep its other ranks job evaluation on track and to provide job scores for the evaluation of 75 officer posts to add to the comparison.

**Armed Forces Pay Review Body Thirty-Third Report 2004*, published by TSO. Read it on-line at www.tso.co.uk/bookshop – also available from Parliamentary Hotline Lo-call 0845 7023474, £15.60.

Figures of speech

THE AFPRB notes that its terms of reference in making its military pay recommendation for 2004-05, require it to "have regard to affordability considerations".

Financial constraints applying to the MoD were set out in the Government's economic and management evidence and reinforced by the Defence Secretary in oral evidence.

It notes that the RPI and RPIX declined through the autumn of

THE recommendations:

- *That the military pay ranges under Pay 2000 for all other ranks and officers be uprated by 2.8 per cent from April 1*
- *That pay range 1 (lower) (privates/lance corporals) be uprated by 3.2 per cent*
- *That the first pay point on pay range 1 (higher) be increased to £13,461*

2003 from 2.6 and 2.7 per cent respectively in October, to stand at 2.5 per cent in November.

Over the three months to October 2003, however, wage settlements hovered around 3 per cent, average

earnings increased by 3.6 per cent and public sector earnings increased by 5.4 per cent.

In making its case, the Review Body says it was sensitive to how the pressures on the Services of providing cover for the fire-fighters' dispute, operations in Iraq and sustaining other on-going commitments had impacted on working time and leave.

In the next four pages: More report details ... daily rates of pay ... interview with new AFPRB chairman

PAY RATES FOR OFFICERS

£ daily

Rank	OF6	2003	2004	Increase
Brig +4	Level 5	217.37	223.46	6.09
Brig +3	Level 4	215.14	221.16	6.02
Brig +2	Level 3	212.92	218.88	5.96
Brig +1	Level 2	210.70	216.60	5.90
Brig OA	Level 1	208.48	214.32	5.84
OF5				
Col +8	Level 9	192.11	197.49	5.38
Col +7	Level 8	189.82	195.13	5.31
Col +6	Level 7	187.52	192.77	5.25
Col +5	Level 6	185.24	190.43	5.19
Col +4	Level 5	182.96	188.08	5.12
Col +3	Level 4	180.67	185.73	5.06
Col +2	Level 3	178.39	183.38	4.99
Col +1	Level 2	176.10	181.03	4.93
Col OA	Level 1	173.81	178.68	4.79
OF4				
Lt Col +8	Level 9	165.91	170.56	4.65
Lt Col +7	Level 8	163.92	168.51	4.59
Lt Col +6	Level 7	161.95	166.48	4.53
Lt Col +5	Level 6	159.97	164.45	4.48
Lt Col +4	Level 5	158.00	162.42	4.42
Lt Col +3	Level 4	156.02	160.39	4.37
Lt Col +2	Level 3	154.06	158.37	4.31
Lt Col +1	Level 2	152.08	156.34	4.26
Lt Col OA	Level 1	150.09	154.29	4.20
OF3				
Maj +8	Level 9	128.07	131.66	3.59
Maj +7	Level 8	125.43	128.94	3.51
Maj +6	Level 7	122.79	126.23	3.44
Maj +5	Level 6	120.15	123.51	3.36
Maj +4	Level 5	117.50	120.79	3.29
Maj +3	Level 4	114.86	118.08	3.22
Maj +2	Level 3	112.21	115.35	3.14
Maj +1	Level 2	109.58	112.65	3.07
Maj OA	Level 1	106.94	109.93	2.99
OF2				
Capt +8	Level 9	100.96	103.79	2.83
Capt +7	Level 8	99.82	102.61	2.79
Capt +6	Level 7	98.66	101.42	2.76
Capt +5	Level 6	96.37	99.07	2.70
Capt +4	Level 5	94.07	96.70	2.63
Capt +3	Level 4	91.78	94.35	2.57
Capt +2	Level 3	89.47	91.98	2.51
Capt +1	Level 2	87.17	89.61	2.44
Capt OA	Level 1	84.89	87.27	2.38
OF1				
Lt +4	Level 10	73.22	75.27	2.05
Lt +3	Level 9	71.48	73.48	2.00
Lt +2	Level 8	69.74	71.69	1.95
Lt +1	Level 7	68.00	69.90	1.90
Lt OA	Level 6	66.25	68.11	1.86
2Lt	Level 5	55.12	56.66	1.54
N/A to Army	Level 4	48.83	50.20	1.37
SSLC +1	Level 3	41.59	42.75	1.16
SSLC OA	Level 2	38.10	39.17	1.07
Off Cdt	Level 1	34.86	35.48	0.98
UCE				
U Cad +3	Level 4	40.08	41.20	1.12
U Cad +2	Level 3	36.71	37.74	1.03
U Cad +1	Level 2	32.69	33.61	0.92
U Cad OA	Level 1	28.48	29.28	0.80
Welbexian Off Cad				
Year 3		40.08	41.20	1.12
Year 2		36.71	37.74	1.03
Year 1		28.48	29.28	0.80

Leave problems we

ANNUAL leave was a recurrent theme wherever AFPRB members visited Service units last year. They report: "They told us it was increasingly difficult to take their full allowance because of work pressures, that previously agreed leave was liable to cancellation and, in some cases, that even post-deployment leave was no longer guaranteed."

Although 15 days could be carried

forward, this often added to the scale of the problem.

Soldiers took 88 per cent of post-operational leave.

Across the Services, the proportion of personnel who reported having to change previously agreed leave remained constant at 53 per cent, a figure the AFPRB thought possibly understated the position.

"As the individual Serviceman or woman is best placed to know their

Separate pay tables are available for these groups and are published in the AFPRB report, or you can get a copy of the daily rates from your RAO.

- Pilot Employment Stream (Army)
- Medical and Dental Officers
- Veterinary Officers
- Chaplains
- MPGS

PAY RATES FOR SHORT-SERVICE (LATE ENTRY) COMMISSION OFFICERS

£ daily

Rank	2003	2004	Increase
Level 15	113.48	116.66	3.18
Level 14	112.73	115.89	3.16
Level 13	111.96	115.09	3.13
Level 12	110.44	113.53	3.09
Level 11	108.94	111.99	3.05
Level 10	107.42	110.43	3.01
Level 9	105.90	108.87	2.97
Level 8	104.39	107.31	2.92
Level 7 (Note 1)	102.50	105.37	2.87
Level 6	101.33	104.17	2.84
Level 5	100.16	102.96	2.80
Level 4 (Note 2)	97.81	100.55	2.74
Level 3	96.65	99.36	2.71
Level 2	95.47	98.14	2.67
Level 1 (Notes 3)	93.13	95.74	2.61

Note 1: Minimum entry point for LEs with over 15 years' service.

Note 2: Minimum entry point for LEs with between 12 - 15 years' service.

Note 3: Minimum entry point for LEs with under 12 years' service.

Territorial Army

TA rates of pay are the same as those for the regular Army less the appropriate X-factor abatement. You can work out your rate as follows:

13% X-factor – FTRS (full commitment) –
same as regular rates

5% X-factor – TA, FTRS (limited commitment) –
multiply the regular rate by 105, then divide by 113

0% X-factor – FTRS (home commitment), NRPS –
multiply the regular rate by 100, then divide by 113

PAY SCALES, ALLOWANCES AND CHARGES

There constant complaint to AFPRB

own leave position," says the report, "we find it difficult to contradict their assessment of the situation."

The board calls for improved data for its 2005 report and notes that the Joint Personnel Administration regime will enable the Services to track leave at unit and individual levels. It urges the Services to develop performance indicators to manage leave effectively, which it describes as "vitally important to the well-being of personnel and their families and to retention and motivation".

WORKING HOURS: A programming error in the MoD's survey data on working hours meant the 2001-02 figures were inaccurate. Corrected figures indicated a reduction in average hours worked last year, which "surprised" the authors of the report.

They were concerned that the latest survey results, for 2002-03, were based on a low response rate compared with 2001-02. Anecdotal evidence suggested those working the longest hours were least able to complete the diaries on which the survey was based.

ALLOWANCES: Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) is to increase by 3.2 per cent in daily rates. Accumulated turbulence and accumulated turbulence plus bonuses are to be increased from £1,250 to £1,300. All other compensatory allowances will increase by 2.8 per cent from April 1.

CHARGES: Food charges will increase by 2.4 per cent to £24.22 a week for single personnel and £17.71 a week for married unaccompanied personnel.

PAY RATES FOR OTHER RANKS

£ daily

		HIGHER RANGE				LOWER RANGE			
Rank	Range 5	2003	2004	Increase	Rank	Range 5	2003	2004	Increase
Warrant Officer 1	Level 7	104.68	107.61	2.93	Warrant Officer 1	Level 7	98.78	101.55	2.77
	Level 6	103.10	105.99	2.89		Level 6	96.08	98.77	2.69
	Level 5	101.30	104.14	2.84		Level 5	93.45	96.07	2.62
	Level 4	99.52	102.31	2.79		Level 4	91.66	94.23	2.57
	Level 3	97.73	100.47	2.74		Level 3	89.88	92.40	2.52
	Level 2	96.08	98.77	2.69		Level 2	88.10	90.57	2.47
	Level 1	94.22	96.86	2.64		Level 1	86.42	88.84	2.42
Range 4					Range 4				
Warrant Officer 2	Level 9	96.84	99.55	2.71	Warrant Officer 2	Level 9	88.73	91.21	2.48
	Level 8	95.49	98.16	2.67		Level 8	86.76	89.19	2.43
	Level 7	94.14	96.78	2.64		Level 7	85.66	88.06	2.40
	Level 6	92.80	95.40	2.60		Level 6	84.37	86.73	2.36
	Level 5	90.80	93.34	2.54		Staff	80.72	82.98	2.26
	Level 4	88.77	91.26	2.49		Sergeant	79.63	81.86	2.23
	Level 3	86.76	89.19	2.43		Levels 1-7	77.81	79.99	2.18
only Staff Sergeant Levels 1-7 only	Level 2	84.75	87.12	2.37		Level 2	75.37	77.48	2.11
	Level 1	82.74	85.06	2.32		Level 1	74.40	76.48	2.08
Range 3					Range 3				
Sergeant	Level 7	82.68	85.00	2.32	Sergeant	Level 7	76.37	78.51	2.14
	Level 6	81.17	83.44	2.27		Level 6	75.80	77.92	2.12
	Level 5	79.64	81.87	2.23		Level 5	73.27	75.32	2.05
	Level 4	78.12	80.31	2.19		Level 4	71.41	73.41	2.00
	Level 3	77.15	79.31	2.16		Level 3	70.69	72.67	1.98
	Level 2	75.24	77.35	2.11		Level 2	68.96	70.89	1.93
	Level 1	73.35	75.40	2.05		Level 1	67.21	69.09	1.88
Range 2					Range 2				
Corporal	Level 7	74.30	76.38	2.08	Corporal	Level 7	66.82	68.69	1.87
	Level 6	72.71	74.75	2.04		Level 6	66.32	68.18	1.86
	Level 5	71.24	73.23	1.99		Level 5	65.81	67.65	1.84
	Level 4	69.55	71.50	1.95		Level 4	65.30	67.13	1.83
	Level 3	67.97	69.87	1.90		Level 3	64.80	66.61	1.81
	Level 2	64.80	66.61	1.81		Level 2	61.78	63.51	1.73
	Level 1	61.78	63.51	1.73		Level 1	59.12	60.78	1.66
Range 1					Range 1				
Lance Corporal Levels 5-9 only	Level 9	64.80	66.61	1.81	Lance Corporal Levels 5-9 only	Level 9	53.89	55.61	1.72
	Level 8	61.78	63.51	1.73		Level 8	52.01	53.67	1.66
	Level 7	59.12	60.78	1.66		Level 7	49.73	51.32	1.59
	Level 6	56.53	58.11	1.58		Level 6	47.68	49.21	1.53
	Level 5	53.91	55.42	1.51		Level 5	45.77	47.23	1.46
	Level 4	48.75	50.12	1.37		Level 4	43.44	44.83	1.39
	Level 3	45.34	46.61	1.27		Level 3	39.93	41.21	1.28
Private Levels 1-7 only	Level 2	41.07	42.22	1.15		Level 2	37.84	39.05	1.21
	Level 1	35.74	36.88	1.14		Level 1	35.74	36.88	1.14

RATE OF PAY FOR NEW ENTRANTS

	2003	2004	Increase
All New Entrants	30.47	31.32	0.85

Standard rates of specialist pay will make change easier

The AFPRB has accepted MoD's proposals to introduce a revised scale of standard daily rates of **Specialist Pay** (SP), including Parachute, Flying and Diving Pay, from April 1.

Existing 2003 rates have been migrated onto the nearest point on the revised scale. This resulted in some being rounded up and some being rounded down. They were then uplifted by the AFPRB recommendation of 2.8 per cent hence why the level of increases vary for similar forms of SP.

ALTHOUGH **commitment bonuses** have not been increased, the AFPRB has approved MoD's intention to target the bonuses better at key manning points under Joint Personnel Administration (JPA).

Transitional arrangements will ensure existing personnel are made aware in advance of any changes. Provided personnel remain in service for the required period, they will continue to receive the full value of existing commitment bonuses, although they may receive them at a different time than at present.

Those joining after April 1 this year will be told that revised arrangements are being introduced.

JOINT Personnel Administration will deliver the new pay and allowances policies through a single IT system to be introduced to the Royal Air Force in late 2005, the Royal Navy in early 2006 and the Army in late 2006. It is designed to improve individual interaction with the personnel, pay and allowance systems, for example allowing the soldier to complete on-line many simple administrative processes.

A comprehensive briefing and training programme is planned to prepare for the introduction of JPA, both for those who administer it and for Service individuals who will have "self-service" access to the new IT systems.

CONTINUOUS Attitude Surveys throughout 2002-03 indicated that Service personnel were, on balance, satisfied with life in the Armed Forces and particularly appreciated the job satisfaction, job security and responsibility. Important areas of dissatisfaction included the impact of high commitment levels on separation.

While pay generally was considered satisfactory, survey results indicated a level of dissatisfaction in relation to skills, responsibility and hours worked.

MINIMUM WAGE: On average, junior ranks worked 45.8 hours a week in 2002-03. National minimum wage rates would produce pay of £206.10 for those aged 21 and over and £174.04 for under-21s. The minimum weekly pay for privates and equivalents in £250.18, significantly above the national minimum wage. Junior ranks' rates could fall below the minimum rate, however, were they consistently to work 55 hours or more a week (over 21s) or 65 hours or more (under 21s).

SPECIALIST PAY

£ daily

	2003	2004	Increase
Flying Pay			
Officers Pilots & Flying Instructor			
Officer Aircrew (Trained)			
Initial Rate	11.64	11.82	0.18
Middle Rate	19.55	20.05	0.50
Top Rate	31.07	31.87	0.80
Enhanced Rate	36.63	37.52	0.89
	32.18	32.90	0.72
	29.97	30.84	0.87
	27.75	28.78	1.03
Lt Col on Appt			
after 6 years in Rank	24.64	25.19	0.55
after 8 years in Rank	23.01	23.64	0.63
Col on Appt			
after 2 years in rank	21.37	22.10	0.73
after 4 years in rank	18.92	19.53	0.61
after 6 years in rank	16.45	16.96	0.51
after 8 years in rank	9.86	10.28	0.42
Brigadier			
Non-Commissioned Aircrew			
Qualified Aircraft Comdr			
Initial Rate	11.64	11.82	0.18
Middle Rate	19.55	20.05	0.50
Top Rate	31.07	31.87	0.80
Enhanced Rate	36.63	37.52	0.89
Qualified as Pilot			
Initial Rate	6.00	6.17	0.17
Middle Rate	13.22	13.36	0.14
Top Rate	15.56	15.93	0.37
Aircrew Pay			
Initial Rate	5.76	6.17	0.41
Middle Rate	12.70	12.85	0.15
Top Rate	16.66	16.96	0.30
RLC, Air Despatch Pay			
Lower Rate	4.06	4.11	0.05
Higher Rate	6.53	6.68	0.15
Diving Pay			
Army Compressed Air Diver(ACAD)	6.76	7.20	0.44
Army Unit Diving Supervisor & Army Advanced Diver	9.66	9.77	0.11
Army Supervisor & Instructor	16.44	16.96	0.52
Parachute Pay			
Qualified Parachutists	4.42	4.63	0.21
Parachute Jump Instructor - Less than 8 years experience	6.34	6.68	0.34
Parachute Jump Instructor - 8 or more years experience	9.43	9.77	0.34
Gurkha Language Pay			
Oral & Written proficiency	1.16	1.19	0.03
Oral proficiency rate	0.66	0.68	0.02
Experimental Pay			
Per test	2.21	2.27	0.06
Pay for Work of an Objectionable Nature (PWON)			
Basic Rate	5.08	5.22	0.14
Higher Rate	14.98	15.40	0.42
Pay for Work in Unpleasant Conditions (PWUC)			
(Soldiers only)	2.06	2.12	0.06
Northern Ireland Resident Supplement (NIRS)			
	5.29	5.44	0.15
Recruiting & Retention Allowance (London)			
	3.28	3.37	0.09
Longer Separate Service Allowance (LSSA)			
Basic Rate	5.39	5.56	0.17
Middle Rate	8.43	8.70	0.27
Higher Rate	11.49	11.86	0.37
Specialist Pay (Special Forces) SP(SF)			
SAS Officers			
Level 1	21.40	22.10	0.70
Level 2	25.39	26.21	0.82
Level 3	27.30	28.27	0.97
SAS ORs			
Level 1	10.59	10.79	0.20
Level 2	14.78	15.42	0.64
Level 3	17.66	17.99	0.33
Level 4	20.36	21.07	0.71
Level 5	22.29	23.13	0.84
Specialist Pay (Special Forces Communications Pay) SP(SFCP)			
All Ranks	9.15	9.25	0.10
Special Communications Pay (SCP)			
WO2 – Sgt	9.33	9.77	0.44
Cpl and below	7.01	7.20	0.19

Pay Rise Professor

Prof Greenaway's team decides how much you are worth

Interview: Andrea Frazer

PAY and conditions, two issues close to the hearts of Servicemen and women, directly impact on retention and motivation within the UK's Armed Forces.

Which should make Professor David Greenaway of much interest to officers and soldiers everywhere. He is the new chairman of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body, which recommends the annual military pay award to the Government.

Soldier asked him to give an insight into the work of the AFPRB.

The 2004 report was compiled under the chairmanship of Prof Greenaway's predecessor, Baroness Dean.

What experience do you bring to the position of chairman?

"I've been a member of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body for six years. The experience has been invaluable in teaching me about the workforce and the job that we ask the men and women of the Armed Forces to do."

"I am a Professor of Economics at the University of Nottingham and come with a variety of experience in other Government services, such as health and higher education. Having never served in the Armed Forces, I also bring independence of judgement."

How do you calculate what soldiers are worth in terms of pay?

"Between September and December each year we meet every two weeks in London to conduct a detailed examination of facts and figures; we analyse information about what's happening in other employment sectors and what's happening to average earnings. We take on board oral evidence, for example from the Secretary of State, who presents the Government's perspective."

Do you take soldiers' opinions on board?

"We spend a further three months visiting different Service locations within the UK and overseas. We talk to between 3,000 and 4,000 Servicemen and women each year.

"We hold small discussion groups, always



Independent voice: Prof David Greenaway

without senior ranks present so that individuals don't feel intimidated.

"This is one of our most valuable sources of evidence; it helps us build up a good picture of what Service life is like for those on the ground. We get a sense of what the job involves, where people work, where they live, the conditions they operate in and what they feel are the key priorities.

"We find that participants are very open and honest in their views and come well prepared with questions. The information we receive through discussion groups definitely influences what we do.

"In recent years we've heard a lot about

certain units being deployed more often than others – one of the reasons why we've tried to make a difference with LSSA [Longer Separated Service Allowance] by bringing down the qualification period and increasing day rates in excess of the pay award in order to compensate those who have to spend more time way from home.

"We've also heard a lot about the quality of accommodation and this has pushed us to take a keener interest the issue, raising it specifically with the Secretary of State. One result of this has been an increase in committed expenditure."

How do you compare soldiers' pay with equivalent jobs in civvy street?

"We use job evaluation data and compare forces pay to equivalent posts within the civilian sector to contrast pay levels. We can't possibly match each and every job up with one in the civilian sector but aim for a comprehensive cross-section.

"On average I think our package compares favourably with the civilian sector but we will continue to make annual recommendations to the Government to ensure that this continues to be the case."

How does our troops' pay compare to other countries?

"Two years ago a study was conducted into the pay and conditions of ten other countries, including the USA, Canada, France and Australia. The findings were fairly reassuring in terms of basic pay and allowances at all ranks – and we came out of it above average. This work will be redone next year to make sure we still compare favourably on an international playing field."

Why do British troops pay tax on operations when soldiers from other countries do not?

"Unfortunately that's the law as it stands – we've all got to pay tax. US forces do get tax-free pay when they are deployed, but how do they fare when they are at home? Let's not cherry-pick – when we look at the overall package British forces come out pretty well."

What the accommodation increases mean

GRADUATED increases in charges for Service families accommodation (SFA), including water, sewerage and furniture range from one to 6.2 per cent. Single living accommodation (SLA) charges rise by 2.2 per cent. The AFPRB, while welcoming increased investment, notes the "unacceptable standard of much SLA", of which 84 per cent worldwide is below Grade 1. "From MoD's detailed plans," it says, "we conclude that it will be some years until substantial amounts of improved accommodation come on stream."

What that means is that majors and above

will pay £1,832 (+£29) for Grade 1 SLA and £621 (+£11) for Grade 4, while corporals and below will pay £635 (+£7) for the best and £212 (+£3) for the worst.

For those in SFA, total annual rental (including water, carpets, curtains and a cooker) for the largest unfurnished officer's Grade 1 quarters will rise by £365 from £6,639 in 2002-03 to £7,004. For the smallest quarters, the figure goes up by £102 from £3,303 to £3,405.

For other ranks, the largest will cost £3,044 instead of £2,865 (up £179 a year); and the

smallest £1,763 instead of £1,719 (up by £44).

Officers will pay £7,004 for Grade 1, Scale I (the largest) furnished SFA, a rise of £365, ranging down to £1,135 (up by £14) for Grade 4, Scale V (the smallest).

Rents for furnished OR quarters range from £3,004 (up £179) for the largest Grade 1 accommodation to £657 a year (up £15) for the smallest Grade 4 houses.

Garages will cost £226.30 (up £14.60) a year in the first of a recommended three-year phased increase of 22 per cent intended to bring charges in line with civilian comparators.

Reds ready for!

Champions begin march towards Twickenham showdown

THE Royal Navy and Royal Air Force will move to action stations for the first leg of the Babcock-sponsored Inter-Services rugby championships at the end of this month, writes **Roger Thompson**.

This traditionally close encounter provides an opportunity for the two "Blues" teams, who have both spent the winter months rebuilding, to fine-tune their performances before meeting the current champions and pre-tournament favourites – the Army.

Enjoying their inaugural season in the County Championships, the airmen have been preparing their relatively young side in the warmth of Barcelona, while the Navy are upbeat, having undergone a major refit around the Cornish halfback pairing of Dave Sibson (Truro) and Dave Pascoe (Penzance).

New recruits Tim Southall, a former Newcastle Falcons Academy player, and Cornwall's Jamie Caruana will provide a punchy back division behind the traditional "hearts of oak" pack.

The competition's grand finale will be the Army v Navy battle at Twickenham on Saturday, May 1 – traditionally a blood-and-thunder affair played in front of 40,000 partisans.

In preparation, the Army have used games against strong Oxford and Cambridge University teams to introduce a number of newcomers to senior rugby. Gdsm Martin Lacey (WG) scored two tries in the Reds' 36-26 victory over Cambridge while Pte Iosa Damadumu (Hldrs), who has only recently returned to the squad after completing a tour in Bosnia, proved that he is in cracking form at number eight alongside Bdr Andy Dawling (7 Para RHA), who after a season's absence is back at his very best.

The squad's first club game of the season against Gloucester Academy – who boast a crop of the next generation of Premiership professionals – last month, may, in retrospect, be seen as a watershed for the Army XV.

Although beaten in the final quarter, young players such as Cpl Phil Littlehales (R Signals) and Spr Darren Ball (RE) showed that in the intense cauldron of Twickenham, the new guard

would be more than capable of taking command.

Head coach Lt Col Andy Hickling (R Signals) is far from complacent and has apparently chosen to forget last year's resounding win. He is "starting afresh and working towards the perfect performance" and has already selected a squad for a high-intensity four-match training camp in the Cape Town region of South Africa.

"The trip will not be a tour, but a period of vigorous training," insisted Lt Col Hickling. "Pitting the old guard against the new over three matches is going to be very exciting.

"The final match of the visit against Stellenbosch University will be a fierce examination of where we have reached in preparation for Twickenham."

Unusually, two pairs of brothers will be competing for places in South Africa. Bdr Gareth Slade Jones (RA), the resident number nine, and Cfn Darryl Slade Jones (REME) both covet the scrum half position. Products of the Army's under-21s set-up, Gdsm Chris and Dave Scarfe (WG) are both utility back five forwards who are more than capable of punching their weight in the senior squad.

At Twickenham, the Army will again be led by recently capped Barbarian and England Counties player Cpl Mal Roberts (RLC).

Alongside him the Army can call upon three full internationals, England A and Counties players, and six sevens internationals. After operations in Iraq and the Balkans all are available for selection, but Hickling knows that "big names" alone will not secure victory against the Navy.

"It's not about reputation, it's all about performance and committing to the team ethos," he said. "Firing on all cylinders for the Army on the day is what really counts."

Although Army backs Cpl Frankie Green (RE) and Pte Saula Roko (RGBW) will be trigger-happy in exploiting the flanks, the crunch will come in the front row, where Scotland international Cpl Mattie Stewart (PWRR) and

Northampton Saints player Cpl Chris Budgen (RWF) lock horns with the Navy's Nick Bartlett (Lydney) and Dan Parkes (Plymouth).

Should either Stewart or Budgen falter, Cpl Steve Trethewey (REME), now playing with Otley, will relish the chance to show that of the three he has the greatest potential. Enjoy the battle in the front row, the rest is only icing.

Engaging the enemy at eyeball range is the red meat of Inter-Services matches. In

typically combative mood the Royal Navy's Director of Rugby, Cdr Chris Alcock (RN), who has played in these games many times, said, with only half a smile: "Of course it's war. The gun ports are open – stand by for a broadside."

◆ **Tickets for the Army's clash with the Royal Navy at Twickenham on May 1 are now on sale and can be ordered by calling the booking office on 01252 334415.**

◆ Teams interested in entering the AFNORTH Knights seventh annual international rugby tens tournament in Brussel, Holland on May 8-9 should contact John Brighton on 0031 455262316 or at NRSG, RHQ AFNORTH, BFPO 28.

It's not about reputation – firing on all cylinders for the Army on the day is what really counts !

RESULTS SERVICE . . . RE

ATHLETICS: RLC(G) orienteering championships, major units – 1, 2 CS Regt; 2, 1 GS Regt; 3, Sp Bn ARRC. **Minor unit and women's winners** – 24 Regt.

Indoor meeting (Birmingham), men's team standings – 1, Army; 2, UWIC; 3, Brunel University; 4, Loughborough University; 5, Birmingham University; 6, RAF; 7, Cambridge University; 8, RN; 9, Staffordshire University. **Women's team standings** – 1, Loughborough University; 2, UWIC; 3, Army; 4, Brunel University; 5, Birmingham University; 6, Staffordshire University; 7, Cambridge University; 8, RAF; 9, RN.

CANOEING: Army wild water racing championships, men's – 1, Sgt Brenden Reese (14 Regt RA); 2, Bdr Andy McCullough (11 Signal Regiment); 3, Maj Paul Hepworth (RLC). **Veteran's K1** – 1, Bdr McCullough; 2, Maj Hepworth. **Under 21's K1** – 1, Spr Easting (33 EOD Regt RE). **Women's open K1** – 1, Lt Nikki MacLeod

May Day battle



Picture: Graeme Main

Flashback: Flanked by Cpl Chris Budgen (RWF), Pte Emosi Naisaramaki (RS) dances through the Navy defence at Twickenham last year

RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . .

(RAMC); 2, Capt Hannah Hewins (158 R Anglian Regt RLC (V)); 3, Bdr Yeomans (14 Regt RA). **C1 men's** – 1, Maj Hepworth; 2, Cpl Green (11 Signal Regt); 3, LCpl Mark Stafford (11 Signal Regt). **C2 men's** – 1, Bdr McCullough/LCpl Stafford. **Team standings** – 1, 39 Regt RA; 2, 14 Regt RA; 3, 14 Regt RA B.

FOOTBALL: Massey Trophy – AMS 1 CA Mus 2 (LCpl Harris, Cpl Shyamkumar); RAC 0 Int Corps 1 (Cpl Kemp); AAC 0 APTC 3 (Collins, Wallbrook, Wilson); RA 1 (Gnr White) Infantry 2 (LCpl Cowap, LCpl Jones); Infantry 9 (Pte Brown (4), Pte Piercy (3), LCpl Powell, LCpl Moran) AMS 1; RA 5 (Gnr White (3), LBdr Arnold, LBdr Carver) RLC 1 (Pte Ayre); AMS 2 (Sgt Cochrane, Cpl Hayley) AGC 2 (Cpl Power, LCpl Gormley); RLC 3 (Sgt Maynard, Pte Biggs, LCpl McDermott) CA Mus 1 (Cpl Gurung).

Pricewaterhouse Cooper League – RLC 0 AGC 3; RLC 1 R Signals 6; RA 7 REME 0; Int Corps 6 AGC 4; REME 0 Int Corps 3.

JUDO: Army novice team and individual championships – 1, 12 Regt RA; 2, RMAS B; 3, 32 Engr Regt A and 11 Sig Regt. **Men's under 60kg** – 1, JS Jerrams (AFC Harrogate); 2, Spr Preston (32 Engr Regt); 3, Sig Anderson (11 Sig Regt) and Spr Kelly (AFC Harrogate). **Under 66kg** – 1, Spr O'Hara (32 Engr Regt); 2, Gnr Allan (12 Regt RA); 3, JS Lancaster (AFC Harrogate) and Spr Quick (32 Engr Regt). **Under 73kg** – 1, LBdr Jones (12 Regt RA); 2, Spr Rose (42 Engr Regt); 3, OCdt Crawley (RMAS) and OCdt McDonald (RMAS). **Under 81kg** – 1, OCdt Maceoin (RMAS); 2, Sig Sharp (216 Sig Sqn); 3, JS Read (AFC Harrogate) and Rgr McGuire (1 Royal Irish). **Under 90kg** – 1, LBdr Ellison (12 Regt RA); 2, OCdt Curry (RMAS); 3, Spr Whittow (32 Engr Regt) and Sig Hill (11 Sig Regt). **Under 100kg** – 1, LBdr Costello (12 Regt RA); 2, OCdt Brooks (RMAS); 3, OCdt Fry (RMAS) and Spr Nash (32 Engr Regt). **Over 100kg** – 1, Spr Griffiths (32 Engr Regt); 2, Spr Hince (42 Engr Regt). **Individual**

novice women, **lightweight** – 1, JS Raymond (AFC Harrogate); 2, LBdr Hodgson (12 Regt RA). **Middleweight** – 1, Gnr Mitchell (12 Regt RA); 2, OCdt Corrigan (RMAS).

Army intermediate team and individual championships – 1, 12 Regt RA; 2, RMAS. **Men's under 66kg** – 1, Rfn Thomas (1 RGJ); 2, SSgt Darnton (19 Regt RA); 3, JS Merifield and JS Hewitt (both AFC Harrogate). **Under 73kg** – 1, LCpl Woolon (216 Sig Sqn); 2, Capt Leach (12 Regt RA); 3, Cpl Dugan (2 PWRR) and Pte Sudron (1 RGBW). **Under 81kg** – 1, Cpl Sherlock (216 Sig Sqn); 2, Cpl Corfield (46 NI Wksp Coy); 3, Cpl Pearce (SEAE) and Cpl Back (AFC Harrogate). **Under 90kg** – 1, WO2 Maddox (1 Royal Irish); 2, Pte Jewell (4 GS Med Regt); 3, Sgt Brown (SEME) and LCpl Brown (19 MBSS). **Under 100kg** – 1, Cpl Ashcroft (Depot Royal Irish); 2, LBdr Watkins (29 Cdo Regt RA). **Over 100kg** – 1, LCpl Cunningham (RDG); 2, WO2 Compey (42 Engr Regt).



British biathlon's first lady: LCpl Emma Fowler (1 GS Regt RLC) has her sights trained on qualifying for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games

Targeting Turin

Soldier talks to the Army biathletes gunning for Winter Olympic glory

Interviews: Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

ANSWERING the call-to-arms to serve in the Gulf War last year has clearly had no lasting impact on the prolific form of Great Britain's leading female biathlete, LCpl Emma Fowler (1 GS Regt RLC).

Despite a season's absence from international competition, the 24-year-old dominated the women's races at the British National and Army Nordic Ski Championships in Ruhpolding, Germany, which attracted a record field of more than 260 competitors, winning the 12.5km biathlon, 10km mass start and 7.5km sprint.

"I did a lot of physical training while I was out in Iraq so my fitness never really suffered that much," explained Fowler, who began competing in biathlon in 1997. "My shooting skills may have faded a little, but I feel that I am now back on top form."

This is good news for the British Biathlon Union, which believes that the Army and Inter-Services champion has the potential to qualify for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, Italy – a feat which would guarantee Fowler a place in the sporting history books as British biathlon's first female Olympian.

"I know that getting to Turin won't be easy, but I'm determined to give it my best shot. Some of the girls I was beating

a few years back are now among the best in the world so with the right training I know that I'm in with a chance."

Cpl Adele Turner (29 Regt RLC), Fowler's closest rival and GB Europa Cup teammate, also harbours ambitions of representing her country in Italy.

"I'm very competitive and don't like being beaten, so having Emma around, and in front, of me really spurs me on," explained the 27-year-old, who recorded a series of second-place finishes in Ruhpolding. "Going to the Olympics would be great, but my main goal at the moment is to just beat Emma."

◆ **Continued on Pages 53, 54 and 55.**



Best of British: National biathlon champion Cpl Mark Gee (2 RTR) plans to step down from international competition ahead of the Olympics

Gee's parting shot?

Olympian considers hanging up his skis

DO not be fooled by the diminutive stature of Cpl Mark Gee (2 RTR). Despite standing at just 5ft 5in and tipping the scales at only 64 kilos he has been a veritable giant in winter sports' toughest discipline for more than a decade.

Since his first competitive season in biathlon in 1989, the 32-year-old has qualified for three Olympic Games, attended eight World Championships and contested 125 World Cup races, and his results at this year's British National and Army Nordic Ski Championships in Ruhpolding, Germany suggest that he is still among the very best in Britain.

However, Gee has made it clear that his country will have to do without the services of its most experienced biathlete at the 2006 Olympic Games in Turin, having announced his imminent retirement from both international competition and the Army.

"A lot has happened in my life since the Salt Lake City Games two years ago," he explained. "I now have a fiancée and a young son and my priorities have changed.

You have to be selfish when it comes to a sport like biathlon because for 11 months of the year you have to train almost constantly.

"Your focus has to be on your sport and other things in your life have to be put on hold or are pushed to one side – that is something I do not want to, or feel I can, do for much longer.

"At the beginning of this season I decided that it was about time I hung up my skis and stopped competing at an international level. I can't really explain the exact reasons behind that decision, other than it was just a gut-feeling, something inside telling me to call it a day, and it's one that I'm going to follow very soon."

Gee had planned to bring a close to his racing career last month, but after out-shooting and out-skiing all of the current GB squad in the men's senior 20km race and 12.5km mass start in Ruhpolding, he was begged to reconsider his decision by the British Biathlon Union (BBU) and has now rejoined the national team on the world circuit on a race-by-race basis.

It is this unerring ability to hold his own against an increasingly younger field that has biathlon insiders convinced that Gee, who is due to leave the Army on May 31, will be unable to resist the lure of one last

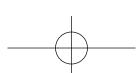
shot at an Olympic medal. The man himself believes otherwise.

"I am more than aware that the Olympics is now just a stone's throw away, but I also know that getting there would mean another two years of really hard work," he told *Soldier*. "You can never say never, but the way I feel right now I think I will be quite happy to cheer the guys on from the sidelines or while sitting in front of the television. I won't stop skiing, but as things stand I genuinely believe that I will not compete at another Olympic Games."

However, as an ever-present face on the "biathlon roadshow" for 14 seasons, Gee concedes that he has no intentions of turning his back on a sport that has dominated more than a third of his life.

"You can't just run away from the sport and I have no doubts that I will be involved in some aspect of biathlon in the future," he said. "Over the last 12 months I have been helping to coach the BBU's development team and have worked very closely with Gnr Stuart Paine (22 Regt RA).

"To watch him annihilating the field in the junior competitions at the British championships was fantastic, so coaching is certainly something that I will consider."

Edited by Andy Simms E-mail: asimms@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Great Britain's hot

NAME: Cpl Tom Clemens (1 D&D)



HAVING experienced the heartbreak of missing out on Olympic selection two years ago, Cpl Tom Clemens is understandably cautious when it comes to speculating about the prospect of representing his country in Turin.

A member of Great Britain's World Cup squad since 1998, the 28-year-old enjoyed his best ever biathlon season in the year prior to the Salt Lake City Games, but was denied the honour of becoming an Olympian at the eleventh hour.

"Nothing went right for me that winter," he explained. "I hit a bad run of form and, due to a last-minute change to the selection process, I was left with just one shot at qualification. When you are under that much pressure in one race it is impossible to do yourself justice."

"It is really hard to express what it was like to miss out on Salt Lake City," he said. "Words cannot describe what it feels like to work so hard for something only to get nothing in return. It was absolutely crushing and was like suffering a bereavement."

"When I learned that I hadn't qualified I felt as though I never wanted to see another set of skis again in my life and decided to give up the sport." However, after eight months of grieving Clemens began to miss the thrill of the circuit and, with the help and support of his regiment, staged an international comeback.

Now firmly back among Britain's élite, Clemens finished second only to a Canadian in the men's 10km

NAME: Cpl Jason Sklenar (28 Engineer Regiment)

GREAT Britain's team captain Cpl Jason Sklenar fears that a persistent back injury could prevent him from completing a hat-trick of Olympic Games appearances.

Diagnosed as having two slipped discs by spinal experts at the British Olympic Medical Centre in London early last season, the 33-year-old has only recently returned to competition and is acutely aware that his days as an international biathlete could soon be numbered.

"Part of one of the discs is still protruding into my spinal column and sometimes causes me slight discomfort," explained Sklenar, who was selected for the 1992 Games in Albertville alongside former Royal Engineer and six-times Olympian Mike Dixon, and recorded Britain's best result at Salt Lake City in 2002.

"Fortunately there haven't been too many days when I have woken up and found it painful to ski, but it is already clear that I'd be expecting too much out of my back to have a long career like Mike Dixon."

"I hope that with the physiotherapy I am doing I can keep the problem at bay, but I have made it quite clear to the British Biathlon Union that should



I be fit enough and competing well enough to go to Turin, then I would retire immediately after."

"I am completely focused on getting to the Games and cannot express how important it is to me, but if I suffer as much as I did last year then I may have to accept that I can not push my body any further and quit."

NAME: Cpl Simon Heard (Rifle Vol)

POSSESSING an air of refined arrogance fuelled by a string of top finishes at the British National and Army Nordic Ski Championships, Cpl Simon Heard believes that he can force his way on to the Olympic stage in Turin – despite being involved in biathlon for only 18 months.

A member of the British Biathlon Union's development squad, the 24-year-old has spent the last two summers training alongside America's cross-country ski team in New Zealand and is hotly tipped to break into the national set-up this season.

"As far as I'm concerned getting to Turin is a very strong possibility," he said. "I'm not sure anyone else shares that view but that doesn't particularly bother me. The selection system means that I have every chance."

Using rhetoric more akin to the fight game than the winter sports scene, Heard explained his plan of attack to *Soldier*: "I want to get on to the Europa Cup team this season and then become Great Britain's number one and a regular in the World Cup squad next year."

"Provided I get enough snow time I am confident that I can do it. I have come a long way in a year and a half and this coming season will be my first with a proper training plan. With that in mind I am pretty confident that I can come back to Ruhpolding next year and beat everyone."

shots

biathlon at the British National and Army Nordic Ski Championships in January and is once again within reach of performing at the winter sports showpiece event.

But with the British Olympic Association (BOA) set to implement more stringent qualifying criteria, with British biathletes having to finish within eight per cent of the first three finishers in a World Cup field on at least two occasions, and vital sponsorship increasingly hard to come by, exorcising the ghosts of 2002 will be far from easy.

"Things will never be sugar-coated for members of the GB team – it is always going to be hard graft," he said. "The fact that we have no snow and start skiing a lot later in life means that we will always be playing catch-up with biathletes from other nations. It is more than likely that the reality of the situation is that we will never get a medal for our efforts, but people should realise that just getting in to the top 30 of a World Cup field is incredibly hard."

"As far as Turin goes, my fingers are firmly crossed, but I am trying not to look too far forward and am taking each week as it comes," he said.



Refreshingly Heard's ambitions extend far beyond beating his fellow countrymen. "My main motivation is to climb up the world rankings," he said. "Without meaning to sound arrogant, I believe that I can improve on Britain's current standing. It's important to have that belief, whether it is misguided, wrong or entirely ludicrous."

NAME: LCpl Lee Jackson (1 GH)

BY his own high standards, LCpl Lee Jackson has had a disappointing start to the 2003-2004 season.

"Results have not come easily for me or the rest of the team this year," explained Jackson, who at 23 is the youngest member of the Great Britain team. "On a personal note I think that part of the problem is that I'm frustrated that my advancements have not been as great as in previous years."

"I progressed so rapidly from being a novice to a senior member of the national squad that I half expected to keep improving at that rate, which I haven't done. My progress has slowed with my age and physical maturity."

"At the moment I have put the Olympics to the back of my mind. We all want to go, but Turin is not the only prize out there. All the races between then and now are just as important, if not more important, than that final goal."



NAME: Cpl Marc Walker (1 GS Regt RLC)



NAMED as first reserve for Great Britain's four-man biathlon team in Salt Lake City, Cpl Marc Walker spent the duration of the 2002 Olympic Games praying for a telephone call.

"I was actually skiing faster than all the guys who went to the last Olympics, but unfortunately my shooting just wasn't consistent enough at the time and I was placed fifth in the team," he explained. "All I could do was sit on the sidelines and hope that the phone would ring to tell me that one of the team had fallen ill. Suffice to say that never happened and I had to be content with watching the Games on television."

"Rejoining the team on the World Cup circuit immediately after they got back from Salt Lake hit home how unlucky I had been to miss out. I was disheartened, but that's sport for you."

Now 31, Walker knows that Turin represents his last shot at becoming an Olympian and that getting there will require complete dedication. However, finding the motivation to train daily in sub-zero temperatures has never been a problem for Walker, who finished second in the 10km sprint and third in the 12.5km mass start at the British National and Army Nordic Ski Championships.

"The only motivation I need is the pride I get from wearing my country's colours," he said. "I love the sport and to compete for your country and represent the Army is an amazing feeling."

NAME: LBdr Lance Hodgkins (40 Regt RA)

A VICTIM of the British Biathlon Union's limited budget, LBdr Lance Hodgkins is having to fund his own quest to qualify for the next Olympics.

"At the start of this season I was selected for the GB team, but only as the eighth member of the squad and was told that if I wanted to compete I'd have to fund myself," explained the 26-year-old. "Having spent most of my money on summer training I have not been able to afford to compete internationally this year. All I can do is keep working hard and hope that I can force my way back among the front-runners in the team."

A regular member of Great Britain's Europa Cup squad last term, Hodgkins was beaten only by Olympians Cpl Mark Gee and Cpl Jason Sklenar in the men's 20km biathlon in Ruhpolding and is adamant that he is not yet out of the race for a ticket to Turin.

"Nobody knows what the GB team will be two years from now," he said. "Everyone has their peaks and troughs and whoever produces the most consistent results in a year or so will make the team."



Still reigning

Pictures: Graeme Main

UNDER the expert eye of Commonwealth gold medallist and newly-appointed head coach Sgt Chris Bessey (RLC), the Army boxing team were crowned Inter-Services champions for the 22nd year in succession at HMS *Nelson*, Portsmouth.

Despite missing the services of Welsh ABA light heavyweight champion Cpl James Whitfield (4 GS Regiment RLC) and England captain LCpl Tony Davis (1 RRF), who were both rested ahead of the European Championships, the Army recorded a 6-5 victory in the tournament, which doubles as the quarter-finals stage of the Amateur Boxing Association championships.

"The Royal Navy are getting stronger and stronger each year and had six internationals on their team," said Bessey. "We were missing some of our top boxers, but still did what we had to do. All of the lads dug in deep and even though there were a couple of close decisions that didn't go our way, we still got the result."



3. Dominant: In complete control from the opening bell, Pte Chris Pacy (RLC) stopped Mne Adam Lancey in the dying seconds of their lightweight bout after trapping his opponent in a corner. Pacy's win stretched the Army's lead to 4-1.

4. Rough justice: Seemingly on top for the first three rounds of his light welterweight contest with Mne Kevin Green, Gnr Simon Patterson (RA) failed to secure the points verdict. A decision later described by Army coach Sgt Chris Bessey as "a disgrace to amateur boxing".

7. Bruising encounter: Despite being dropped to the canvas by a fierce body blow in the second, light heavyweight Cpl Lee Spare (AAC) gave the Army team an unassailable 6-3 lead by defeating the RAF's lone finalist JT Lee Aldridge. The airman, who finished the bout bloody-nosed and with severe swelling around his left eye, was later named as best runner-up.

8. Valiant effort: Refusing to be overwhelmed by the high calibre of his opponent, the Army's Pte Jamie Toal made Mne Mick O'Connell work hard for his second successive heavyweight title, which came courtesy of a points decision.



1. Three up: Following walkovers for Pte Keith Spong (1 RRW) and Spr Duncan Bariball (RE), bantamweight Pte Chris Sagar (RLC) extended the Army's lead with a deserved points victory over MEM Al Boyce. Putting his clear height and reach advantage to good use, Sagar's accurate jabbing kept him clear of trouble for the duration of the contest.

2. Cut short: Having bounced back convincingly from a standing eight count in the opening round of his featherweight clash with Mne Alex Urrutia, Pte Pete Murray (RLC) looked to be in the ascendancy when, 45 seconds into the third round, the referee deemed that a cut above his right eye was too serious for the bout to continue. Murray's reaction to the official's decision suggested that he believed to the contrary.



5. Déjà vu: In a repeat of last year's final, England international Pte Steven Briggs (1 PWO) beat Mne Stuart Elwell to the welterweight title.

6. Tall order: Giving away a huge height and reach advantage, middleweight LCpl Dean Frost (RLC) took reigning champion OM Shaun MacDonald the distance but failed to make an impression on the judge's scorecards. 5-3.



9. Battle of the titans: Home favourite and eventual Inter-Services champion OM Suku struggled to counter the unorthodox style of Army newcomer and ABA Novice super heavyweight champion LCpl "Fiji" John Tuiatu (RLC). Despite lacking the experience and finer ring skills of his opponent, Tuiatu kept his naval counterpart pinned to the ropes for much of the bout and attacked relentlessly despite being caught with some telling upper cuts in the third.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to March . . .

ATHLETICS: 3-10 – Inter-corps cross-country championships (TBC); 10 – 4 Div cross-country league meeting (Aldershot); 17 – 4 Div cross-country league meeting (Aldershot).

BASKETBALL: 5-6 – Inter-Services championships (TBC); 13-14 – Founders Cup second round (Aldershot); 19-21 – Caister tournament (Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth); 29-April 1 – Army cup finals week (Grantham).

BOXING: 4 – Army minor units team finals (Aldershot); 18 – Army major unit finals (TBC).

CRICKET: 1-7 – Army tour to South Africa.

FOOTBALL: 3 – RAF v Army (Uxbridge); 4 – Army women v Prison Service (Aldershot); 5 – Int Corps v APTC (TBC), AGC v AAC (TBC); 10 – Army v AFC Newbury (Aldershot); 11 – RAF v Army women (Uxbridge); 12 – RAC v CA Mus (TBC); 13 – Charterhouse v Army Crusaders (Charterhouse), Army youth v Oxford (Aldershot); 16 – Hampshire v Army U21 (Blackfield, Langley); 17 – Army v Royal Navy (Aldershot); 19 – AMS v APTC (TBC); Infantry v RLC (TBC), AGC v RA (TBC), AAC v Int Corps (TBC); 20 – RAF Icarus v Army Crusaders (Aylesbury); 25 – Army women v Royal Navy (Aldershot); 26 – RLC v RAC (TBC); 27 – Army Crusaders v Corinthian Casuals (Aldershot); 31 – Army Challenge Cup final (Aldershot), RA women v AGC women (TBC), RLC women v AMS women (Deepcut), R Signals women v Int Corps women (Blandford).

HOCKEY: 10/11 – Army v British Police v Civil Service (Portsmouth); 11 – Army women v Civil Service (Aldershot); 14-15 – Army veterans training camp (Aldershot); 16 – RMAS v Army U23 (Sandhurst); 22-26 – Inter-Services championships (Portsmouth).

JUDO: 5-6 – Inter-Services championships (TBC).

MARTIAL ARTS: 20 – Army open championships (Aldershot).

NETBALL: 11-12 – Inter-Services championships (RAF Halton).

REAL TENNIS: 7 – Hardwick House v Army (Pangbourne); 20 – Cambridge v Army (Cambridge); 21 – Newmarket v Army (Newmarket).

RUGBY LEAGUE: 17 – Army inter-unit nines competition (Bordon).

RUGBY UNION: 3 – Army v Harlequins (Aldershot); 9/10 – Major and minor unit finals (Aldershot); 12-30 – Army tour (South Africa); 17 – Army women v England youth (Aldershot).

SHOOTING: 13 – Inter-division small bore final (Bisley); 14 – Land inter-unit final (Bisley).

SQUASH: 8-12 and 15-19 – Army inter-unit knockout championship heats; 20 – Canons Cup (Aldershot); 29-31 – Army major and minor inter-unit finals (Aldershot).

TENNIS: 13 – Army veterans v English Law Society (Aldershot); 20 – Army women v Avondale (Aldershot).

WINTER SPORTS: 1-6 – Army Scottish championships (Scotland); 1-7 – Inter-Services bobsleigh championships (Lillehammer, Norway).

■ Got a date for the diary? E-mail the details to fixtures@soldiermagazine.co.uk

COMPETITIONS

No 748

How observant are you?

WIN £100!



TEN details have been changed in one of our archive drawings by Frank Finch. Circle the differences in the right-hand image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send it to HOAY 748, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by March 31, 2004.

A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

First correct entry drawn after the

closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the May issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

January competition (No 746): First correct entry drawn at random was from Mrs M Mosey of MRS Hohne, who wins £100. Runners-up Cpl K Gittins, of St Neots, Cambs, and Mrs N J Evans, of Bridgnorth, Shropshire, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: Plane wheel, top right; lines to left of plane; debris from wheel, lower right; mudguard shape, right; debris from vehicle, mid-right; and upper; driver's helmet; camouflage design; tailplane, left; soldier's thumb, left.



Freeze frame

“Steady chaps . . . don’t shoot until you see the whites of their pads.” ►

Write a caption for the photograph, right, published in *Soldier* in July 1953. The best, in the Editor’s opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by March 31.



WINNER of our January competition, left, is Mrs B Kearns of Winchester for her caption: “Facilities for the Army gymnastics team were a bit limited on operations.”

We also liked “The new recruits could not shake off their joy-riding pants” from WO1 John Mill of DII(A) UNICOM, Worthy Down.

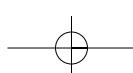


SSgt G E McLorie, of Medical Branch, HQ 5 Division, suggested the enigmatic: “Look out, lads . . . it’s the Americans!”

“Spider! Big hairy spider!” from Sgt Dene Deacon, CPU RMP, Longmoor Camp, Hants, and “Mouse!” from P A Clarke of Wokingham, Berks, struck a chord, while Sgt T James,

ACIO Glasgow obviously thought he was looking at a sporting activity: “Cpl Jones won the Mortar Platoon’s high jump competition by the seat of his pants.”

And finally, a worthy mention for Alan Howlett of Weston-super-Mare, who offered the highly credible: “Quick, lads, *Soldier* magazine has just arrived.”



Reunion and searchline notices also appear on our website. See

REUNIONS

19 Regiment RA (Highland Gunners): All-ranks reunion, Mar 20, at TA Centre, Northampton. Details from Maj (QM) GC Porter, tel 01980 634230, or WO2 (BSM) Keir, tel 01980 634282, or write to 19 Regt RA, Horne Bks, Larkhill, Salisbury SP4 8QU. E-mail s.keir@ntlworld.com

Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW: Annual reunion at Gloucester on Mar 20. Details from RHQ tel 01452 522682.

UDR: Officers' Club dinner to be held at Lisburn on Mar 26. Further details from Regimental Secretary (UDR) on 028 2566 1386 or secretary@udrassociation.org

Queen's Own Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry: Reunion and open day 1000 to 1630, Mar 27, at the Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum, The Court House, Warwick. Contact Ron Hartill on 07976 305995.

The Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry: Reunion on Apr 3 from 1930 at the TA Centre Wigan. All past DLOY and present D (DLOY) Sqn welcome. Write to D (DLOY) Sqn RMLY, Canal Street, Wigan WN6 7NQ; tel 01942 248882; or John Cavanagh, tel 01942 246411; or e-mail john@cavanaghj.freemail.co.uk

6 Artillery Support Squadron RCT: Reunion Apr 17 from noon at 158 Transport Regiment, TA Centre, London Road, Peterborough. For further details contact "Skin" Askham on tel 07976282438 or prassart@aol.com.

A Coy, 1 Bn The Wessex Regiment:

So,
You
Think
You're
Ready
To
Leave?

Written by a Service Leaver
For Service Leavers
Geoff O'Flanagan

THIS is the cover of an easy-to-read, 120-page guide on how to reintroduce yourself back into civvy street, written by someone who did just that. His advice ranges from the bleedin' obvious (before your job interview, get your hair cut, don't wear jewellery, put on a suit, make sure you don't smell) to the very sound.

The gist of it is: Do your homework and don't take civvies for granted – you are moving into their world, not they into yours.

So, You Think You're Ready to Leave? by Geoff O'Flanagan (£5.99 plus £2 p&p) is available direct from The Sasquatch Consultancy, PO Box 420, Eastleigh SO53 4XU or go to www.soyouthink.co.uk

Reunion for all ex-A Coy, AT/KS, Recce, Ass Pnrs on Apr 24 at Gloucester TA Centre. Write to Bob Kulzaj, A Coy, RGBW, Rifle Volunteers, Eastern Avenue, Gloucester GL4 3BD or tel 01452 523132

1, 4 and 7 Royal Tank Regiments Old Comrades: Annual reunion to be held April 30-May 2 at the Derby-Nottingham Renaissance Hotel. Contact Alex Birrell on 01508 492246 or David Francis on 01992 632372.

Italy Star Association 1943-45: Events to be held on May 6 to mark 61st anniversary of the Allies' return to Europe and mainland Italy. Chichester Cathedral service in presence of Fd Marshal Lord Inge (all to be seated by 1320); followed by parade led by band of 1 RGR. All welcome. Details from Graham Swain on 01425 614884.

260 Signal Squadron (SAM) R Signals Association: Reunion in Dortmund, May 7-9. Go to www.260sig.sqnsam.abelgratis.co.uk

Black Watch Association: Dinner and dance, May 8, at the Jarvis Clayton Lodge. Details from F Bailey on 01782 28091.

Air Formation Signal Regiments' Association: Open to all Army or RAF who served in any AFSU or

CAFSO branch. Next reunion May 8 at Stoke on Trent. Contact Chris Collier by e-mail to cecollier@supanet.com or tel 01902 338662.

201 RCZ Wksp (V): 33rd joint mess reunion for former officers, SNCOs and families to be held on May 14-15. Details from R F Smith, 6 St John's Place, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 5NP.

Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW Regt Assn: Reunion to be held May 22-23 at Devizes. Phone 01722 414536 for details.

17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC and 20 Maritime Regiment RCT: Open day and reunion on May 22 at Marchwood. Details from Capt Gary Hawker on 02380 664289.

UNIT DISPOSALS

The Army Technical College, formerly the Princess Marina College and the Army Apprentice College/School, at Arborfield: is to close in August.

Anyone who has made a presentation to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess is invited to reclaim it. Presentations not reclaimed by July 15 will be relocated to ATFC sites.

Write to WO1 (RSM) Osborne PWRR, Army Technical Foundation College, Rowcroft Barracks, Arborfield, Reading RG2 9NL or phone Pipe Major Duthie on 01189 763581.

WFR Association: Reunion day at Worcester Rugby Club, June 5, 1200-1800. Bar and canteen, drumhead service, march-past, Prince of Wales's Division Band, Colonel's address, static displays, regimental shop.

50 Missile Club RA: Reunion at Pettycur Holiday Park, Kinghorn, Fife on June 5. Information from Tony Todd on 01387 262378 or e-mail secretary@50missileclubra.com

Queen's Lancashire Regiment Association: Loyals

SEARCHLINE

Jeff Park, RLC Mobile Display Team 1994-5: seeks ex-MDT members for possible reunion. E-mail mail@wingfield2293.fsnet.co.uk

Arthur Tatem, ex-Bermuda Cadet Corps: served with Wiltshire Regiment in Krefeld and Hong Kong late 1940s and with Royal Welch Fusiliers in Jamaica and British Honduras, early 1950s, would love to hear from any old friends. Write to 5 Daisyfield Drive, Sandys MA 05, Bermuda.

Army families might like to check out national website with 60 sites dedicated to local mums at www.netmums.com

Sid Norman seeks former members of 2 Locating Troop RA 1963-66, who served in Malaysia. Most came from 22 Bty RA and 94 Regt RA. E-mail cassid@btopenworld.com

Berlin 1945-92: Mick Cartmel, ex-KRH, is

proposing an unofficial commemorative or souvenir medal, with proceeds to charity. Interested? E-mail mickducati@aol.com

Ray Fisk seeks ex-pupils from RAF Changi 1947-48 and Selarang 1948-50, also Schloss Krastovich, Klagenfurt, in Austria, from the early 1950s. E-mail arfisk@hotmail.com

Corps of Army Music Old Comrades' Association North-West Branch: Inaugural meeting was held in February. Anyone requiring details on future events should contact Phil Watson, Secretary CAMOCA NW, The Kings Division Normandy Band, Weeton Barracks, Preston PR4 3JQ. Tel 01772 260942 or e-mail camocanw@aol.com

F (Sphinx) Para Bty RA database update. Former members asked to send details to Capt P Tolley, F Para Bty RHA, Kirkee Barracks, Colchester CO2 7UJ, tel 01206 783171.

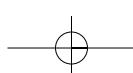
COMPETITIONS

From the January issue:

Jeremy Bowen Six Days. Winners: P Smith, York; G Kinsey, Salisbury. Answer: **Moshe Dayan**.

Hidden and Dangerous 2. Winners: R Mann, St Neots; G Crandles, Edinburgh; T Gamble, East Grinstead; D Thompson, Pontefract; S Horridge, BFPO 140. Answer: **20 missions**.

Robin Hood Defender of the Crown. Winners: Cpl Whan, Birmingham; W Harding, Twickenham; M Kerry, Nottingham; S Widowfield, Bury St Edmunds; J Marriott, Edinburgh; D Jones, BFPO 15; B Barton, Colchester, Z Thornton, Colchester; H Timothy, Warminster; K Bates, Amesbury. Answer: **Kevin Costner**.

e. See them at www.soldiermagazine.co.uk**UPDATE EXTRA****WEARING YOUR
MEDALS
IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES**

Lieutenant-Colonel Ashley R. Tinson



STRICT rules and regulations govern – in great detail – the wearing of orders, medals and decorations in the Armed Forces. Not so for those now longer in uniform. **Wearing Your Medals in Civilian Clothes** by Lt Col Ashley R Tinson (Token Publishing, £5) is a very slim, but very useful guide to getting it right. The 36 pages include advice on how to interpret invitations to formal functions at which medals are worn, the wearing of sashes and collars of order, and the basic rules for the wearing of ordinary or swinging, or royal- or court-mounted medals on the breast.

The pamphlet also contains a comprehensive list of the order in which medals should be worn. Available from Token Publishing Limited, Orchard House, Duchy Road, Heathpark, Honiton, Devon EX14 1YD, tel 01404 46972, or info@tokenpublishing.com

weekend dinner-dance (tickets £16), Jun 5, and Loyal Regiment (N Lancs) memorial service at Preston Parish Church, Jun 6, at 1100. Service followed by lunch at Sgts' Mess, Fulwood Barracks. Bookings and tickets from RHQ on 01772 260362.

Royal British Legion D-Day Anniversary parade, Jun 6, at Southwark Cathedral, 1500. Form up at Harper Road, off Borough High Street, at 1400. Standard bearers welcome, also RAF Association, RNA etc. Enquiries, with sae, to Ceremonial Officer, Metropolitan and Overseas Region, Stan Heath, 15 Ashgrove Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 1NS.

144 Para Med Sqn (V)/144 Fd Amb: Past and present reunion dinner at Squadron HQ, TAC London on Jul 3. Enquiries to Capt Roy Hatch on 01926 812363 or 07730 977989.

RCT/RLC Arctic and Nordic ski teams: Reunion dinner, Jul 3, at Deepcut. All former 2 ADTR/1 ADTR/1 GS Regt RLC ski teams welcome. Details from Maj Jamie Clarke at jameion2wheels@btopenworld.com or ring 01252 833473, or WO1(RSM) Kipper Knight at knightsci@hotmail.com or tel 0049 5241 927715.

WFR Association annual pre-Crich buffet supper: 1900 for 1930, July 3, at Foresters House. Admission by ticket only. Details from

RHQ Nottingham or rhq_wfr@lineone.net

WFR Association pilgrimage to Regimental Memorial at Crich, July 4. Gates open at 1230, service begins at 1530. Members and families advised to arrive before 1430.

747 Squad (1960), Royal Marines: Third reunion to be held July 10 at the China Fleet Country Club, Saltash. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Harry Briggs on 02088 590846 or hbriggs747_rm@hotmail.com

RBL Military Gala Night, July 14, **Kempton Park Racecourse**, in aid of the Poppy Appeal. Parade of standards, Guards Band, RHA and musical ride, 1700-2200. Details from RBL on 08457 725 725, Mon-Fri 0900-1600.

King's School CCF Chester: Reunion dinner at the school on Sep 4. All past and present invited, ladies welcome. Details from 2nd Lt Diane Joseph on tel 01244 689508 or diane.joseph@chester.ac.uk

Beverley Ex-Boys Association Royal Signals: Reunion to be held at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Willerby near Beverley, Sept 11. Further information available from Tony Hull at e-mail beba.tonyhull@lineone.net

Gordon Platoon RAOC Apprentices College Sept 1970 intake: Reunion at Ironbridge,

Telford, Sept 15. For further information, e-mail graham.harvey53@ntlworld.com

11 (Sphinx) Battery RA: Fifth annual reunion for past and present members (all cap badges) and members' association to be held on Sept 25 at the Crewe Arms Hotel, Crewe. Details from G W "Knocker" Knowles on 01270 253154 or jangarychuck@aol.com or go to www.11sphinxbty.co.uk

D-Day guest

MAJ G M "Bolo" Young MC, now in his nineties, attended the opening of a D-Day exhibition in the Green Howards Regimental Museum in Richmond. Maj Young led the first GH company to go ashore on D-Day. The exhibit will run until the end of November.

Grenadier Guards drummers:

Reunion for past and present members of the regiment to be held at Windsor, Sept 25. For details call Peter Taylor on 01189 793372.

Red Devils Freefall Team:

Reunion Sept 25-26, venue to be confirmed. Contact details to Sgt Steve Blee or Pte Steve Candlish, Red Devils Freefall Team, Airfield Camp, Netheravon, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 9SF; 01980 678211; or reddevils@reddevilsonline.com

Birgelen Veterans' Association: Annual reunion to be held Oct 1-3 at the Trecarn Hotel, Babbacombe, Torquay. Details from association secretary Cyril Harding on 01873 856021 or via www.birgelenvets.org

Infantry Boys/Junior Leaders: Tenth annual reunion for those who served at Tuxford, Harrogate, Oswestry, Plymouth and Shorncliffe during 1950s-70s. To be held on Oct 9 at the Royal Rifle Volunteers Training Centre, Milton Keynes. For further details, contact Hon Sec Charlie McGrogan, 15 Lambie Street, Whitburn, West Lothian EH47 0HH, tel 01501 741215; or Howard Johnson on 02920 891274.

Cambrai Band (Royal Tank Regiment):

Reunion weekend at Ipswich from Oct 22-24. More information from Simon Burns tel 01473 255353 or e-mail burnies@ntlworld.com

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000; www.armybenfund.org

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 433456

Army Families Federation 01980 615525; www.aff.org.uk

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org.uk

Career Transition Partnership 0207 766 8020 www.ctp.org.uk

Confidential support lines:

UK 0800 731 4880

Germany 0800 1827 395

Cyprus 080 91065

Bosnia 0800 731 4880

Others UK 1980 630854

Operations worldwide Paradigm Homelink Access Number *2999@thePINprompt

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

Consumer Credit Counselling Service Free

Confidential Helpline 0800 1381111

Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

www.gulfveteransassociation.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575

Mutual Support (Forces Multiple Sclerosis support group) 01666 824709

National Gulf Veterans and Families

Association Office (0900-1700) 01482 808730;

24-hour helpline on 01482 833812;

www.ngvfa.com

Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011; www.rfea.org.uk

Royal British Legion's Legionline 0845 7725; www.britishlegion.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre 01622 717202/718484; www.rbli.co.uk

ESHRA Ex-Service Homes Referral Agency 020 7839 4466 www.eshra.com or eshra@britishlegion.org.uk

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021; www.st-dunstans.org.uk

SAMA 82 (South Atlantic Medal Association)

Falklands conflict veterans 01495 227577

e-mail: densama@aol.com

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

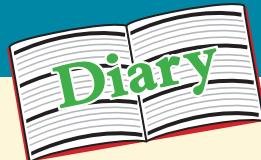
SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783; www.ssafa.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Agency (includes War Pensions Agency) 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas); www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272; from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

WRVS General enquiries 02920 739906; www.wrvs.org.uk



DATES

MARCH

27: Military Band Concert, Guild Hall, Winchester, at 1945. Performed by Band of The Light Division. Call 01962 888282.

MAY

29: Trooping the Colour, Major General's Review, Horse Guards. Tickets: 020 7414 2479.

JUNE

5: Trooping the Colour, Colonel's Review, Horse Guards. Tickets: 020 7414 2479.
12: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards. 020 7414 2479.

JULY

3/4: Aldershot Army Show, Queens Avenue, Aldershot. For information call 01252 349539 or see www.armyshow.co.uk.
17-18: Royal International Air Tattoo, RAF Fairford, Glos. Celebrating 50 years of C-130 Hercules, 30 years of Hawk and 40th display season of Red Arrows. Tickets after Mar 1, £29.95, £35 on day. Available at www.airtattoo.com or call 0870 758 1918.

AUGUST

6-28: Edinburgh Tattoo. Book on 08707 5551188 or at www.edintattoo.co.uk
28-30: Military Odyssey. Kent County Ground, Detling. Enquiries 01829 730830. www.military-odyssey.com

■ Producers of a developing series for BBC TV are in the market for a "drill sergeant type" presenter. The programme will be about teaching a lazy couple time management and effective performance, as would be expected in the Army.

If you're not afraid to air an opinion and have high standards contact Kirsty Poskitt on 020 7861 8142 or send her an email at kirsty.poskitt@talkbackthames.tv

AAC's briny adventure

AS part of **Exercise African Hackle**, a Joint Services adventurous sail training exercise to circumnavigate the Atlantic, a team from **7 Flight AAC** sailed the leg from Walvis Bay in Namibia to Recife in north-east Brazil.

Despite problems with an overheated engine and severe sea-sickness, Recife was reached after 18 days at sea.

Cpl Anthony Howley, from 7 Flt, said: "I enjoyed parts of it immensely, but also hated parts, especially the sea-sickness.

"Would I recommend it to anyone else? It was the experience of a lifetime. I will definitely sail again, but probably more coast-hopping rather than a massive leg like this one."



Dunfermline's 101st . . . and counting

IT was an occasion to celebrate when **Dunfermline Army Careers and Information Office** signed up their 100th and 101st recruits.

Nineteen-year-old **Jason Messenger**, from Rosyth, will soon start training as a tank driver with The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards based in Germany, while **Naomi Wilson**, 16, a pupil at Beath High School, will join the Adjutant General's Corps as a military clerk.

Jason and Naomi were enlisted at a ceremony at Dunfermline ACIO by **Maj Andy Holman** and started their basic training at Winchester and Bassingbourn at the beginning of February.

The new recruits are pictured with Maj Holman and recruiter **WO2 Rab Kemp** of The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.



Timely Kosovo convoy delivers the goods

THE people of Kosovo thanked the Army Careers and Information Office in Doncaster after its staff arranged for more than 40 pallets of school and hospital equipment to be transported to the region.

Local woman **Ann Swift** arranged for schools, businesses and other organisations across South Yorkshire to donate their old and unused equipment. **WO2 John Pearce**, of the Doncaster office, then arranged for the pallets to be transported on the

Army's weekly truck convoy to Kosovo. Computers, sports equipment, bikes, stationery and books were distributed to schools throughout Pristina, and local hospitals received wheelchairs, walking frames, bath hoists and other equipment.

John said: "This appeal has been extremely rewarding and it's fantastic to see equipment finally arriving in Kosovo, where it has been very well received."

World class band collection moves to Bristol

TRUSTEES of the Jerome Gatehouse Collection are to hold a reception in commemoration of the late collector's 59th birthday, and the tenth anniversary of his death. It also marks the collection's move to its new home in Bristol.

A brochure has been published which describes Jerome's years of collecting mili-

tary band memorabilia; a collection which is described as the largest known archive of its type in the world. The reception will be held at the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum, Bristol, and will take the form of a celebration of Jerome's achievements for the military band world. It will also mark the handing over of the collection to the BECM.

Donations to help continue the work Jerome, pictured, started would be welcomed by the collection, which aims to make sure that it continues to thrive. Donations should be made to Jerome Gatehouse Collection, and sent to Mrs Anne Gatehouse, 67 Hoskins Street, Newport, NP20 5LA.



Royal visit to new FANY HQ

IN January the **Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps (FANY)** welcomed their Commandant-in-Chief, the Princess Royal, to the corps' new accommodation at the Territorial Army Centre in Horseferry Road, Westminster.

The FANY actually moved to the centre, home of the London Scottish Regiment, last

March. "We were sad to leave the Duke of York's after 30 years," said **Commander Lynda Rose**, "But the London Scottish couldn't have been more welcoming."

During her visit, Princess Anne was briefed on training and operational activities, including the FANY's role with London's Civil

Contingency Reaction Forces and work with the City of London Police Casualty Bureau. Her visit ended with a performance of *The Nursing Yeomanry Reel* written for the corps by Doug Kean of the London Scottish.

To find out more about the FANY, go to www.fany.org.uk or phone 020 7976 5459.

Royal guest: From left are **Katie Garrod** (wearing FANY ceremonial riding tunic), training officer **Sandra Webb**, **Commander Lynda Rose**, the Princess Royal and equestrian officer **Kate Pink**



■ Clockwork radio inventor **Trevor Baylis**, above left, is put through his paces by **Sgt Lawrence Nelson** of the Army Physical Training Corps at Palace Barracks, Holywood, Northern Ireland. As a soldier, Trevor did his National Service from 1959 to 1961 with The Royal Sussex Regiment based there.

A physical instructor himself, Trevor popped back to Palace Barracks recently during a visit to the Province. Returning to his old haunts was a pleasant trip down memory lane.

■ Soldiers from the **Close Support Engineer Squadron** in Bosnia have been assisting a local man, Ilija Milisis, right, to distribute blankets to destitute people in Sipovo's rural communities.



In a place where neighbours and friends once turned against each other, one man is offering a helping hand to the most needy.

■ The **Museum of Army Flying** hosts an annual concert at Middle Wallop, mixing a combination of live classical music performed by the London Pro Arte Orchestra and chorus with a spectacular synchronised flying displays.



Readers interested in the show might like the DVD recorded at last year's event. Entitled *Music in the Air*, it is available from the museum at a cost of £20. Call 01980 674421 for details or email enquiries@flying-museum.org.uk

■ Fort Blockhouse, Gosport was the venue for a graduation ceremony last month for the latest tri-Service group of nurses to qualify after three years of training. Fifty-one students completed their training, including 25 from Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. All gained BN(Hons) degrees.

■ Eight soldiers and a civilian based at ATR Bassingbourn achieved four marathons plus a 135-mile row and 419-mile cycle ride in 24 hours. The team completed the challenge at the Tesco's store at Royston using rowing, running and cycling machines. The money raised is going to the Neo-Natal Baby Care Unit at Addenbrooke's Hospital.



Family messes for Messrs MPGS

A MARITAL double act has been taking place at the **RAC Training Regiment Bovington**. **LCpls Gary and Jayne Silver**, and **LCpl Chris Crawshaw and Melissa** (all pictured, right) are turning the base into a conjugal home-from-home.

Gary arrived at Bovington to serve with the Military Provost Guard Service 18 months ago. His wife Jayne and son **Bradley** quickly followed and moved into Service accommodation. Jayne also enlisted into the MPGS, and baby Bradley now has the best of both worlds with a dad working an opposite 12-hour shift to his mum.

The other MPGS family, Chris, ex-RAF, and Melissa, and their two daughters, were also allocated service accommodation. Melissa

joined up and has now been posted to an adjacent MPGS section to Chris.

The guard service is obviously an equal opportunities employer.

Sue in final command(ers) performance

SERVING and former Army commanders got together at a special lunch in January to recognise 14 years of service by civil servant Sue Smith. Sue worked for nine consecutive brigade commanders at Colchester Garrison over the period, but has now moved to the welfare office in the Military Corrective Training Centre.

"Being secretary to various commanders has been tremendously enjoyable, and I feel I have been in a very privileged position," said Sue. "I was apprehensive about my move to the MCTC, but I know it's time for a change."

Paying tribute to Sue, Brig Jacko Page, commander of 16 Air Assault Brigade, said: "Sue has made a tremendous contribution to the brigades based here over the past 14 years. She is sadly missed at Brigade HQ but we wish her well in her new job."

Fan club: Maj Gen Dair Farrar-Hockley, Brig Jacko Page and Maj Gen Peter Wall make up the back row. In the front are Brig Mark Elcomb, Mrs Sue Smith and Maj Gen Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter





Switched on . . .



CUT ABOVE THE REST ▲

A HYBRID of a traditional folding pocket knife and box cutter, the razor-sharp Superknife features anodized aluminium/stainless steel fixtures, ergonomic styling and a belt clip.

Available in five colours, the knife uses disposable utility blades, alleviating the need for sharpening, and folds to a mere 3.5 inches long.

① £19.95, from www.classiccarpentrytools.com (01304 214947).

LIGHT LIGHTING ▼

USING thin-film solar cells, the iSun Military P3 charging system represents a lightweight, portable power solution.

The versatile pack boasts twice the power-to-weight ratio of alternative options yet is so compact that it can be folded away and stored in a rucksack.

Fully weatherproof and UV resistant, the P3 is produced in four versions, ranging from 17W to 48W, can be set to 12- or 24-volt, and features a rip-stop nylon backing.

① From www.icpglobal.com

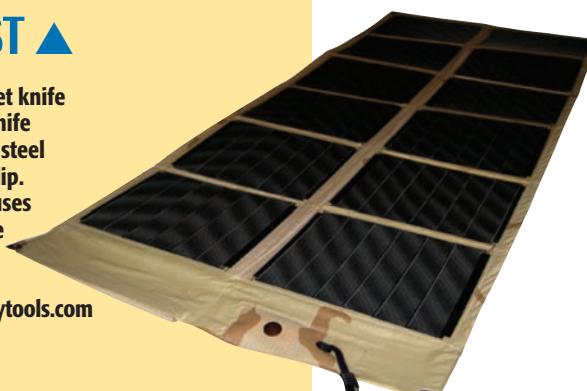


TIME-PISTE ▲

AN ideal watch for snowboarders and skiers, Suunto's S6 incorporates a compass, barometer, altimeter, clinometer (for measuring slope angles), and special ski chronometer.

Designed for easy-reading in bright conditions, the watch sports a black face and techno-blue figures.

① £300, from www.suunto.com (01294 316306).



Game on . . .

X2: THE THREAT, PC

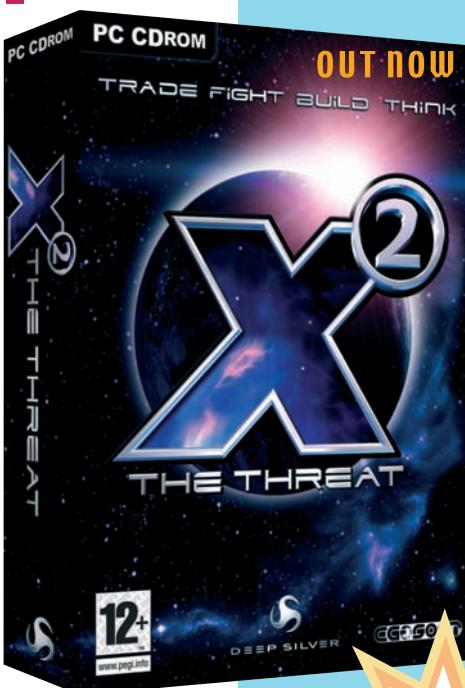
DEEP Silver's first-person space trading/combat simulator transports players to a dynamic, living, breathing cosmos where every event and action has "cause and effect" on the entire gaming universe.

Discovering new worlds and life forms as they travel across countless sectors of space, it is up to the gamers whether they make an honest living out of trading commodities between space stations, become a bounty hunter closing in for the next highly-profitable kill, prey on other traders as a pirate by stealing cargo or whole ships, mine asteroids for profit or build an empire with a strategic selection of each.

As the players "live out" their lives in the X Universe they are free to pursue the story missions or alternatively attempt the diverse selection of smaller objectives that do not affect the game's main storyline. Via a bulletin board system, the player is assigned all manner of tasks, from passenger/freight cargo runs to search and destroy missions that involve tracking a fugitive through space.

There are more than 70 craft to buy or fly, including fighters, cargo ships, transporters, passenger liners, corvettes, battleships and carriers, all of which can be equipped with a myriad of offensive or defensive weaponry.

VERDICT: Out of this world. 9/10



COURTESY of publishers Deep Silver, Soldier has ten copies of *X2: The Threat* for the PC up for grabs.

For your chance to win, simply tell us on a postcard the year Neil Armstrong landed on the moon.

Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by March 31. Usual rules apply.

BYTE-SIZE NEWS

STATE-of-the-art robots being developed in America for use in military and civilian emergency operations will be able to communicate with their operators to an unprecedented level – thanks to technology from a Scottish video company.

Glasgow-based Essential Viewing is working with Sandia National Laboratories to provide video technology that will allow operators of unmanned machinery and vehicles to interact with situations even if they are thousands of miles away.

AFTER months of speculation, Nintendo has unveiled that it is planning to bring out a dual screen handheld console next Christmas.

Codenamed Nintendo DS, the console will feature two three-inch LCD display panels powered by separate processors.

FOLLOWING the success of last year's event, the Edinburgh International Games Festival is set to make a return to the Scottish capital this August.

New to the festival will be a series of game screenings, which will be open to the public and the press, by some of the leading creators in the games industry.

SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY, ALL

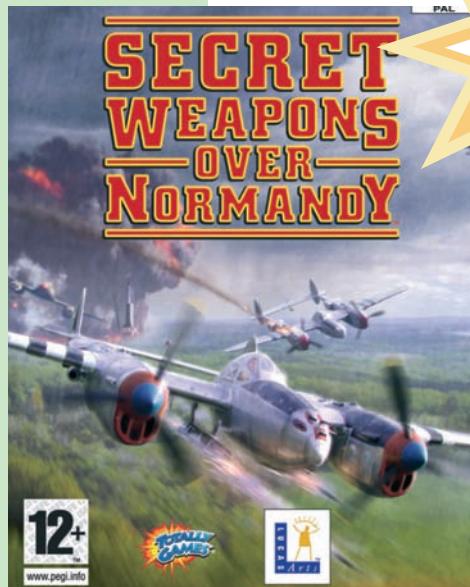
AS a member of a covert squadron of élite pilots, players take to the cockpits of authentic Second World War aircraft and undertake some of the conflict's most dangerous missions in LucasArt's *Secret Weapons Over Normandy*.

The story-driven action features more than 30 exhilarating air-to-air and air-to-ground missions, with gamers engaging in dogfights in the turbulent skies over 15 unique combat theatres, including Europe, the Eastern Front, North Africa, China, India and the Pacific.

Spanning a period of four years, the game follows an historically accurate timeline of key conflicts, beginning with the dramatic evacuation of Dunkirk; the fierce Battle of Britain; Germany's planned invasion of England, known as Operation Sea Lion; the pivotal Battle of Midway; and culminating in the D-Day invasion.

Among the multitude of realistically modelled Allied, German and Japanese aircraft featured, players can pilot the twin-engine P-38 Lightning; the P-51 Mustang, one of the fastest piston-driven fighters of the era; the dangerously unstable Me 163 Komet rocket; the Me 262 turbo jet fighter, the first jet fighter used in combat; and even be a gunner in the B-17 Flying Fortress.

True to LucasArt's trademark cinematic presentation, actors have been used to voice



the in-game dialect and the background sound has been derived directly from field recordings of actual aircraft.

◆ The PS2 and Xbox versions of the game offer single and multiplayer cooperative modes, while the PC version includes a mission builder.

VERDICT: Certain to soar to the top of the charts. **9/10**

GLADIATOR: SOU, PS2

OUT NOW

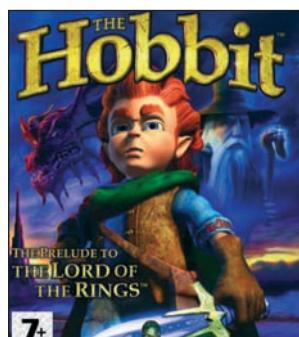
SET in 106AD, Acclaim's mythological action adventure *Gladiator: Sword of Vengeance* is one of the bloodiest games released and more than warrants its 15-rating.

Assuming the role of a warrior slave, players must hack and slash their way through bloody battlegrounds loaded with deadly traps, imposing fortifications and lethal stage machinery, as they strive to overthrow the despotic Emperor Arruntius, who has bled the once powerful Rome to its knees.



VERDICT: Mindless sword-wielding caper. **6/10**

THE HOBBIT, ALL



VERDICT: Runs rings round the opposition. **8/10**

PLAYERS adopt the persona of the famous Bilbo Baggins, an unassuming hobbit who has been unwittingly thrust into an epic quest, in this third-person action-adventure based on J R R Tolkien's prelude to *The Lord of the Rings*.

Set in the mystical world of Middle Earth, gamers will need to solve mind-boggling puzzles, confront the dragon Smaug and defeat hordes of orcs and goblins, if they are to succeed in the battle to retake Lonely Mountain.

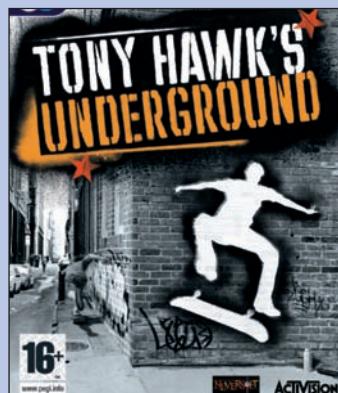
OUT NOW

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND, PS2

OUT NOW

USING Neversoft's proprietary face downloading and mapping technology, gamers can play as themselves as they attempt to progress from an unknown skate punk to being the most popular skateboarder in the world in Activision's latest addition to their *Tony Hawk* catalogue.

For the first time in the series, players can get off their skateboards and explore eight expansive levels on foot or in a vehicle. Similar in style and feel to *Vice City, Underground* also features a skate park editor.



VERDICT: Lord of the boards. **9/10**

GHOST HUNTER, PS2

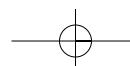
OUT NOW



VERDICT: Gripping ghost story. **8/10**

INSPIRED by the cinematic styling of classic horror films, this atmospheric action-adventure from Sony immerses players in a game that fuses combat, puzzles and exploration with spine-chilling terror.

As Lazarus Jones, a Detroit cop who inadvertently releases a host of deadly ghosts during a routine patrol through a derelict high school, which was once the site of an unexplained massacre, gamers must clean up the chaos left by a swarm of supernatural spirits and monsters enjoying their new found freedom.



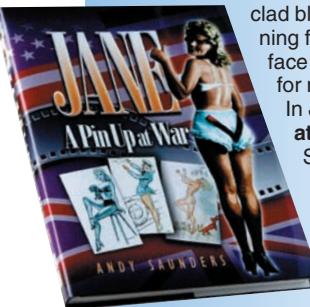
Books

Legend of lady Jane and her fighting men

MENTION the name Jane to any British male over the age of 50 and there is a fair chance their minds will fill with images of a scantily-clad blonde with a stunning figure, a lovely face and a predilection for men in uniforms.

In *Jane: A Pin-Up at War* (Pen & Sword, £19.95) author Andy Saunders tells the story of a wartime icon who endeared herself to

Britain's fighting men. Lavishly illustrated with cartoon strips from the *Daily Mirror* and pictures of the late Christabel Leighton-Porter – the real, and frequently very naked, lady Jane.



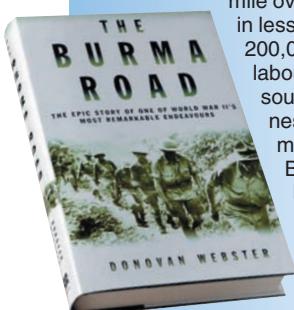
Harrowing story of the road to hell

DONOVAN Webster covers an extremely rugged journey in *The Burma Road* (Macmillan, £18.99). The road in question is the 7,000-mile overland route cut

in less than a year by 200,000 Chinese labourers from the south-western Chinese city of Kunming to Lashio in Burma. When Burma fell in early 1942 the road was severed, and with it China's trade artery to

the outside world.

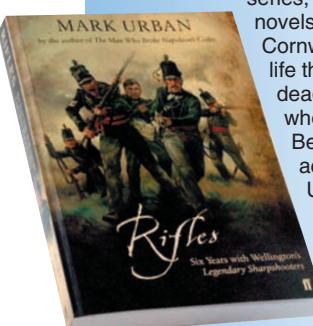
This is the harrowing story of American efforts to keep China supplied by airlift from India, while repulsing the unstoppable Japanese.



Wellington's riflemen put in Sharpe focus

A NEW generation of TV watchers can claim to know something about the 95th Rifles. The Richard Sharpe series, based on the novels of Bernard Cornwell, brought to life the exploits of the deadly marksmen who followed Sean Bean into colourful action. Mark Urban's *Rifles*

(Faber and Faber, £20), sub-titled "Six Years with Wellington's Legendary Sharpshooters"



"Sharshooters", brings their lives into focus and fills a gap in the history of one of the predecessors of The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment.

Nell's place ad

Colourful glimpse into extraordinary home for our retired Servicemen

The Royal Hospital Chelsea: The Place and the People by Dan Cruickshank, with foreword by Prince Charles (Third Millennium, £35*).

Review: Brian Jewell

THE world view of British culture includes the Changing of the Guard, Burberry raincoats, tartan, Harrods, the Crown Jewels and the Chelsea Pensioner, whose distinctive scarlet coat has scarcely changed since the Royal Hospital first arose from its riverside site in the late 17th century.

It may, however, come as a surprise that the Royal Hospital at Chelsea was pre-dated by *Les Invalides* in Paris and Kilmainham Hospital in Dublin.

Compared with the ambitious project of the Sun King, Louis XIV, in which a national architectural treasure was combined with a home for 5,000 retired soldiers, Sir Christopher Wren's building at Chelsea, with a capacity of about 350 men, was more modest in scope.

Dan Cruickshank's *The Royal Hospital Chelsea: The Place and the People* is the first comprehensive account of how the Royal Hospital came into being and developed over the next 220 years.

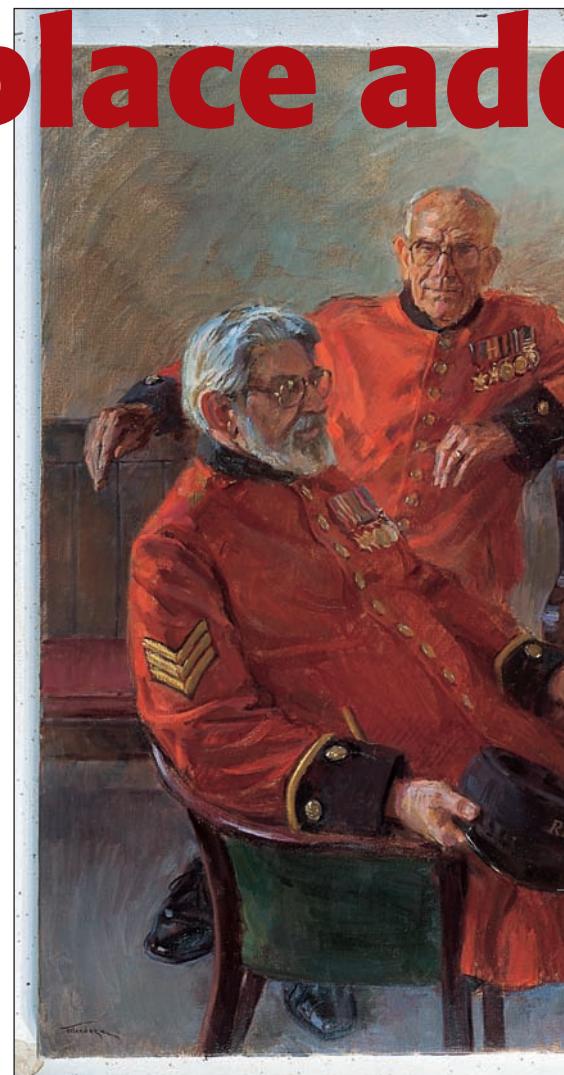
Charles II approved the project in 1681 and instructed Sir Stephen Fox to set up an English equivalent of *Les Invalides* and Kilmainham, the foundation stone of which had been laid the previous year.

Legend has it that Nell Gwynne urged the King to authorise the foundation of the Royal Hospital: true or not, her name was listed in the Great Hall among the benefactors and a tavern close to the hospital was named after her.

Many famous men were involved in the building of Wren's design which was, in fact, part of a larger plan by which Sir Christopher intended to link important landmarks in the capital.

"The main axis round which the Royal Hospital is organised continues north-west to King's Road ... a monumental avenue linking the royal palaces at St James and Whitehall with the Royal Hospital and ultimately Hampton Court Palace to the west."

In addition to its function as a retirement home, the Royal Hospital was expect-

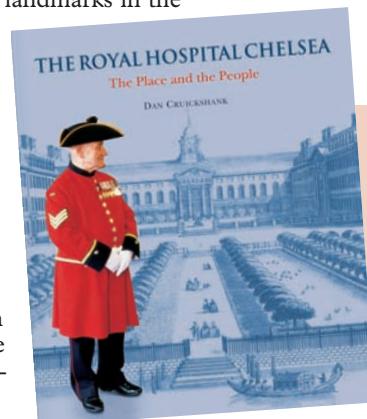


ed to provide a useful body of men capable of dealing with outbreaks of civil disorder.

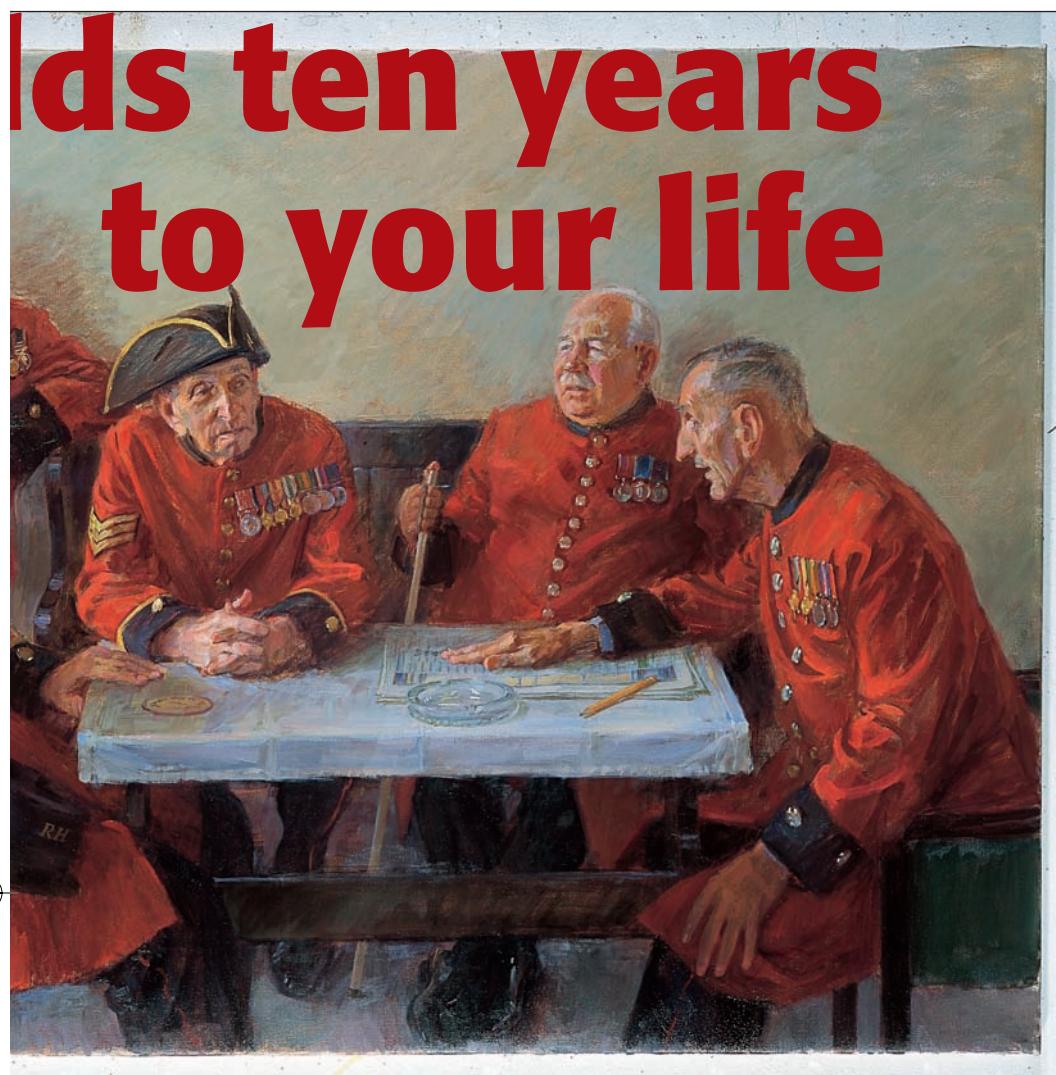
Great artists and craftsmen contributed to its embellishment, among them Grinling Gibbons, who carved the statue of its founder, Sebastiano Rizzi, and his nephew Marco, who painted the canvas displayed in the chapel; master plasterer Henry Margetts, who provided "6 Capitells with Lace Leaves and Cherubinheads", for which he charged the princely sum of £12 16s. Wren himself received a mere £1,000 for his work.

In this sumptuously produced and illustrated book, Cruickshank traces the genesis of this national institution and its history over a period during which many wars were fought.

The Royal Hospital is a token of the gratitude and



*Readers of *Soldier* are being offered a special discount to buy the book for £30, including p&p to any address in the British Isles. Send your order to Third Millennium Publishing, (RHC - order), Farringdon House, 105-107 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3BU; tel 020 7837 4004, fax 020 7837 5005.



Comrades in arms: June Mendoza's painting, one of the many fine illustrations which adorn Dan Cruickshank's book, depicts, from left, In-Pensioners Jack Rogerson, Sam Weekes, Frank Chambers, Michael McClean and Joe Britton. On his birthday in 1943 Frank Chambers led his squad a little too far into German lines and spent the rest of the Second World War as a prisoner-of-war

esteem due to the soldiers involved in those wars. The text is interwoven with accounts of the lives of some individual pensioners and the author links them with historic campaigns, including Ramillies, Waterloo, the Crimea and El Alamein.

Conditions at the Royal Hospital resemble in many ways those of a monastery where the monastic cells have been replaced by microcosmic oak-panelled cabins placed in long galleries.

The residents, though no longer required to perform domestic duties, must nevertheless observe certain rules and conditions, somewhat relaxed, however, since the days when pensioners returning late "without reason or excuse" were confined to a guard room for the night.

Every aspect of the domestic organisation and staffing of the Royal Hospital is covered by the author, who includes entertaining detail such as the story of two women who enlisted as men and were eventually awarded pensions – the so-called Chelsea Amazons.

It should be mentioned *en passant* that

there are no plans as yet to admit women. To quote one inmate: "Women – let them have equality, but not in here."

It has been said that admission to the Royal Hospital Chelsea can extend a man's lifespan by as much as ten years. Certainly, its camaraderie, outstanding medical care and the chance to live out one's time free from the stresses of everyday life in surroundings of exceptional beauty and prestige, must foster health and happiness.

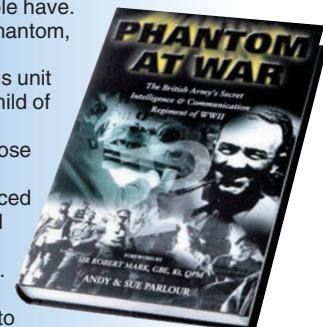
At £35 (see opposite page for details of special price available to *Soldier* readers) this fascinating and beautiful book is excellent value. Purchasers should be warned not to lend it as they would be unlikely ever to see it again.

Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>

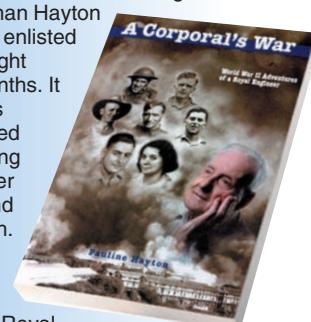
Secrets of little-known regiment laid bare

IF you have never heard of The General Headquarters Liaison Regiment you are in good company. Not many people have. Codenamed Phantom, the special communications unit was the brainchild of Lt Col George Hopkinson, whose experiences at Dunkirk convinced him of the need for a special comms service. He persuaded the War Office to go along with his idea and the regiment went on to serve in many theatres during the Second World War. Its unusual history is told in *Phantom at War* by Andy and Sue Parlour (Cerberus, £20).



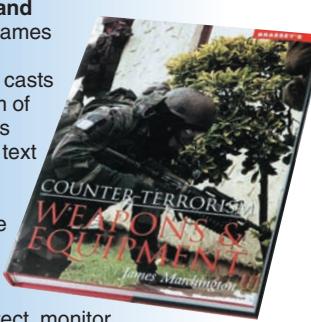
My dad, the Royal Engineer, goes to war

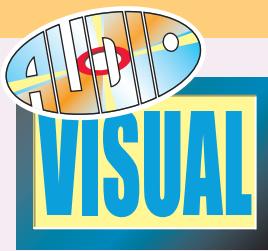
PAULINE Hayton felt compelled to write a book about her father after listening to his war stories and reading his diaries. Norman Hayton was 20 when he enlisted for what he thought would be six months. It was seven years before he returned home to the young wife and daughter he had left behind in Middlesbrough. *A Corporal's War* (i Universe, £20.49) is the story of a young Royal Engineer who survived Dunkirk, India, Assam and northern Burma, where he was involved in the mopping-up operations against the retreating Japanese army.



Tools of the business in a life-and-death trade

NOT your usual collection of weapons and equipment... but then they wouldn't be. *Counter-Terrorism: Weapons and Equipment* by James Marchington (Brassey's, £30) casts light – in the form of many illustrations and explanatory text – on the highly-specialised gear developed by the Armed Forces and civil agencies, including the police, to detect, monitor and make life as difficult as possible for terrorists intent on destabilising our society. A comprehensive reference book for anyone within the trade or outside it – journalists included – who need to understand the paraphernalia of these dark arts.





Win a third helping of M*A*S*H

LAST summer we brought you news of the release on DVD of the first two seasons of **M*A*S*H**, one of the most-watched TV shows of all time.

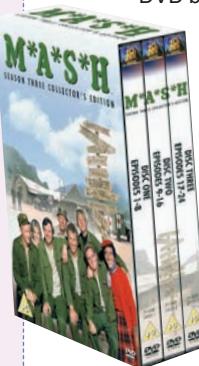
Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment is releasing this month as a three-disc

DVD boxed set all 24 uncut episodes from the third series about the trials and tribulations of the US Army's 4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital during the Korean War.

It features on/off laugh options and interactive menus. The third series includes the famous "Abyssinia Henry" episode – the shock departure of Colonel Blake.

We have ten boxed sets (each worth £29.99) to give away. Tell us on a postcard or the back of a small sealed envelope marked "MASH Series 3 competition", who played the part of "Hawkeye".

a) Alan Ladd b) Alan Alda c) Alan Key
Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by March 31.



BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Armed Forces of the United Kingdom 2004-2005 by Charles Heyman. Small but very useful pocketbook, updated with the latest information on the organisation, equipment and statistics of all three Services. (Pen & Sword, £5.95.)

Military Handguns of Two World Wars by John Walter. Facts, diagrams, pictures and drawings cover the subject in depth. The handguns are grouped by country of manufacture. (Greenhill Military Manuals, £14.99.)

An Anatomy of Terror by Andrew Sinclair. A history of terrorism, from the Crusades to modern Kabul via just about every corner of the globe. "Terror," concludes the author, "will for ever be with us, because there will always be the unjust gap between the rich and the poor nations." (Pan softback, £8.99.)

Joe's War: My Father Decoded by Annette Kobak. The author's research into her "mysterious" father uncovered a remarkable story of a Czech man, born of Polish parents, who fled the Nazis, then the Russians, fought alongside Polish forces in France and eventually found refuge in London. During the Cold War he worked in secret to intercept Soviet messages. (Virago, £16.99.)

SOLDIER March 2004

NEW RELEASES

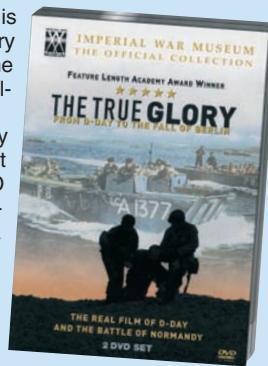
'Greatest' war footage released on video, DVD

THE Imperial War Museum is making rare war documentary footage, preserved for the nation in its film vault, available to the public.

In partnership with military film specialists DD Video, it released on video and DVD last month the Oscar-winning **The True Glory** in a special collector's edition.

Sub-titled "From D-Day to the Fall of Berlin", the feature-length film is regarded as one of the greatest war documentaries ever made.

Shot by more than 700 front-line cameramen (32 of whom were killed, 16 reported missing in action and 101 wounded) during 1944 and 1945 as a record of the campaign in Europe, it covers the major engagements from the Normandy landings to the fall of Berlin, including Omaha Beach, the Falaise



Gap, Arnhem, the liberation of Paris and the Battle of the Bulge.

The original documentary was compiled from more than six-and-a-half million feet of film.

Gen Dwight D Eisenhower, the Allied commander, took a personal interest in the making of the film and is featured in the introduction.

The collector's edition includes four further full-length wartime documentaries covering the campaign in Europe: **From Italy to D-Day**, **From D-Day to Paris**, **From Paris to the Rhine** and **From the Rhine to Victory**, all of which were produced by British Paramount News for the Ministry of Information.

The VHS video double pack and two-disc DVD set, priced £19.99 each, are available from all good retailers or direct from DD Video on 01829 741490 (add £2.75 p&p).

Win copies of **The True Glory**

SOLDIER has two DVD and two video copies of **The True Glory** collector's edition to give away. To be in with a chance of winning one, tell us the name of the Allied supreme commander at the time of the invasion of Europe. Answers, on a postcard or

the back of an A4 sealed envelope, should be marked "True Glory competition" and reach this office by March 31. Specify DVD or video preference. First correct answers drawn at random will win. Multiple entries will be disqualified and usual rules apply.

A Regimental Affair by Catherine Jones. Third novel by a former Army officer, married to a serving one. The affair in question is an ill-fated romance between a CO and his AO. (Severn House, £18.99.)



The Battle of Hastings 1066 by M K Lawson. England changed from Saxon to Norman rule on Saturday, October 14, 1066, but the author argues that a faulty restoration of the Bayeux Tapestry in the 19th century has completely altered the way the battle is understood. (Tempus, £25.)

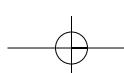
Duel in the Snows: The True Story of the Younghusband Mission to Lhasa by Charles Allen. Drawing on previously unpublished diaries and letters, the author examines the military expedition of December 1903 to counter a non-existent Russian threat. It was a clash between the mightiest empire-building power in the world, armed with Maxim machine-guns and Lee-Enfield rifles, and the

weakest, and it ended in calamity for the non-violent Tibetan people. (John Murray, £20.)

General Ike: A Personal Reminiscence by John S D Eisenhower. A son's view of his famous and beloved father, Dwight D, a great wartime commander and one of America's most popular presidents. John S D, who himself rose to the rank of brigadier general, served on the White House staff and was US Ambassador to Belgium, is supremely well qualified to give what he describes as "a personal reminiscence". (Free Press, £18.99.)

Moshe Dayan by Martin van Creveld. A biography of Israel's greatest military commander. With his one good eye and his crushing victories, Dayan is compared to Admiral Nelson at Trafalgar. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.99.)

An Ordinary Man . . . by Jim Haggas. Wide-ranging recollections, including a description of the nuclear tests on Christmas Island, which the author witnessed as a Serviceman. This episode is covered more fully in *Christmas Island: The Wrong Place at the Wrong Time*, published in 1997. (Printability softback, 01429 267849, £9.95.)



Comment

SOLDIER to soldier

Silence is golden

WE anticipated a mildly hostile reaction to news that the military pay rise for 2004-05 is to be 2.8 per cent from April 1 . . . but have not, so far anyway, heard a single grumble.

Every one of the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body's recommendations was accepted by the Government, so perhaps there is reason to be positive.

In particular, there was good news for those paid the least – privates and lance corporals.

During the latter part of last year wage settlements hovered around three per cent and average earnings increased by 3.6 per cent (5.4 per cent in the public sector).

♦ ♦ ♦

The firemen's much-publicised staged 16 per cent increase – which springs to mind simply because Service crews manned the barricades when they went on strike last year – was a different kettle of fish anyway.

There were plenty of strings attached to that settlement, not least that it be conditional on extensive reform and modernisation and funded by savings within the Fire Service.

In its report to Government, the AFPRB acknowledges its sensitivity to how the pressures on the Services of providing cover for the fire-fighters' dispute, operations in Iraq and sustaining other on-going commitments had impacted on working time and leave.

♦ ♦ ♦

Small rises in food and accommodation charges were expected, as they were for housing. The AFPRB has long signalled that families' and single accommodation should bear some relationship to the civilian market, but not until all of them are of an acceptable standard (a surprisingly large number still are not).

Garage rent went up by 6.9 per cent or 62p a day – the next stage of a phased increase of 22 per cent to bring them in line with civvy street.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Seeing ourselves as others see us

IT'S been interesting to watch *Red Cap* and see how life in the Army is now portrayed on national telly. It's been a few years since *Soldier, Soldier* and things have definitely changed – all those female NCOs, for a start!

And an Army equivalent of Professor Sam Ryan – that's an interesting khaki career path I didn't know existed. But some of those sad, rank stereotypes are still there, and villains definitely outnumber heroes.

I sometimes wonder how the public really sees its Armed Forces, looking at the contrasting stereotypes and images of the Army dished up on a daily basis by newspapers and TV.

Take officers for instance: are they chinless Ruperts, pompous idiots, coughing cheats and salacious sex beasts . . . or quite bright professionals? (OK, OK – pipe down at the back).

What about soldiers? Are they thick squaddies, violent drunks, druggies, and racist bullies . . . or the steady salt of the earth?

Are senior NCOs demonstrating leadership and care for their soldiers, or shouting morons and rank-abusing bullies?

And generals, let us not forget generals. Are they ancient relics, war-hungry eagles . . . or rather clever men (definitely no women in your general stereotype yet) doing their best to advise wayward politicians? (No comment, absolutely no comment).

How do all these fit in with the "Be the Best" professionals and the best-trained little Army in the world? I can't see some of this lot doing much to produce a successful professional Army, yet the public accepts these images – whether in TV drama or newspaper reporting.

And, depressingly, there is some truth in some of it. There have been one or two fairly unpleasant stories recently highlighting behaviour none of us can be proud of and doing the Army's reputation no good at all.

We have to be grateful for the fact that, stereotypes aside, the great British public still prefers to believe the best of its soldiers, even when they are reading stories in lurid detail in their daily newspapers.

On the whole they are right to do so – most Service personnel spend most of their time honestly trying to do their best, their duty and their work. However, the Services can only reflect the society they come from, and if bullies, sex beasts, cheats, racists, drunks and thugs exist in society, then they exist in the Army.

But they are in the minority and when they are found out, they are drummed out. In the meantime, the rest of us have to cope with the results of the publicity they earn for themselves and, by default, the Army.

As for the MoD, its public image is something of a disaster area. It's either spending too much or not enough, and the only word it seems generous with is "No". Little wonder that its budget is always being challenged and diminished. Why give more to defence when there is so much more immediate political benefit to be gained from increasing the education and health budgets?

And what of us other-halves? Are officers' wives still flouncing around in twin-sets, pearls and Gucci shoes, blonde hair held back by an Alice band? Are soldiers' wives in shell suits and stilettos, puffing a fag and heading the pushchair towards the coffee morning/video shop?

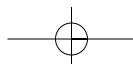
In my experience, most wives are out there using their formidable talents and skills in the workplace or community. More than a few of them will be at the AFF's international conference in June, where they will be expressing their views about life in the Army today, and debating the prospects for Army families in the future with senior officers and politicians. It should prove to be an interesting, image-challenging day (see Page 9).



A personal view
from Sue Bonney,
Editor of the AFF
Families Journal

**Are officers' wives still
flouncing around in twin-
sets, pearls and Gucci
shoes, blonde hair held
back by an Alice band? ,**





WRITE TO: SOLDIER, ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT, HANTS GU11 2DU
 • E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

BFPO post not 'safe' way of cheating Customs

FURTHER to your article "Brize alert over ciggies, alcohol" (Feb), I would point out that Customs officers take a similarly close interest in mail posted through the BFPO system.

BFPO customers should be aware that all postal packets and parcels, official and private, are liable to be opened for examination in the country of destination and may be subject to duty. Routine customs examinations include Forces mail carried on RAF flights.

There have been recent cases of contraband goods being confiscated. Disciplinary action may be taken against anyone falsifying entries on declaration forms. The BFPO system does not present a "safer" option for a would-be smuggler.

Further information on the importation of goods by post can be obtained from BFPOs worldwide. If in doubt ask your local postie. – Lt Col J A Kerce, SO1 Log Sp PCS.

It just is not possible to get full welfare package to far-flung troops on operations

IF soldiers are deployed on Op Telic 3 and find that their duty takes them out of reach – for extended periods – of the full operational welfare package otherwise available in-theatre, could some form of financial compensation in lieu of the full OWP be considered? – **Warrant officer, Op Telic 3.**

PS4(A) replies: The operational welfare package was introduced in April 2002, following an MoD-wide review of welfare support on operations, which sought to harmonise the provision of operational welfare across the three Services and standardise its delivery in all theatres.

The policy specifically states that the provision of the OWP to expeditionary forces may be constrained by the stage and nature of the operation being conducted. It is quite possible that personnel may be deployed away from a location that is fully provided with the OWP, such as a ship or assembly location, to operate under austere conditions where it is not possible to deliver the OWP in full.

Do your homework before buying home

I AM 36 and coming up to my final four years in the Army so decided to buy a house in January 2003.

After moving out of a married quarter I asked about the motor mileage (MMA) and Residence to Place of Duty (RPOD) allowances from my new home to my workplace, a trip of 108 miles a day. I was then told I could not claim because I had not given written notice within six months of moving into an MQ.

I cannot live in the mess (as I will be charged for food and accommodation), and I cannot claim the Over-37 package



PS10(A) replies: The writer has made the choice to buy his own property and settle his family 54 miles from his duty station. It is not clear whether this purchase was due to a posting or not, and this can make a difference to the allowances available.

This reply assumes he made a mid-tour move, for which he had no authority (ie no posting order to move in the interests of the Service). It would have been advisable for him to have discussed his options and the financial implications of his move with his RAO before his move rather than afterwards.

Apart from mileage allowance issues he could have discussed Longer Service Advance of Pay (LSAP) to assist with his house purchase. The maximum claim for

until May this year, (which coincides with my posting in July). I understand there are rules, and I have abided by them over the past 19 years, but please could someone clarify if I can claim anything.

And could it be made clearer to all personnel that if you want to buy property after taking over an MQ you must apply within six months. Over the past year I have forked out around £2,000 for petrol.

A quarter of homeless people in Britain are ex-Services, so every soldier needs all the help they can to get on the property ladder. – **Name and address supplied.**

home-to-duty travel is usually 50 miles. For those in private accommodation a nine-mile personal contribution has to be paid. It is called Recompense In Lieu Of Relocation – (RILOR). If the move was made when not entitled to relocation (when there is a posting order) you would not be entitled to RILOR for any distance further than the RPOD you were receiving at the time of the move.

If no RPOD was received then no RILOR may be paid.

His comment that he cannot live in the mess is incorrect. Of course he can live in the mess. Quite correctly he would have to pay food and accommodation charges, unless he was eligible for the Over-37 package, in which case he would pay only a food charge. He should discuss this option with his RAO.

We want to hear from you... but please be brief

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of officers' and soldiers' agenda wherever the Army is deployed... but please keep them brief. E-mails MUST include your name and

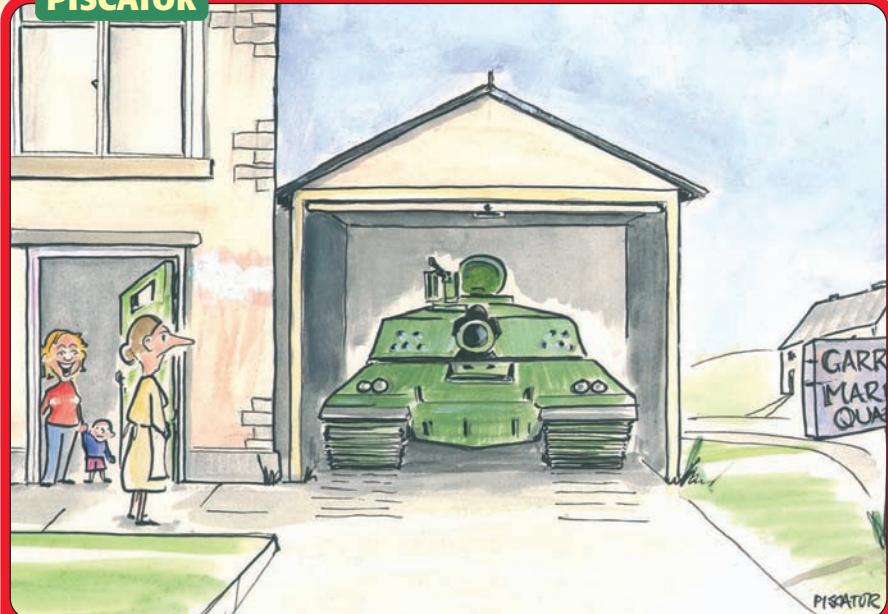
led directly to welfare improvements on Op Telic – for example, the increased provision of mobile phones. In addition, as operational theatres become more established or mature, the coverage of OWP was extended.

Similarly, the conclusion of the recent review of OWP was that much more should be done to ensure the established scale of OWP is rolled out earlier (to cover the initial entry parties and force recce elements) and further (to cover isolated detachments and manoeuvre forces).

Work on this is now under way, however, full provision of OWP to manoeuvre forces presents many technological and intelligence and security challenges.

location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). Anonymous letters go straight in the bin. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style.

PISCATOR



"We bought it just in case they don't have enough to go round."

This year is the 60th anniversary of the Army Benevolent Fund. To mark 60 years of caring for soldiers, ex-soldiers and their families in times of real need we're hoping to raise more money than ever for the Army family. Can you help? For a fundraising pack, please call 020 7591 2042 or send an e-mail to enquiries@armybenevolentfund.com



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My partner and I can't have a surplus quarter

IN civil law my partner is recognised as my common-law wife and the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme recognises unmarried couples.

On standing orders it states that I must inform the Army if I establish a relationship as though married.

My fiancée and I have a joint mortgage on our home, where we live when not on duty. I am presently one of four corporals sharing a four-man room and I am not permitted to visit my fiancée in her room.

As our garrison has surplus quarters we approached the Defence Housing Executive to apply to live in one, but were refused because we are not married.

As Investors in People, the policy-makers should see sense and allow a little flexibility for couples like us. As a bonus, if this was addressed, problems with over-crowded, dated accommodation might be alleviated. – **JNCO, Northern Ireland.**

● Col Max Marriner addresses this issue on Pages 36-37.

Salute to coalition's brave interpreters

I WAS pleased to see the letter from Fadhel Abbas ("Thanks from Basra", Jan). Having worked closely with interpreters I can say they are giants among men within the Iraqi community. They risk personal verbal abuse and threats

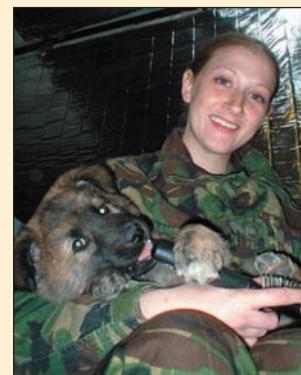
from the criminal fraternity simply for being associated with coalition forces.

The selfless perseverance of interpreters has enabled our Forces to achieve their mission within Iraq. I salute them all. – **LCpl D Bloom, Basra.**

PS...

Pounds for puppy

I ENCLOSE a small cheque to help Cpl Hayley Allen fetch her pup back from Bosnia (Update, Feb, Page 8). I am more than usually sympathetic as I once brought a Doberman home from Germany in similar circumstances. – John Bushell, Chesham Bucks.



● We forwarded John's cheque to a grateful Hayley, who can be e-mailed at hayleyallen007@yahoo.co.uk – Editor

We were on pull, too

YOUR January item about Territorial Army members of the Royal Logistic Corps pulling the ASCAR to Rockingham race track omitted to say that, although there were indeed members of the RLC TA involved, the majority of the driving force behind the event (no pun intended), were permanent military staff from Grantham Station. – Maj K D Pembroke, Grantham.

Junior staff course

I HEARD that the final TA Junior Staff Course will run in April. What will replace it as the qualifying course for promotion to major? – Name and address supplied.



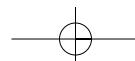
DITrg(A) replies: No final decision over the future of the Junior Staff Course (TA) and its association with the pre-qualification for promotion has been taken. DITrg(A) is exploring the options for TA integration into the new ROCC programme which, if accepted, would replace the current TA career course and associated promotion rules.

Chestful of medals

YOUR picture on Page 9 (Jan) shows a warrant officer wearing six medals, which look out of proportion. My understanding is that any more than five medals should be overlapped.

Medals must be arranged according to the order of wear, with the most senior one fully visible and nearest the centre of the chest. Up to five medals may be worn side by side without the medals overlapping. With six medals or more it is necessary for them to overlap.

The degree of overlap depends on the number of medals, and on the individual's physique, but it should be equal for each riband. Regulations state that not more than two-thirds of a riband should be covered by that of an adjacent medal. – Ken Fowler, Warwick.



WRITE TO: SOLDIER, ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT, HANTS GU11 2DU
 • E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Regular dental treatment? Not in my case it wasn't

I WAS called up for Op Telic in July last year and on my return was retained by the Regular unit I was with for the remainder of my 12 months "due to operational requirements", albeit the remainder of my time would be served in the UK.

In common with most people I have biannual dental check-ups and, one being due, asked the local military dental centre for an appointment. On discovering I was a member of the Territorial Army they refused to see me other than in an emergency.

I was told that TA personnel, unlike

Regulars, are barred from routine check-ups and treatment unless they are deployed on operations.

I explained the difficulties in getting a weekend appointment with my dentist and my inability to go home mid-week, but was told to make my own arrangements.

On mobilising we were informed we were subject to the same rules, discipline and regulations as Regulars and there would be no distinction between us. It seems in this instance we are not entitled to all the benefits of a Regular soldier. — Name and unit supplied.



The Defence Dental Agency replies: As a general rule TA personnel are not entitled to dental treatment from Service sources prior to mobilisation. When mobilised they are entitled to the same dental treatment as Regulars when on detachments, or when living away from home in Service single accommodation. When mobilised but living at home they have no entitlement to dental treatment from Service sources because they can still receive care from their civilian dental practitioner. See DCI Army 37 2003 Para 42.

The regulations regarding entitlement to dental treatment are complex and vary across the Services, but if the writer was given incorrect advice at a Service dental centre, the Defence Dental Agency can only apologise for the mistake.

Families' officer is so vital to us civvy wives

AS an Army wife of seven years I have experienced varying degrees of service from families' officers and unit welfare officers (UWO) at three locations.

What training (apart from time served) do these officers undertake? Why do some units have UWO support round the clock while others have only a part-time post? It should be possible to contact the officer when the need arises, not just on an answerphone (where one is supplied).

Why is it not possible



"Damn it, I'm quite aware it's 10pm ... but my husband's in Basra ... surely this is a UWO job?"

to have a visit from the families office at march-ins and for newly posted-in married soldiers?

Why is it that when you leave married quarters to buy your own home you seem to slip through the net when it comes to events organised by the unit and newsletters?

Families' officers are very important: they are the go-between for us "civvy" wives who may not know how the Army works. — D Newman-Caffrey, Yorkshire.

early days of their appointments a Best Practice Guide, which includes advice on assisting owner-occupiers, is included in Appendix 1 to Annex A to AGAI 81 (Welfare in The Army).

We understand Mrs Newman-Caffrey's point that there are differences in the provision of out-of-hours cover, but accept that COs are best placed to judge the level of support provided, based on the role, organisation and resources available to their units.

Most UWOs are married to their beepers for the duration of their tour.

There is considerable pressure of work on UWOs, particularly in deployed units, which can result in families feeling out of touch.

Why not touch base with your UWO? Drop in on his or her office. He or she is there to help and, once the informal connection is made, communication can begin.

Problem resolved

MY long-running problem with Pay 2000 has been resolved at last and my final back-payment made. Thankfully I had Sgt Bennett AGC on-side and working tirelessly on my behalf. For those still awaiting a resolution, there is light at the end of the tunnel. — Sgt D Middlemiss, 1 PWRR.

Stability nothing to do with it

I WISH to highlight the absurdity of a particular allowance available to those who own their own house or residence.

The Get-You-Home-Package is designed to provide an allowance to get you back to your own house. If you are married it provides a set amount a month, based on the distance you have to travel.

Single personnel are entitled to one warrant a month to their property under



PS10(A) responds: GYH (SA) is to enable those who meet the criteria to travel to a property that they own (or rent on a long-term basis) because they have decided to maintain a stable civilian home, 12 times a year at public expense.

The allowance is not designed to "enhance a stable relationship" (although we are delighted if it does), but was introduced to assist a soldier to visit his property to ensure its upkeep, maintenance and security.

The property may be owned or rented (even a council house) ... the point of GYH(SA) is that it must be the individual's property, whether married or single. The easi-

PS4(A) replies: Unit welfare officers attend two courses at Bristol University designed to assist them in their welfare role. The first (Supporting Army Personnel and their Families) is followed by a continuation briefing, which provides additional information and, more importantly, allows UWOs to compare experiences gained in their units.

The courses cover a range of issues including bereavement, marriage, helping others, counselling, family law and childcare. Speakers from the Child Support Agency, Benefits Agency, Relate and the Defence Housing Executive provide an overview on additional resources available to help families.

Of course, the formal training is no substitute for experience gained in applying that knowledge in a unit. To assist UWOs in the

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO



From *Soldier*, March 1979: Capt Robert Nairac, Gren Gds, the former public schoolboy who passed himself off as an Irishman while working in South Armagh, and who revealed nothing as he was tortured and later killed by Provisional IRA thugs, has been awarded the George Cross.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1954: An aerial view of the new military cantonment at Dhekelia, above, on the southern shores of Cyprus. Episkopi and Dhekelia, the sites of new military towns, are names which will be bywords in tomorrow's Army. They set a standard for the British Army in the Middle East. Each will have its own shops, schools, churches, hospitals and quar-

allowance does for our stability

the Get-You-Home Stability Allowance (GYH (SA)). Claimants must be the sole payer of council tax on the property, so are disqualified if there are two names on the tax demand. If you are in a long-term relationship and you and your partner own the property and both pay the council tax, you aren't entitled to GYH (SA).

It beggars belief that it is called a stability allowance, because in my case it does

est proof of "ownership" is the council tax document in a sole name. The point of SA is to enable the individual to return to the property. It is not a leave entitlement, nor to promote family reunions. The rules are strict because they were put in place to allow those who could not rely on anyone else to get home to check on their properties.

Those who sell and buy a property on each posting receive different assistance in the relocation package – they do not have a stable property.

Council tax is levied on each property in a council's area. If the writer were to own two properties at either end of the country he

anything but enhance a stable relationship.

The single living accommodation (SLA) I occupy during the week is classed as my primary residence by the Army, whereas the local district council classifies my home as my primary residence.

I can't have two primary residences. Is there a conspiracy to squeeze as much as possible out of single personnel? – **Name and address supplied.**

would have to pay the appropriate tax on each. Some councils permit a reduced rate of 25 per cent for single occupancy.

As there are two names registered for council tax in this case it would not be relevant. As has been correctly pointed out, the MoD considers a single soldier's Residence At Station (RAS) to be his SLA.

Every resident of SLA or SFA pays a charge in lieu of council tax (CILOCT) to the MoD, which in turn pays the relevant council tax. CILOCT is a flat rate for the type of accommodation occupied, wherever one serves, no matter how high the council tax in that particular area may be.

PS...

Car scam red light

A WARNING for anyone considering buying a second-hand car in Cyprus.

Dealers on the island have been known to sell cars to soldiers with the promise that they will buy them back on posting.

As the posting date approaches the soldier returns to the garage and is given an encouraging offer, but told to keep hold of the car until he leaves "as you will need it". On subsequent visits he is told the manager is away and will be back in two weeks, and, with time running out, that the manager is sick and there is nobody to sign the cheque.

Eventually the soldier delivers his car to the garage on his last day in Cyprus to find the price has drastically reduced. With check-in calling, the buyer has no choice but to accept it. He's been had. – **Name and address supplied.**

Flights of fancy?

WHILE I agree with SAC Nick Black's comments (Feb) that it is not the fault of the Royal Air Force if troops arrive with incorrect documentation, my main point is that the RAF changes flight timings and departure locations at the last minute.

With all the expertise and technology at our disposal, perhaps the movers could set up a website on the Intranet to enable units access to up-to-date information, keeping us all in the loop. – **R Sant Shrewsbury.**

Ferry bad move

MAJ Sheldon ("Why should I pay to reach new post", Feb) says that when travelling to Germany he bought a day return ferry ticket and did not use the return. He should be aware that ferry companies and the Tunnel operators check tickets bought in this way and levy the appropriate charge the next time you book with them. – **Name and address supplied.**

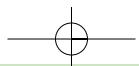
Billy's black mark

BOBBY the Indian blackbuck mascot of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers was inherited from The Royal Warwickshire Fusiliers (6th Foot) and I note his promotion to lance corporal and award of the General Service Medal (*Soldier*, Feb).

The Royal Regiment of Wales also kept an Indian blackbuck as a mascot or pet while serving in India.

Billy, as he was called, charged at the head of the regiment at Chillianwalla on January 13, 1849 and may have lived for many years with the medal awarded for the action if he had not succumbed to an act of pugnacity.

Regimental history notes that after attacking and putting to flight a new draft from England he was ordered to be destroyed. The history also notes that Billy had not the slightest respect for officers. – **D Smart, Stratford-on-Avon.**



TALKBACK

Vox pop

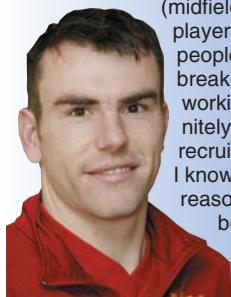
The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

A question of **SPORT**

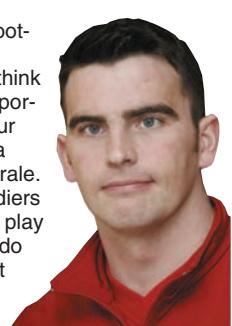
We disturbed the Army football team's preparations for this month's Inter-Services championships to ask the current Constantinople Cup holders how important they think sport is to life in the Services



**Cpl Ellis Langford,
3 CS Regt RLC**
(midfield, capt)
Sport is very important to Army life, which is not a problem as long as the lads are doing their jobs back at their units and remember that they are soldiers first and sportsmen second.



Bdr Shaun Hale, 47 Regt RA
(midfield, Fleet Town and CS player)
Playing sport gives people a much-needed break from their day-to-day working routine and definitely plays its part in recruitment and retention. I know that one of the main reasons I joined up was because the Army had a reputation for playing a lot of sport.



Sgt David Hope, 4 GS Regt RLC
(forward, CS player)
I have been playing football for the Army for nearly ten years and think that sport, and the opportunity to represent your unit, is very good for a soldier's personal morale. I think it is fine for soldiers to be given time off to play sport as long as they do their bit when they get back to their unit.



Sgt Steven Neal, 27 Regt RLC (kit manager)
Sport is paramount to Army life because it breeds camaraderie and the importance of team effort. In the past it probably played a big part in recruitment, but nowadays the Army is quite stretched by its commitments. You can't really tell lads coming off the street that they can join up and play football five days a week because it just doesn't happen.



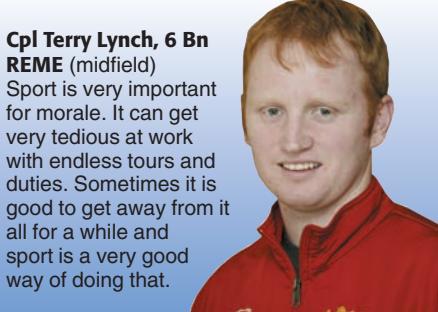
**Pte Phillip Piercy,
2 PWRR** (midfield)
I play a lot of sports, not just football, and find that it gives me a chance to get away from my unit and keeps me interested in my career. If you are good at a sport the Army tends to push you and gives you the opportunity to compete at the highest possible level, which must appeal to people considering joining the Services.



**LCpl Tommy McCormick,
3 RSME** (midfield)
One of the reasons I joined up was because I wanted to play football, have a steady job and learn a trade, and I knew that the Army could give me all three. Sport has been good to me and I think I have managed to juggle football and work pretty well.



Cpl Jim Panniers, 9 Para Sqn RE (goalkeeper)
Playing sport can help soldiers to develop their teamwork skills. I think that in the past it has helped with recruitment, but current operational commitments mean that less and less time is being set aside for sport.

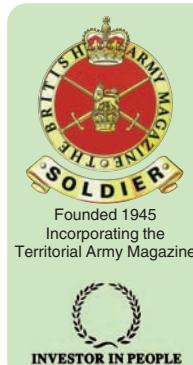


Cpl Terry Lynch, 6 Bn REME (midfield)
Sport is very important for morale. It can get very tedious at work with endless tours and duties. Sometimes it is good to get away from it all for a while and sport is a very good way of doing that.



**LCpl Neil Bartlett,
2 PWRR** (midfield)
As well as being great for morale, playing sport helps to generate good PR for your battalion or unit and allows you to mix with a whole range of people within the Army who you might not otherwise get the chance to meet.

Interviews: Andy Simms Pictures: Graeme Main



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