

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



**Rapid-reaction
record-breakers
speed to Kosovo**

**Cave 'rescue':
the real story**



May 2004 £2

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Cover picture

Speedy arrival: Cpl Scott Maunders, patrol commander with A Company, the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, stops to take stock by a Serb church in the centre of Pristina. When inter-ethnic violence broke out between the Albanians and the minority Serbs, the battalion, the UK Spearhead Lead Element (SLE), was deployed to Kosovo in record time as Nato's Over the Horizon High Readiness Force for the Balkans. Col Hugh Boscawen,

Commander of British Forces in Kosovo, described it as "a remarkable effort". See Special Report, Pages 4 and 5.

Picture: Mike Weston



"Um, Ah, well . . . you're never going to believe this . . . but . . ." See Feature - Pages 22-23

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Cave drama: "More people have walked on the moon than set eyes on what we saw down there." These are the words of Capt Toby Hamnett, AGC, talking exclusively to *Soldier* about the experiences of his Combined Services caving team, which spent seven days trapped underground in Mexico. See Pages 36 and 37.

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Rapid-reaction re

British battalion speeds to Kosovo to quell inter-ethnic violence

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Mike Weston

"RECORD-BREAKING" best describes the speed at which Britain's rapid-reaction forces deployed to Kosovo in response to Nato calls for reinforcements.

The call came when Kfor's peacekeeping troops were faced with the worst outbreak of inter-ethnic violence the province has seen since the war ended five years ago.

Intensive clashes over three days left more than 30 local people dead, hundreds injured and thousands homeless as extremist Albanian mobs attacked houses, churches, schools and hospitals in Serb enclaves.

Although tensions between ethnic Albanians and minority Serbs have risen since the start of the year with a number of tit-for-tat revenge killings, the sudden outburst of violence was unexpected and took international peacekeepers by surprise.

In what was thought to be the fastest deployment of the UK's Spearhead Lead Element (SLE) battalion, the arrival of British troops in Kosovo, within just 24 hours of receiving its notice-to-move order, was an impressive demonstration

of the critical value of Nato's Over the Horizon High Readiness Force for the Balkans, a commitment which UK and US forces take in six-month blocks to cover.

The extra 750 UK soldiers deployed by the Ministry of Defence to bolster Kfor's efforts in Pristina and surrounding districts helped quell the violent clashes. The number of British troops in Kosovo had drawn down to 250 before reinforcements arrived.

"It was a remarkable effort, a tremendous demonstration of rapid deployment which had an immediate impact on the situation," said Col Hugh Boscawen, Commander of British Forces in Kosovo.

"British troops liberated Pristina in 1999 and patrolled here until two years

ago. The fact that the Brits are back in the city has had a major calming influence on some of the hotheads behind the unrest.

"Nato's call to the MoD in London was made at 0600hrs on March 18 and before midnight the first British rifle company arrived in Pristina.

"The fact that we were able to reinforce Kosovo very quickly with the Over the Horizon forces and from within the Balkans limited the duration of the unrest to two-and-a-half days. It was an unpleasant and damaging period but could have been much worse had we not got experienced troops in quickly."

The UK's SLE battalion, currently the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, remains on 24-to-48 hours' notice to move for deployment to trouble spots world-wide. The RGBW troops received

the order to move just eight days after taking over the Spearhead commitment.

Lt Col Nick Welch, commanding officer of 1 RGBW, said: "We were out very quickly. Most soldiers didn't even have time to say goodbye to their families. It took six days to outload us completely – a total of 750 soldiers, 218 vehicles, ammunition and stores."

On arrival in theatre the battlegroup, which included Queen's Company, the Grenadier Guards alongside engineer, logistic, signals and medical support, was backed-up by Bosnian-based Sfor troops from the 1st Battalion, the Royal Gurkha Rifles and subsequently by the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire in addition to a company from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers already based in Kosovo.

But it wasn't just the speed with which



**Lt Col Nick Welch, CO
1 RGBW**



In ruins: Pte Gaz Longstaff, Pte Ian Parry and LCpl Neil Thompson, B Coy, 1 RGBW assess the damage to a hospital in Bresje

Record-breakers

British troops arrived that was welcomed by both Serbs and Albanians – the British Army's unique style of operating has proved popular and successful in keeping the peace, guaranteeing security and gaining the confidence of both communities.

Lt Col Welch said: "Our deployment was a high-profile statement of intent. We provided much-needed reassurance to the local population and acted as a deterrent.

"British soldiers have developed skills and procedures through 30 years of experience in Northern Ireland and a host of recent operations and have learned to work among the people.

"We adopt a friendly yet firm posture, patrol on foot and wear berets, whereas the other nations tend to move about in large armoured vehicles with helmets on. We have a lot more interaction.

"I have employed 72 interpreters to

enable all my teams to talk to people, gain their trust, draw information out of them and build a pattern and a picture of life.

"We are also pretty good in our public order skills and are capable of escalating and de-escalating very quickly in response to a situation. We have the drills in place to help us be more proactive, to engage a crowd yet keep our distance and we have the intermediate step of using baton guns before we fire live rounds, which makes a huge difference."

Troops are using their time to gather information and intelligence to combat crime. Targeted searches resulting in significant finds of weapons, ammunition and arrests have helped put the extremist elements on the back foot.

Patrols continue to protect churches and homes from further destruction – and soldiers regularly escort Serb children to

school and accompany frightened families back to assess the damage of their burnt-out homes.

Stability has now returned to the streets of Pristina and Kosovo Polije and although the situation remains quiet a definite tension prevails.

As the Spearhead Lead Element battalion approaches the end of its 31-day Balkan deployment, what's next on the agenda?

"We will re-group and remain ready to deploy wherever we are required in the world," said Lt Col Welch.

"Iraq is not as stable as it should be, there's a referendum in Cyprus, elections in Afghanistan and trials in Sierra Leone – 2004

isn't going to be a very quiet year."

Destruction: Pte Semesa Leweni, 1 RGBW, reassures communities living in fear following indiscriminate attacks on their homes and property in Pristina, Kosovo



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Picture: Mike Weston



It's good to talk: Sgt Rodney Poulter, 1 RGBW, receives an update on the situation from UN policeman Jim Lyas and a member of the Kosovo police force while gunmen are detained

Textbook arrest

British troops help foil gunmen's escape in Pristina

BRITISH troops helped capture the suspected killer of a Kosovan policeman during a "classic" dawn swoop.

Soldiers, working alongside police, flushed-out the gunman and his accomplices from their hiding place in the capital Pristina, arresting the gang as they fled.

The textbook operation involved troops from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, The 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire and Queen's Company, The Grenadier Guards.

The prime suspect refused to halt when

challenged by local police and was shot in the leg.

Meanwhile two of his accomplices were captured in a cordon set-up by the UK's Spearhead Lead Element battalion.

Lt Col Nick Welch, Commanding Officer of 1 RGBW, said: "This was a classic internal security operation, led by the police and supported by the military which successfully cut-off escaping criminals."

A follow-up search of the area also uncovered a large cache of illegal weapons and ammunition.

Forces' heroes honoured

MORE than 120 Servicemen and women have been honoured for outstanding bravery, determination and commitment on operations around the world.

Cpl Shaun Jardine, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, is awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross for "courage and inspirational leadership" when he and his men successfully engaged three Iraqi positions while under heavy fire in Iraq's Maysan province.

TA soldier Kgn Michael Davison, the King's and Cheshire Regiment, receives the Military Cross for rescuing an officer during a firefight in Basra.

Another TA soldier, Pte Gary Smith, the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, receives a Mention in Despatches for identifying and

apprehending an Iraqi man carrying a hand grenade. His "positive action" prevented both civilian and military casualties.

The George Medal is awarded to bomb disposal expert WO1 Nicholas Pettit, Royal Engineers, for rescuing four RAF personnel from a Land Rover which was badly damaged when it drove into a hidden minefield in southern Iraq.

In Afghanistan, CSgt Martin Gray, 2 R Anglian, receives an MBE for playing a central role in the capture of a group of terrorists in Kabul when he "acted with speed and aggression" and personally overpowered, disarmed and captured the terrorist leader.

● Full details of the honours and awards will appear in our June issue.

Freshen up with your new-look *Soldier*

WE may be celebrating the magazine's 60th birthday next year – but *Soldier* has never felt livelier.

Next month marks the start of a fresh phase in the development of your fast-moving, award-winning publication.

The June issue will sport a NEW look, NEW feel and contain NEW features.

Since 1997, when *Soldier* reverted to its popular monthly frequency and format, its size has increased from 42 mainly black-and-white pages to an all-colour 80 last year, rising to a bumper 88 as recently as March.

Buoyed by an ever-increasing readership and advertising support, *Soldier* will next month take another step in its expansion by moving up to a record 92 pages.

Like many other popular magazines it will switch to a perfect-bound format – with a square spine – and its cover pages will be of slightly heavier glossy paper.

The cover price, held at £2 since January 2000, will rise to £2.50, but that increase will not affect our growing army of postal subscribers, whose annual rates will

remain the same – making the magazine an even better bargain for them.

New features starting in June and in subsequent issues will include a modern music section in which young soldiers will be invited to review the latest CD and DVD releases. There will also be interviews with chart bands.

Modern medals and Army mascots are the subjects of two series sure to prove popular, while articles by an expert on sports psychology, heralding a new health and fitness section, promise to be intriguing.

In 1997 our print-run was around 20,000. Today, well over FOUR TIMES that number are sent out world-wide every month to British and foreign soldiers and their families, the ex-Service community and many other interested civilians.

‘The June issue will sport a new look, new feel and contain new features’



Geared-up for op

THE 1st Battalion The Royal Highland Fusiliers left for Iraq last month with some of the best kit available.

QM, Maj Jocky Frew, pictured above, welcomed the top-spec equipment saying the MoD was pulling out all the stops to ensure soldiers had first-class kit.

He said: "In many ways the bad press the MoD has received surrounding the equipment being used out in Iraq has worked to our advantage as it has brought the issue to the forefront of people's minds."

"The MoD are doing all they can to provide us with the best equipment."

The new kit includes one desert helmet which is designed to survive a round of fire, four pairs of warm weather socks, sunglasses, a mosquito net, thermal clothing for cold nights and new desert goggles.

Sgt Terry Young, Signal Platoon, 1 RHF, is among the soldiers benefiting.

"We have had to buy some of the kit ourselves in the past but this time that isn't the case," he said. "The kit is as good as it could be and we have been issued it all, so I have had no complaints."



It ain't half cold mum: A captain from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment braves a dunking during an ice drill in snow-bound Norway.

Many soldiers from B Coy also had to learn to ski for the first time with 80lb of kit on their back while enduring nights sleeping in snow holes as part of Operation Snow Leopard.

Before heading to the snowy wastes of Norway B Company spent time in the sun-baked Iraqi desert attached to 16 Air Assault Brigade.

I'm celibate... Get me out of here

FANCY living in a monastery for up to eight weeks over the summer?

Tiger Aspect Productions are looking for up to four volunteers to take part in a series of documentaries for BBC2 and are keen to hear from former male members of the Armed Forces for whom the slow-moving peace and tranquillity of monastic life is in total contrast to their normally active and energetic existence.

Volunteers would not need to be practis-

ing Christians but they would need to be genuinely interested and committed to the project.

The production company is particularly interested in hearing from ex-soldiers who have been forced to question their faith because of what they have seen and experienced in the line of duty.

◆ **Anyone interested should call Gabe Solomon on 020 7544 1903 or email gablesolomon@tigeraspect.co.uk**

'Thank you' trophy from Army charity

A prestigious annual award has been created for the unit that raises the most cash for the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF).

As briefly reported last month, the competition for the sterling silver Carrington Drum is open to all units and sub-units of the Regular Army, Territorial Army and Army Cadet Force and will be awarded to the biggest fundraisers or those who come up with the best money-spinning idea.

The life-size Carrington Drum trophy will be engraved with the winners' name and will be displayed in their mess for one year.

Crafted by Carrington and Co, silver-

smiths to the Army, the drum will be presented at a high-profile reception after the Beating the Retreat on Horse Guards Parade next summer (2005).

Maj Gen Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, Controller of the ABF, said: "This is an opportunity for the Army Benevolent Fund to thank units of the Army for their work on our behalf. I hope this award will encourage them to continue with even greater vigour."

To enter the competition, download an application form from the ABF web site on www.armybenfund.org or call the ABF's Wendy Lynch on 0207 7591 2042.

Para families bring smiles to Shaiba

POOR children in an Iraqi village are smiling again thanks to donations of clothing and toys from the families of 2 Para.

Troops based near the Iraqi village of Shaiba were struck by the plight of impoverished youngsters scavenging through rubbish and so wrote to loved-ones back home asking for help.

Maj Guy Lavender, who spearheaded the effort in Iraq, was amazed by the response. He had hoped for around 20 parcels of aid to distribute among villagers but the generosity of families based near Battalion HQ

in Colchester far exceeded expectations.

He said: "So many parcels have been sent here that the Army's postal service was temporarily overloaded, and so much has been sent to the barracks in Colchester that it has all had to be shipped here."

"The project has snowballed and we have been overwhelmed by the generosity and support of so many people."

Shaiba village is home to around 150 people forced to flee to Southern Iraq after years of persecution by Saddam Hussein's regime.

IN BRIEF

■ **The Prince of Wales** viewed wartime documents relating to two relatives held prisoner during the Second World War. Papers at the Red Cross Museum related to his great uncle Michael Bowes-Lyon and the then Queen's great-nephew John Elphinstone, who was imprisoned at the notorious Colditz Castle.

■ Two weightlifters, **Cpl Paul Kennedy** and **LCpl Jim Gallagher**, raised nearly £500 for the cancer ward at Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary. The musclemen, both with 621 EOD Sqn, RLC at RAF Northolt, lifted a combined 447,420kgs, the equivalent of 28 double

decker buses each, during their 24-hour marathon.

■ Sixty TA soldiers from Nottingham-based **87th Sig Sqn** have embarked for the Balkans where they have taken the place of their regular counterparts. They will provide communications services throughout Bosnia and Kosovo.

■ Hundreds of soldiers and civilian staff from **ATR Lichfield** have filled piles of tea chests with toys, clothes, shoes and bedding after a campaign to collect the supplies for the children of Chernobyl.

Caroline set to take up baton

THE Army is set make history by appointing its first-ever female bandmaster.

Sgt Caroline Constantine, a 31-year-old flautist, is currently studying at the Royal Military School of Music at Twickenham and is on track to earn the honour when she graduates this summer.

Sgt Constantine, right, said: "I had not done any conducting before this course.

"It's intimidating to start with, knowing that everyone is relying on you.

"You're looking at good musicians who might have been playing their instruments for ten years, with a baton that you've only had in your hand for a very short time."

Despite her modesty Sgt Constantine has more than earned her high-powered role.

A mere six students are picked for the prestigious three-year bandmaster course annually and are put through a gruelling succession of tests.

Successful students then get the chance to conduct some of the Army's finest musicians at a string of world-class venues around the globe.

When not wielding her baton, Caroline,



like other Army musicians, will be responsible for decontamination following a nuclear, biological or chemical attack.

Off-duty soldier dies in ambush

TRIBUTES have been paid to CSgt Christopher McDonald, who was killed in an ambush near the Iraqi town of Mosul.

CSgt McDonald, of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment, was on resettlement leave when his vehicle was attacked by masked gunmen. The 39-year-old father of one from Bangor, Co Antrim, was due to leave the Army later this year following 22 years' service.

Lt Col Nigel Whittaker, CO of the Northern Ireland Support Battalion – to which CSgt McDonald was seconded

when he died – praised the dead soldier on the eve of his funeral last month.

He said: "Although we only served together for a few months, he made a marked impression on me as a man who lived life to the full.

"His infectious enthusiasm, professionalism and cheerfulness meant he was a much-admired and respected figure.

"Our thoughts are very much with his wife Gill, and son, Harrison, his close friends and family at this traumatic time."

● **Iraq update – Page 21**

■ Former Chief of the Defence Staff, **Gen Lord Guthrie** has joined the board of directors of Advanced Interactive Systems where he will advise on security issues affecting the Armed Forces, including the development of specialist training for frontline military personnel.

■ A team of Army climbers has conquered one of the highest mountains in the world. The eight-strong party tackled Argentina's Mount Aconcagua, the highest peak outside the Himalayas, despite ferocious weather and a case of frostbite. The team was made up of six soldiers from **21 Sig Regt**, based in Chip-

penham, and two other mountaineering experts from units in London and Brawdy. The expedition to the 22,835ft summit took 15 days.

■ Army top brass turned out in force for a parade and Tornado flypast to mark the reformation of the historic **10 Field Squadron (Air Support)**. The squadron was disbanded in 1992 as part of a cost-cutting exercise – the fifth time in its 100-year history the unit has been axed or renumbered. Air Vice-Marshal C Morgan led luminaries at the parade held at RAF Leeming, North Yorkshire.



Deep sympathies for tank dead

ARMY divers paid tribute to fallen Second World War tank crews during a highly unusual underwater memorial service.

Two frogmen from the Royal Dragoon Guards were dispatched to find the remains of six experimental floating tanks which sank during a top-secret D-Day exercise in 1944.

The Valentine Duplex Drive (DD) tanks were designed to sail from landing craft to the Normandy beaches buoyed by a canvas bag of compressed air.

But a live-fire rehearsal conducted off the Dorset coast revealed fatal flaws in the secret weapon when half a dozen craft sank killing six men.

Valuable lessons were learned from the disaster and the amphibious tanks were launched much closer to beaches on D-Day.

Divers placed the wreath on the turret of a tank commanded by Lt Robert Ford, now Gen Sir Robert Ford, who survived to witness the poignant ceremony last month.

Reliving the horror of that day he said: "Within ten minutes the wind increased and the waves grew bigger, beating against the screen and sloshing over the top.

"It was soon very clear that the pumps were not getting rid of the water faster than it was being taken on board. Suddenly one of the struts snapped and the canvas screen sagged.

"Within seconds the water was pouring in and the outcome was inevitable.

"I think it can be said with truth that those men did not die in vain. There was a big lesson – that only in the calmest of water would DD tanks be able to swim 5,000 yards to the beach."

New jobs deal

SOLDIERS returning to civvy street will now have even more help finding work thanks to a new partnership between the Ministry of Defence and Jobcentre Plus.

Everyone leaving the Army early will receive expert advice on the full range of services and benefits available through Jobcentre Plus.

They will be allocated a personal adviser to help guide them into a new career. Training will also be made immediately available through the New Deal scheme.

It's your Army. It's your charity.



You can rely on the ABF if you or your immediate family ever needs help. For 60 years we have been providing support for soldiers, former-soldiers and their families in times of real need. To continue our vital work, we also rely on your support.

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Under Big Ben

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

Brit forces have their hands full

LARGE-SCALE operations by Britain's Armed Forces will not be possible for at least another four years, the Chief of the Defence Staff told MPs.

Appearing before the Defence Committee, Gen Sir Michael Walker said: "We are engaged in five fairly major operational theatres at the moment – the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iraq and Northern Ireland.

"This year – not taking account of the major part of our earlier involvement in Iraq –

we reckon there will be something of the order of 30,000 troops on operations throughout the course of the year.

"Of that about 14,000 or so will be required to do some sort of roulement – and that, of course, is across all three Services.

"I think we are unlikely to be able to get to large-scale [operations] much before the end of the decade, probably 2008 or 2009."

When asked whether, if circumstances demanded that we had to do another Op Telic fairly quickly, he

would say to the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister that something had to go, Gen Walker replied: "Absolutely."

Reservists on call: A new call-out order has been made under Section 56 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 so that Reservists may continue to be mobilised into permanent service in the former Yugoslavia. The order took effect from April 1. About 300 Reservists are there now. The call-out follows a similar order to support operations in the Congo and Sierra Leone.

Iraq attacks: Between October 17, 2003 and March 28, 2004 there were 67 recorded attacks where firearms or explosives have been used against UK forces in MND(SE). These include 18 IEDs, 41 contact shooting incidents and eight other attacks including mortars and RPGs.

Bowman training: Prime contractor General Dynamics UK has sub-contracted the conversion training of around 75,000 personnel from all three services to Westland Helicopters Ltd. To date almost 3,500 have completed their individual training.

And I quote . . .

"We have given this matter some consideration, but I am not necessarily sure that it is appropriate to try to replicate the arrangements under which Gurkhas are recruited to Britain's armed forces."

– **Geoff Hoon, Defence Secretary** in response to a question about the formation of a Commonwealth Regiment on the lines of the Gurkhas.

Moonwalk

Landmine victim's bid to eclipse Botham's effort

SUPER-FIT disabled veteran Chris Moon is preparing for his toughest challenge yet – a speed-walk from John O'Groats to Land's End.

Chris, who lost an arm and a leg during landmine clearance in Mozambique, faces the equivalent of two marathons per day over 25 consecutive days.

In comparison, Ian Botham took a leisurely 34 days during his much-publicised walk and followed the shortest route possible.

Chris's far more ambitious plan will see him hurry through Edinburgh, Newcastle, York, Manchester, Birmingham, London, Bristol and Exeter.

Visiting the capital alone will add 300 miles to the epic 1,300-mile trip.

The former member of the Royal Military Police said: "I am hoping to get four or five hours of sleep a night. If I get

behind, I don't sleep, I just keep walking."

In preparation Chris, 41, from Basingstoke, has been trying to gain weight as there will be little time to eat during the walk, which starts on June 5.

Since he was horrifically injured in 1995 Chris has completed the London Marathon and the gruelling 140-mile Great Sahara Run, and has led a party up Mount Kilimanjaro.

He hopes his epic attempt, dubbed OneWalk, will raise £1 million for the Leonard Cheshire disabled charity.

Chris said: "I am sure there are lots of people who think that I cannot do this, but what is important is that I believe that I can. It is important to challenge the concept of limitation."

To sponsor Chris Moon's mammoth effort call 08444 411111 or log on to www.onewalk.org.uk

Ruff justice at sea

CASPER the Army sniffer dog is living proof that every hound has its day.

The lucky springer spaniel has turned sea-dog in a bid to help the crew of HMS *Monmouth* tackle drug trafficking in the sun-drenched Caribbean.

With the help of his handler, Cpl Daniel Fiddy, three-year-old Casper has already used his sensitive snout during a routine stop-and-search operation to uncover a secret consignment of cocaine aboard a fishing vessel.

While Royal Marines may take hours to scrutinise a ship's many compartments, Casper simply follows his nose, dramatically slashing search times and reducing delays to local shipping.

The navy is taking good care of its secret weapon and even honoured him with the ship's acclaimed "Man of the Week" award.

Casper has also been kitted-out with his own life jacket and kennel, which is kept in the officers' accommodation, and he is regularly exercised around the sun-soaked decks of the Type 23 Duke class frigate.

The four-legged crime-buster triggered



Picture: Paul Barrow

Teammates: Cpl Daniel Fiddy and Casper

headlines recently when it was revealed he enjoyed a daily food allowance of £3 while sailors had to make do with just £2.50.

● **Pooch patrol** – Page 17

IN BRIEF

● **Forces Reunited**, the website where soldiers can hunt for old pals, is to sponsor five SSAFA Forces Help caseworkers. Dominic Hayhoe, managing director of Forces Reunited said: "SSAFA and their caseworkers do a fantastic job, their work supports a great many people in need."

● **Adrenalin junkies** are being offered a free parachute jump in aid of the British

Wheelchair Sports Foundation (BWSF). Two types of jump are on offer – a tandem skydive from 10,000ft and a solo static line jump from 3,000ft. If you would like to experience the ultimate rush and raise cash for the charity call the BWSF on 01296 395995 or email info@bwsf.org.uk

● **More than 100 Army Cadets** have marshalled a major sponsored walk in aid of cancer charity Macmillan. The Cam-

Montage: Mark Owens



Flight path: SSgt Darren Herd (53 Field Squadron (Air Support)) monitors Concorde's journey

Jet's track stars

CONCORDE made its final journey across farmland to a museum thanks to the expertise of 53 Field Squadron (Air Support), Royal Engineers.

Engineers from the unit spent several weeks laying a 1.7km metal roadway so the iconic aircraft could reach its final resting place – Scotland's East Fortune Museum of Flight.

With its tail and famous delta wings removed for transportation, British Air-

ways' 150-tonne supersonic jet crawled along the purpose-built track at a snail's pace atop a 48-wheeled self-propelled trailer.

SSgt Darren Herd oversaw the delicate operation, saying: "It's sad to see Concorde grounded but I'm glad we were able to make its last journey dignified and trouble-free."

The jet had been transported to the area by barge from the Thames to Torness.

Special guest: Cheeky Alexander Robson tries to make a member of the Household Cavalry laugh during a visit to their Whitehall HQ.

The 15-year-old youngster, who suffers from a rare blood disorder, watched the changing of the guard, toured the stables and even tried on ceremonial uniforms.

The trip was made possible by the Make a Wish Foundation, which works with children who have life-threatening illnesses.



bridgeshire cadets manned checkpoints and provided communications along the 17-mile route from Cambridge to Ely last month.

● The 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots, has paraded its battle-christened colours following the regiment's recent return from Iraq. Accompanied by The Royal Scots Pipe Band, 60 members of the unit, clad in desert fatigues, marched through Linlithgow and Musselburgh before an audience of digni-

taries. The Royal Scots was recently granted the freedom of both Scottish towns.

● A 24-hour charity "rowathon" by Hull-based TA soldiers has raised £2,000 for a host of good causes. Six teams of five competitors notched-up a total of 824 miles on rowing machines – the same distance from Hull to London. Charities benefiting from 150 Transport Regiment's efforts include Childline and the Army Benevolent Fund.



English skills: A language tutor explains grammar to 1 RGR soldiers

Tearing down the language barrier

A NEW English language learning package to help Gurkha and Foreign and Commonwealth soldiers has been introduced at Sir John Moore Barracks, Shorncliffe, for a six-month trial period.

ELLIS, the English Language Learning Instructional System, is a computer-based package which, with the support of specialist tutors, can be used to meet each soldier's language learning needs.

This flexible and free training scheme is delivered through the Army Learning Centre on camp and allows students to progress at their own pace and practise reading, writing, listening and speaking skills at a time that suits them.

Interest in the courses has exceeded all expectation and if results are successful access will be extended across the Army for Foreign and Commonwealth troops.

For information on ELLIS contact the Army Basic Skills Development Officer, Martin Rose, on Upavon mil ext 5721 or 22 AEC Basic Skills Tutor Sally Jordan on Chatham mil 2920.

Clansman 'bows' out this summer

TROOPS will finally get to grips with the long-awaited Bowman radio system in July, the MoD has announced.

The new piece of kit, which provides secure voice and data links, will replace the Clansman, which has been in service since the 1970s.

Bowman radios will be fitted to around 20,000 vehicles and will be used by 70,000 Servicemen.

Some 300 aircraft and 160 ships will also be equipped with the system so that all three Services can communicate.

The first Bowman radios will enter service this summer and will totally replace the Clansman by 2006.



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Scoff to tingle the taste-buds

Designer ration packs for 'athlete' soldiers

EXPERTS are designing a "ration pack of the future" which could be in soldiers' berghens within 12 months.

The team of scientists and MoD specialists is considering a range of options from high-energy snack bars and isotonic sports drinks to caffeine-laced chewing gum to keep troops alert.

Traditional dishes such as beef stew face the chop in favour of carbohydrate-rich meals such as chicken pasta.

The new Expert Panel on Armed Forces Feeding (EPAFF UK) has been set the challenge of creating the next generation of ration packs which will ensure peak physical and mental



Brand new: Is this the future of Army rations?

performance as well as winning over soldiers' fussy taste-buds. Leading nutritionist Dr Anna Casey told *Soldier*: "While American troops view their rations simply as a source of energy, UK soldiers are far more demanding and want food that tastes good too."

"The food we are considering could include curry powder and garlic to spice things up a bit, improve taste and increase morale as well."

"We want soldiers to consider themselves as athletes and the range of high-energy foods under consideration reflects that. The right diet can also fight off infection and even injury – a lack of calcium, for example, can lead to stress-fractures in bones."

Dr Casey, from the research company QinetiQ, explained that isotonic drink powder, which is mixed with water, was also being considered as a means of keeping soldiers fighting-fit in hot countries such as Iraq.

Meanwhile a review of the operational ration pack during Op Telic revealed troops are routinely turning their noses up at energy-packed snacks. Consequently, biscuits could soon be replaced by snacks such as cereal bars, which are easily stowed in webbing and can be munched on the move.

More branded sweets, such as the ever-popular Yorkie Bar, may also be introduced in a bid to win over soldiers' stomachs.

Maj Andy Main, from the Defence Catering Group, said: "We know that the Infantry want to see new products in the ration pack and the formation of the EPAFF will let us do this in quick time."



Dr Anna Casey

Mr Chips batters opposition

SENNELAGER-based soldiers can now get a real taste of home thanks to the opening of a traditional English fish-and-chip shop just yards from the camp's main gate.

Mr Chips, owned by Londoner Steve Alder, opened just before Christmas and has already attracted a legion of loyal customers.

The shop is aimed squarely at its British neighbours and most supplies come from the UK. Only the potatoes, which come from the Netherlands, are not English.

Speaking from behind the counter of his shop in Bielefelder Strasse, Steve told *Soldier*: "I believe there are only three fish-and-chip shops in the whole of Germany."

"Our menu is what you would expect to find in a chip shop in London, but we are looking to meet Scottish and northern tastes



and hope to sell haggis, saveloys and steam puddings soon."



What the Press has been saying

● The Army has revealed it is facing a recruitment crisis – because one in every five volunteers is too fat to join up. The tubby would-be recruits are told to go away and return only when they have lost enough weight. – *Daily Star*

● Former Second World War codebreakers, firefighters, nurses, seamen, miners and others who served on the home front were celebrating after news of a £7.3 million fund to pay for events to celebrate their contribution to the British effort. – *Times*

● British troops in Iraq have been warned that they will undergo a full-scale police investigation every time they open fire. The move follows a High Court test case that forced the MoD to pay compensation over shootings by peacekeepers. – *Daily Mail*

● An Army sniffer dog became a target of Iraqi hitmen because he was so successful at finding hidden weapons. Blaze, a Springer Spaniel, was run over by a speeding car while he worked in the streets of Az Zubayr. Amazingly he escaped with cuts and bruises. – *Daily Mirror*

● Maj Gen John McColl will become Deputy Commander of the coalition force in Baghdad in the rank of Lt Gen when the new Iraqi interim government is formed on July 1. – *Times*

● The MoD has auctioned off £600 million of equipment intended for emergency wartime stocks as it struggles to meet a shortage of cash. The "fire sale" has included hundreds of armoured personnel carriers, military lorries, cars and specialist vehicles. The transactions have led to complaints that soldiers will be starved of vital equipment. – *Sunday Times*

● Thousands of elderly Suez veterans will die before they get long-awaited medals because of the MoD backlog, campaigners fear. – *Daily Mirror*

● Two hundred Royal Engineers paraded at the base of the Rock of Gibraltar at the start of events to mark 300 years of British rule. – *Daily Telegraph*

● Britain's overstretched Armed Forces are being called on to send more troops to Afghanistan to reinforce Nato-led operations there this summer. – *Times*

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The Army's Basic Skills Support Programme

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Greater confidence: Constables Wayne Johnston and Colin Anderson, PSNI, are supported by LCpl Marty Redmond and Cpl Rob Heatley, 3 R Irish, while on the beat in Middletown

NORTHERN Ireland has almost vanished from the public eye as the international war against terror dominates the headlines but, with more than 13,500 British soldiers still committed to duty in the province, what can troops expect from an operational tour?

"Soldiers are here to do a very difficult job and there is the constant drum beat of the operational cycle," said Lt Gen Philip Trousdell, General Officer Commanding (GOC).

"The mission still stands – the Army exists to support the police in defeating terrorism, to maintain public order and assist with the return to normality."

Northern Ireland and its communities are rapidly changing and the Army is adapting in response to the changing needs of the police force it exists to support.

As the Police Service of Northern Ire-

land gains confidence in its growing ability to operate without the Army, the requirement for soldiers to be out along side the police is starting to slowly disappear.



Lt Gen Philip Trousdell

"We are working with a new police force that is focusing on a different set of skills. It is growing away from being a counter-terrorist police force and into a community police force and this means that we have to operate in support of them in a different way.

"They have a difficult area to work in but want to interact with the local community as much as possible without us being there.

"We continue to assure the police that they can have the support they want from us.

"The police only ask for our support when there is an intelligence-led requirement for it and their requests are becoming increasingly infrequent."

In security terms, much progress has been made since the dark days of the 70s, 80s and even 90s. "We haven't fired a baton round for more than 18 months," said Lt Gen Trousdell. "The police no longer routinely patrol with long-barrelled weapons and we continue to rear-base as many troops as we can while the threat remains at the current level.

"We no longer have any troops in Londonderry. Augnacloy is being demolished and Clooney is closing down."

Troops undertake patrols to counter terrorist activity and the Army's continuing public order commitment involves an enormous amount of training and resources.

In July last year, the GOC had more troops under his command than were in



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Seeing for themselves

Phase One trainees take time out to visit Normandy beaches

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Graeme Main

EIGHTY Phase One recruits just four weeks into their training spent a weekend in France to relive the experience of D-Day soldiers on the Normandy beaches.

Despite roaring winds and torrential rain, the young soldiers enjoyed treading in the footsteps of the heroes of 1944.

They stood on the sands of Gold Beach on the trail of hero Sgt Stan Hollis, VC and saw the Mulberry harbour at Arromanches, the German coastal defence batteries at Longues-Sur-Mer and Pointe du Hoc, and the battle sites at Omaha and Sword Beaches. They went to Pegasus Bridge and visited the Café Gondrée.

They also paid their respects at the US military cemetery at St Laurent and the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Ranville, where they held a short ceremony of remembrance.

Capt Helen Dingsdale, AGC (ETS) and 2ic HQ Sqn at ATR Winchester, who organised the trip, said: "Tours started at Winchester in 2001 and have expanded to other ATRs and are endorsed by the initial training group.

"The recruits receive some background in the classroom about the tour and are given handouts as they go."

The ATR runs three tours: Ypres, Somme and Normandy. She added: "This visit to Normandy has special significance this year with the 60th anniversary and everyone is enthusiastic despite the weather."

The recruits produce a report of the visit which contributes to their core skills certificate in communications.

They are in the expert hands of Royal British Legion guides John Ross, ex-PWRR TA, from the Department of War Studies at Kings College London and Col Mike Bradley, the Commander Regional Recruiting South Eastern Home Counties.

"I specialise in Normandy mainly because I am a Green Howard," said Col Bradley, who has been visiting the beaches for 25 years. "I get something new on every visit, particularly with ATR Winchester. Only a few weeks ago they were leaving my recruiting offices and it gives me great pleasure to see them here."

Capt Dingsdale added: "One of the reasons we do the tours is to emphasise core



Organiser: Capt Helen Dingsdale, inset, and the trainees are greeted by M Arlette Gondrée and Bill Higgs at Pegasus Bridge café

values such as loyalty, integrity, and moral and physical courage. This happens when they hear the tales of individuals like Stan Hollis and his selfless commitment. When we focus on an individual it brings it home to the recruits that it is one individual who made a difference. I think they can relate to that a lot more.

"The tour also gives them both a sense of pride in the Army and a sense of history."



Pte Matthew Cowins finds the grave of his American grandfather. Matthew's father changed his name by deed-poll

The pilot's story

FORMER Staff Sgt Bill Higgs, 84, was a glider pilot on D-Day, one of more than 60 who made the night landings near Pegasus Bridge.

Called up in 1939, he was based at a depot near Yarmouth and volunteered for the Glider Regiment in 1942.

Months of day and night training followed before a briefing where they were shown a map of the Caen Canal and Orne River.

"Six gliders were picked to land right up at Bénouville Bridge, later renamed Pegasus Bridge" he said. "Three of those

six gliders landed just a few feet from the bridge.

"I set off with 64 gliders and we had to arrive with guns and men to prevent the bridge from being retaken by German reinforcements based near Caen.

"We picked up some ack-ack over the coast but landed on target, and I ripped off my starboard wing hitting the stakes that had been put in the ground by the German defenders."

He had to use all his training, flying a glider in pitch darkness into a battle and with no second chance of a re-run. It took both courage and a great degree of skill.

"As soon as we landed we got everyone



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Basra flares up



Picture: REUTERS/Atef Hassan

Engulfed in flames: British soldiers are attacked with petrol bombs and grenades during a protest by job-seekers in Basra in March

Trouble erupts in southern city

CHAOS descended on the streets of Basra last month as suicide bombers targeted school children and commuters travelling through the city's hectic rush-hour traffic, **writes Andrea Frazer.**

In a dramatic turn of events, a series of car-bombs exploded simultaneously on April 21, targeting three police stations within the Old Basra, Saudia and Al-Asher districts.

The death toll is reported to have exceeded 50 and included more than 20 children, some of whom burned to death in their school bus. More than 100 civilians were injured in the attacks.

As British soldiers rushed to the aid of casualties they were stoned by angry local people.

Two separate explosions at Az Zubayr police training academy later that morning injured five soldiers from the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

The ruthless and indiscriminate attacks, thought to have been carried out by for-

eign terrorists, were without doubt the worst to hit Iraq's southern city.

As *Soldier* went to press Basra was reported to be calm again as the city's grieving residents came to terms with the carnage and mourned and buried their dead.

The recent upsurge of violence throughout the country has heightened fears that unrest could increase further as the deadline for the handover of power to the Iraqis on June 30 approaches.

The past two months have been amongst the most turbulent for the Coalition forces with significant numbers of fatalities amongst US forces in the troubled north and an increase in random attacks against British troops in the relatively stable and peaceful south.

British soldiers came under petrol-bomb and grenade attack during public order disturbances in Basra on March 22 when a demonstration over job shortages was hijacked by extremists and became violent. Troops clashed with crowds of up to 500 and 14 were injured.

During two nights of street battles in Al Amarah, British forces shot dead a number of armed supporters of the Shia

Muslim Cleric Hujatoleslam Moqtada al-Sadr. Six troops were injured.

Towards the end of the month two soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment were injured in an ambush north-west of Basra. Both were attached to the 1st Battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Two soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment received medical treatment for minor shrapnel wounds to the shoulder following a roadside explosion before being released back to their unit.

In a separate incident a soldier also from 1PWRR was seriously injured in a shooting incident in the Maysan province. He was operated on at a military hospital before being flown back to the UK for further treatment.

As the deadline for the handover of power in Iraq looms ever closer, British soldiers maintain the firm but fair approach to operations which has won them world-wide acclaim. They are determined that the terrorists should not be allowed to wreck Iraq's rocky road towards democracy.



Exercising th

Police warn that contraband seizures are on the increase at Britain's major military airport

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

CHECKS to stop cigarette smuggling at RAF Brize Norton are on the rise in response to a sharp increase in the volume of contraband being brought into the UK by soldiers returning from operations.

As reported in *Soldier* (Update, Feb) RAF Police and Customs and Excise officers at the military airport have seized cigarettes worth tens of thousands of pounds in unpaid tax in recent months. In the last three months of 2003, lost tax amounted to £50,000.

On one flight from Iraq two soldiers tried to take 20,000 cigarettes each into the Oxfordshire airbase.

RAF policeman Sgt Guy Wilmshurst, the NCO in charge of air transport security at Brize, said: "Our primary role here is the policing and security of outbound flights. But we have a secondary role to assist Customs and Excise on incoming flights and can work on their behalf with written authority that gives us Customs powers."

Illegally imported alcohol has also been found.

Soldiers are given ample warning when they arrive at Brize Norton – over the tannoy as well as on printed notices – to declare goods over and above the duty-free allowance. If they then pay the excise involved at the point of entry in the red channel there is no problem.

But if they are over the limit and choose the green channel, they are open to challenge.

"If found to be over the limit, Pte Smith loses his entitlement to all the goods he is importing, including his duty-free allowance," said Sgt Wilmshurst.

"The goods are taken and the case is out of our hands. Normally Cus-

toms and Excise contact Pte Smith and he becomes liable for civil prosecution."

Seized cigarettes are always incinerated, bottles of alcohol crushed.

Soldiers have been known to import weapons, mostly as war trophies.

"They try to smuggle them by hiding them among genuine Service weapons," said Cpl Dieter Coulson, RAF Police. Favourites are Uzis, AK47s, pistols, ammunition and bayonets, although most don't reach Brize because they are picked up by police at the departure airport.

Individuals have found inventive ways to get things through, but the police are aware of most of them. For example, if keys to locked footlockers are "lost", the padlock is simply cut off by the police.

Some try to beat the system by swapping bags with a mate at the reclaim carousel, not a course of action recommended by Cpl Coulson. "Only a fool would carry someone else's bag through.



Flt Lt Craig Teasdale



Sgt Guy Wilmshurst



Cpl Dieter Coulson



If you are found carrying that bag, even unintentionally, you will be pursued," he said.

Personal effects boxes, often seen as a "safe" way to send illicit goods home, are also a target.

"There is a perception that because they travel on military aircraft, it is somehow different from security on commercial airlines. It is not and everyone gets checked at least twice," said Cpl Coulson.

Cartons of cigarettes dumped in bins and bottles abandoned in toilets are signs of last-second changes of mind by would-be smugglers.

It is not actually an offence to bring the goods into Britain: the offence occurs when there is a failure to declare them.

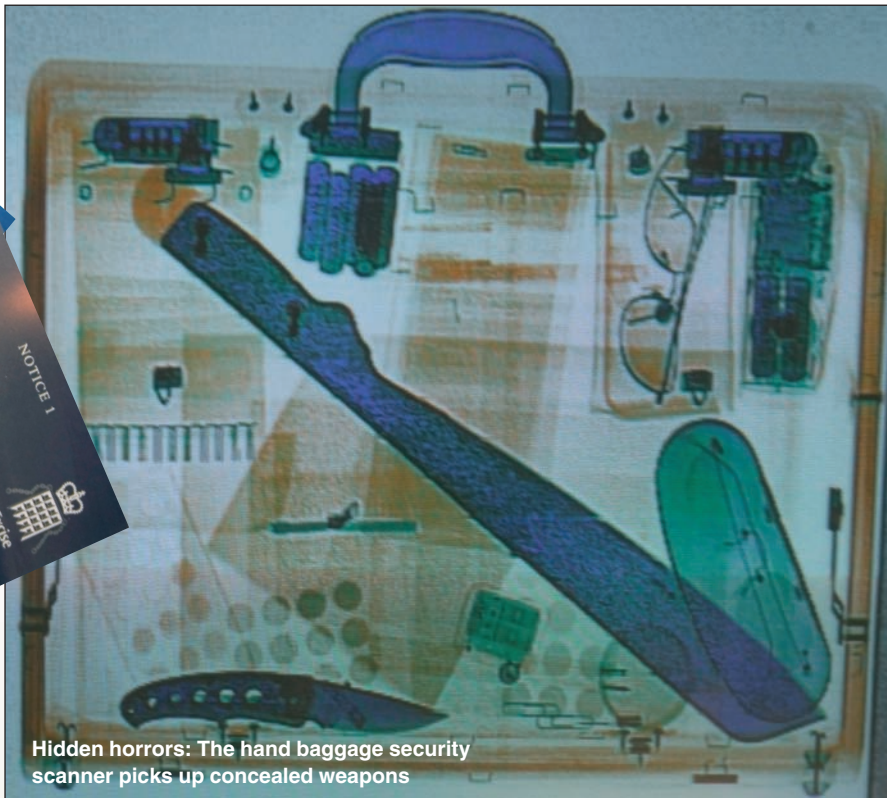
"We aren't here to cause problems," said Cpl Coulson. "We know they've been in an operational theatre and we want to get them home as quickly as possible.

"We are looking for people trying to buck the system. When we find them, they are dealt with by Customs . . . and their regiments usually have something to say as well."

the Customs

WARNING

If you fail to make the appropriate Customs declaration you will be committing an offence and will be liable to prosecution if you proceed beyond this point.



Hidden horrors: The hand baggage security scanner picks up concealed weapons



OUTBOUND passengers at RAF Brize Norton have been caught attempting to take illegal material – in particular weapons – on board aircraft.

“We have a box of confiscated replica weapons, knuckle-dusters, flails, throwing stars, butterfly knives, nunchucks, and machetes,” said Flt Lt Craig Teasdale, RAF Police. Many were offensive weapons under UK civil law.

His staff advise soldiers to put their favourite (and legal) tool, the Leatherman, and other multi-tools into the baggage hold or hand them in before departure. They can be retrieved at the arrival airport.

Pork products, pornography and alcohol-based items are also not allowed into Saudi Arabia and some other Muslim states.

Your allowances

Travel from outside EU to UK (including Canary and Channel Islands and Gibraltar):

- ❖ 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250gm of tobacco
- ❖ 2 litres of still table wine
- ❖ 1 litre of spirits or strong liqueurs; or 2 litres of fortified wine, sparkling wine or other liqueurs
- ❖ 60cc/ml of perfume
- ❖ 250cc/ml of eau de toilette
- ❖ £145 worth of all other goods including gifts and souvenirs.

From EU to UK

You don't have to pay duty on goods bought in other EU states as long as tax was included in the price when the items were purchased. The items must be for your own use, and have been transported to the UK by you.

If you bring back large quantities of alcohol or tobacco, a customs officer is likely to ask questions.

Remember, the EU is expanding on May 1 to include the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Cyprus (not including northern Cyprus).



Point of no return: Passengers crossing the grey line on the floor in Customs and not declaring excess goods risk arrest



Nothing to declare

You have been warned: Green and red Customs channel signs

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RED RAT goes GREEN



Recycling is a way of life in Germany

Pictures: Steve Dock

THINK of the Desert Rats and images of soldiers from the 7th Armoured Brigade with their distinctive red rat shoulder flash in Sahara sands come to mind.

Now these ground-breaking soldiers are set to take another big step and move into a greener environment in Germany.

That is why they have launched "Red Rat Goes Green".

Capt Stu Pemberton RE, SO3 Infrastructure, HQ, Hohne Garrison, is leading the initiative. He said environmental issues are a fundamental part of family life in northern Germany and big changes are planned for soldiers behind the wire in offices, workshops and accommodation. He reckons the Army can save money too provided soldiers and civilians on camp take recycling seriously.

"We are tackling environmental protection head on," he explained.

He has the support of the garrison commander, recycling contractors and the German local authorities who are years ahead of the UK on green issues.



Capt Stu Pemberton

"We are implementing an environmental management system in compliance with host nation legislation. This will improve our impact on the environment."

Money can be saved too by separating waste prior to disposal.

"For example we get rid of wood that other workshops could use again. So rather than just disposing of it, we want people to ask if anyone wants their rubbish before it's thrown away."

Families are already involved in recycling according to Uschi Hawkins, the garrison environmental protection advisor. She said the German authorities already provide the different bins and the yellow sack system to help them.

"We have bins for combustibles and food waste, for paper and cardboard, for normal household rubbish, and a yellow sack for cartons and packaging like plastics and metals, and glass banks are easily found. Done properly you should only be left with about 15 per cent rubbish to go to land-fill."

Unlike the UK, German families pay to have their bins emptied. So if a family recycles well, collections are less frequent and at €1.80 a time, there is a financial incentive to recycling.

The Army could save money too.

"The garrison pays for a contractor to take our waste away," added Capt Pemberton. "He separates that waste and

charges us for that service. We want to separate it first and that will save the garrison money.

"We will be visiting every unit to make them understand what it is all about. We have already provided them with wheelie bins for the accommodation."

Capt Pemberton says soldiers must be educated.

"Typically a soldier will dump his waste in the nearest bin. If that bin is for waste paper only, he has contaminated it and that costs money to separate. We want the soldier to put the recyclable waste in the correct bins."

"We want units to operate a disciplined approach. If it means having someone standing by the bins to ensure compliance, then so be it, it won't be long before recycling becomes the natural way to do things. Hopefully it will be second nature as it is in married quarters."

For heavy-duty items, industry waste containers for oil, paint, white paper, scrap ferrous metal, untreated wood, and cardboard are already commonplace on the garrison.

"The Germans in the community recycle about 70 to 75 per cent of their rubbish," said Uschi. "Children collect paper and get paid by the contractor. The money goes into a kitty and they have perhaps a big Christmas party. So why can't the units do that?"

All it takes is a moment.

TEAMS of Army drivers are set to take on one of the great road challenges of the year and raise money for charity at the same time.

Driving from the northern tip of Europe to its southern equivalent is the aim of Sgt Paul Lewis, AGC with HQ 1 Sig Bde at JHQ Rheindahlen and his three-vehicle Mitsubishi Shogun teams.

Raising money for SSAFA North West Europe, The Gurkha Trust and St Dunstan's, Sgt Lewis aims to complete the course in less than 133 hours, the present record for four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The present overall record for the ten-year-old event was set in 2000 when a Volvo 740 completed the 5,500km course in just less than 56 hours.

One of the rules is that all vehicles must comply with the speed regulations in whichever country they are.

"I have three Mitsubishi Shoguns provided by Maurice Smith of the Colt Car



At the wheel: Sgt Paul Lewis with co-driver Richard Simms of Defence Fire Services

Company in Elmpt," said Sgt Lewis. "Each will have four drivers and a mechanic."

Before the event, the teams will tour seven Naafis in BFG to raise money before heading to the UK with stops at SSAFA HQ in London, Bulford, Tidworth and Larkhill. Then it is embarkation from Newcastle and a 24-hour drive to northern Norway just to get to the start on June 20.

The teams will travel through Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany before entering France and on into Spain, north of Barcelona and the finish line south of Gibraltar.

"We hope to complete the course and be back for a cheque presentation at the Rheindahlen Jubilee in July."

Sgt Lewis is grateful for the sponsors Mitsubishi, Naafi, Marconi UK, BAE Systems, O'Gurks Travel and P & O Ferries.



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CHANGING the Guards

SG 'gunners' move seamlessly from ceremonial duties to war fighting

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

EXCITEMENT was high on the training ranges at Sennelager this spring as the Scots Guards held their gunnery camp.

After three-and-a-half years of ceremonial duties in London and a move to Munster, where they replaced the Irish Guards, the soldiers from north of the border were keen to show what they could do.

The Warrior gunnery camp was the last hurdle for them in conversion year.

"We are live-firing the Warrior's main armament, both the cannon and the chain gun," explained Capt "JP" Pitt, media officer.

"This will culminate in company integrated attacks with Milan, mortars, and tanks from The Royal Dragoon Guards."

Training will continue later this year at Batus, back-filling The Royal Dragoon Guards and The Duke of Wellington's Regiment before moving into high readi-

ness next year. When *Soldier* caught up with them they were taking their annual crew tests to ensure gunner, driver and commander can work effectively together as a team.

Although it was an SG show, other Guards' regiments were involved.

"Every one of the five regiments of foot

guards is featured here in the company," said Maj Marcus Elmhirst, C Coy Commander.

"Working with the Scots Guards on dismounts, we have manning increments made up from the Grenadier, Coldstream and Irish Guards, and the Prince of Wales Company from the Welsh Guards."



Call-up: A Warrior commander directs his driver over the radio



Shelling out: Gdsm Robert Spencer loads 30mm ammo into the ready-to-use rack



On track: Scots Guards cut loose on the Sennelager ranges

Multi-skilled

Allied Rapid Reaction Corps completes its annual training cycle at Elmpt/ 'Calaban'

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

SPEEDY and efficient methods of setting up a joint task force headquarters were there for all to see at a major exercise at Elmpt in Germany this spring.

Exercise Arrcade Guard tested the strengths and resourcefulness, and searched for weaknesses, of the Rhein-dahlen-based Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) as it set about its mission.

Using old aircraft shelters and specially constructed tents, the task force operated for five days backing up peace support operations in Calaban, a fictitious country that bears a striking resemblance to Iraq.

The exercise was designed to test communication and force protection elements as well as HQ control of land, air and maritime assets.

When *Soldier* caught up with ARRC Chief of Staff Maj Gen Nick Houghton, late Green Howards, in mid-exercise he said: "The sole purpose of the ARRC is to go on operations. Outside of that its primary function must be to prepare for them."

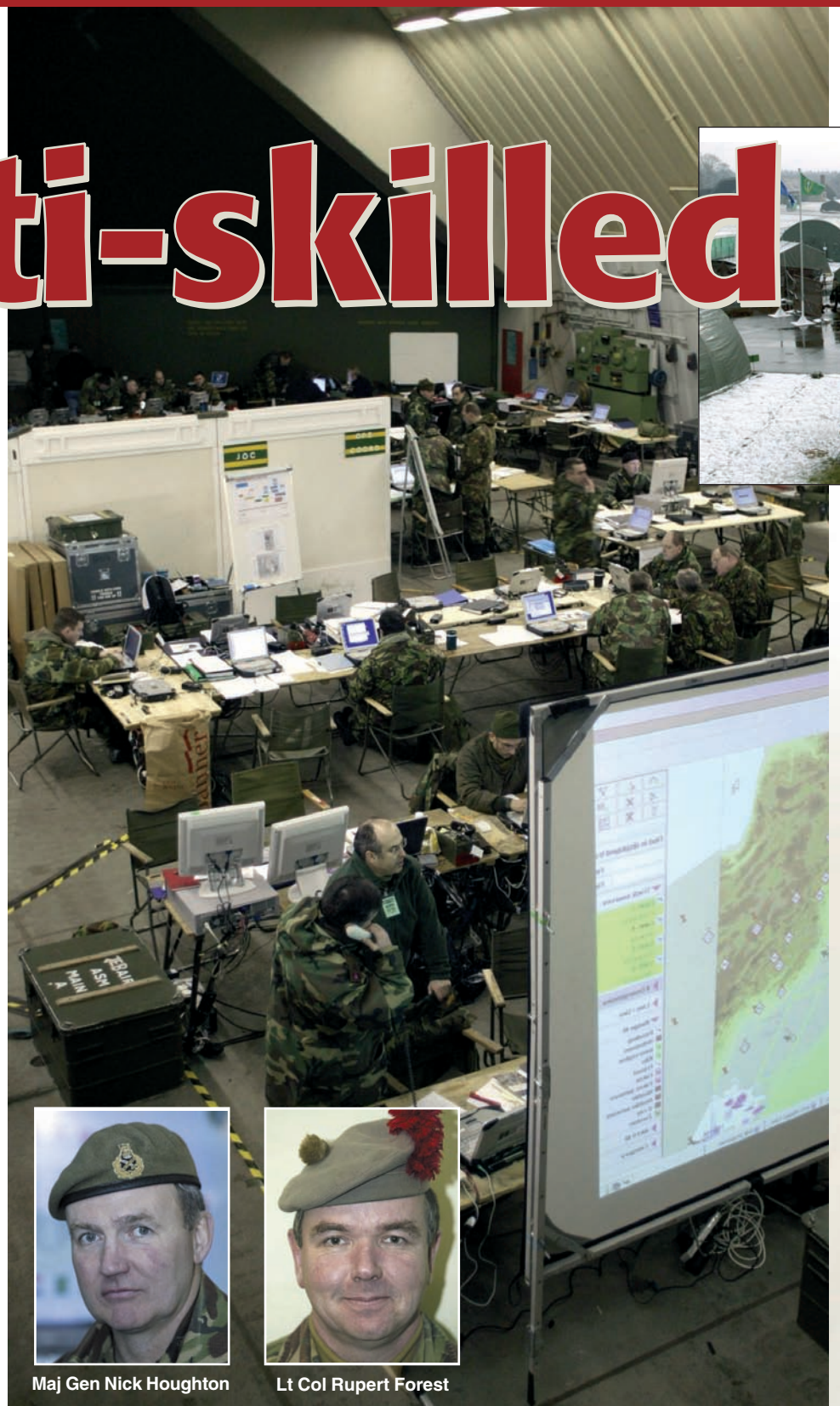
HQ ARRC undertakes combined, joint military operations across the operational spectrum either as a corps HQ with up to four divisions, or as a land component command HQ, in order to support the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's (SACEUR) crisis-management options.

The ARRC successfully deployed for real in Bosnia and Kosovo and the exercises keep the multi-national staff on their toes.

"There are a variety of ways and roles that the ARRC can act as a headquarters and on an assortment of mission types," said Maj Gen Houghton.

"These can range from peace support and humanitarian operations to war-fighting. The ARRC can be a corps HQ, a land component, or a joint task force HQ.

"In the future it can command the land element of Nato's response force (NRF). And it can go on operations not just with Nato, but under EU auspices or a coalition of the willing."



Maj Gen Nick Houghton

Lt Col Rupert Forest

As a high readiness, joint, deployable multi-national force package, the NRF is tailored to the needs of a specific operation and able to move quickly to wherever needed. It will be able to carry out certain missions on its own, or serve as part of a larger force to contribute to the full range of Alliance military operations.

The six NRF forces are made up of national elements which will rotate through periods of training and certification, followed by an operational "stand-by" phase of six months.

The ARRC is to take its place on the

rota. It leads the way as Nato's first and most experienced high readiness force HQ. To meet its new duties, ARRC has modified its training programme.

"One of the new tasks will be for the ARRC to take its turn for six months in every three years as standby for SACEUR to send on newly emerging missions for which Nato is the alliance of choice," said Maj Gen Houghton.

With all these potential roles, ARRC HQ has to generate a number of default options to ensure its capability in whatever scenario. "Arrcade Guard is focused on



Command Centre: Inside the Joint Operations Centre, left; HQ ARRC on exercise deployment, above

acting as a Joint Task Force HQ in a post-conflict operation, such as Bosnia, Afghanistan or Iraq, where there is a certain amount of hostility. A lot of the functional requirements of headquarters are about interfacing with the civil authorities, NGOs and civil-military relations."

Back at the exercise, American Maj Luke Knittig, an engineering officer most

recently with the US 3rd Infantry Division, now ARRC Media Relations Officer, said the UK-led ARRC is 60 per cent British.

"Exercises are taken seriously and the four for 2003-04 all took place in the Middle East/Mesopotamia scenario.

"By the end of Arrcade Guard the commander wants to know that he and his staff are familiar with what it would take if we were asked to be a joint task force HQ with a big focus on political and civil affairs.

"For the exercise we have been deployed to the fictional country of Calaban. The exercise proper runs for 72 hours and within the general hubbub, exercise control have created three or four major incidents.

"For example they sank a grain container ship in Umm Qsar and on another occasion a supply lorry was stolen and driven to the front gate, where a suicide bomber blew it up. In media ops we have the irate world's press here.

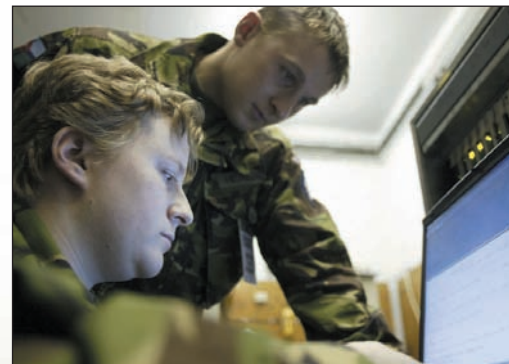
"The chief of staff wants people out of the comfort zone."

Maj John Knopp, The Prince of Wales's

Own Regiment of Yorkshire, information officer HQ ARRC, said Arrcade Guard is the last part of the 12-month exercise sequence.

"Last year's series of exercises started with Arrcade Warrior, designed to exercise the Rear Support Command.

"Guard finishes the series and as the scenario winds down a new exercise cycle is ready to start up."



Set-up: Cpl Rebecca Burnell and Sgt Chris Healey, 231 Sig Sqn, configure a Promina Computer System

Movers and shakers

ONE of the key elements in a successful ARRC exercise or deployment is the vital work done by the Support Battalion.

Lt Col Rupert Forest, Black Watch, commanding the battalion on Arcade Guard, said it was a unique organisation.

"We are a UK asset supporting the ARRC, which is Nato owned," he explained. "And we are part of HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde."

The battalion is 60 per cent RLC and home to 24 cap badges. It is based at Rheindahlen and Wegberg, has a strength of 420 and runs pioneer, logistic support and defence for HQ ARRC.

It is the support battalion, along with colleagues from the Royal Signals, who set up the camp on deployments and exercises.

Although for Arrcade Guard some hard standing buildings were available to house the HQ, the battalion is capable of

going onto a green field site to build from scratch, in five days, small villages housing up to 500 personnel.

"We provide everything from an operational working environment to accommodation, ablutions, power and administration. And we feed them at the same time.

"On Arrcade Guard we have gone into existing buildings. Signallers do the main comms, but we arrange HQ equipment."

There is a lot to consider when building a new headquarters in the field. It starts with a Forward Liaison and Reconnaissance Group (FLRG) arriving within 48 hours of the order being given.

In four days the key enablers from 1 Sigs Bde are in theatre, soon followed by forward-deployed HQs which are light, mobile and C-130 transportable.

"I take part in the recce to identify the site. I look at size, whether it is easily defensible, and consider ease of logistic support. Meanwhile the Royal Signals look at communications. Everyone has an input."

Exercises like Arrcade Guard are a valuable training aid.

"We have to be prepared for anything from desert to snow," he said.

New kit: LCpl Danny Woodall, left, and LCpl Mike Kirkham-Ingram carry out checks on a 40kw field generator which came into service in March



Hands on: LCpl Tam Fay, Support Tp RE, operates a back hoe on a digger



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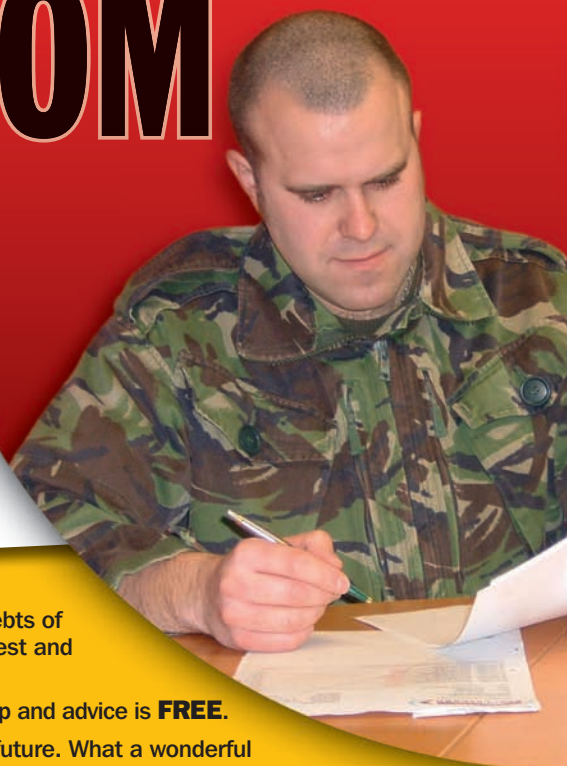
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Design concept for part of the improvements at Elmpt

Soldiers at Javelin Barracks are set to enjoy new catering arrangements

SOLDIERS in Germany are set to join the Pay As You Dine (PAYD) queue this summer in a trial at Javelin Barracks, Elmpt, **writes Ray Routledge.**

The move follows successful trials at UK sites involving all three Services.

The new dining facilities will be aimed not only at soldiers, but at civil servants and families too with a new bistro.

Lt Col Peter McCall, RLC, Project Manager of the British Forces Germany PAYD team at Rheindahlen, says the move is a positive one.

"Right now service personnel who live-in pay a standard food charge covering three meals a day," he said. "They pay that whether or not they eat the meals."

He said less than 20 per cent of soldiers in Germany take breakfast. About 40-60 per cent go to lunch but that figure falls away again in the evening. The oft-heard complaint is that the evening meal is too early, usually from 1630 to 1800hrs.

"We have to be customer-focused and Naafi, our partners in Germany, have already invested about £250,000 in market research and produced detailed reports into what people want. And we view our people as customers because they are paying for a service."

Statistics indicate that soldiers only want to pay for the food they have and they want to eat in modern surroundings with modern menus.

"In many cases the food, while of a high quality, is considered outdated and many

of the facilities are out of date too. Eating habits have changed.

"And the inflexible opening times are not the hours that suit our customers."

So in Germany PAYD is set to be introduced alongside improvements to restaurant facilities and opening times which could go on as late as 2300.

Another key decision is that facilities are being opened to all entitled personnel. The PAYD team wants to attract the wider defence community and by investing to make dining a more pleasurable experience they hope to create an environment where civil servants, dependants and locally employed civilians as well as soldiers feel comfortable using the facilities. The scheme will meet both leisure and retail needs.



Lt Col Peter McCall

"At Elmpt we plan to include an internet café and a 24-hour automated shop along with retail facilities," said Lt Col McCall. He said introducing better commercial practice is vital to the scheme's success. But he added a note of caution.

"There is a lot of good practice now in retail catering and we need to bring in that element while optimising quality."

German issues make the overall scheme more important in BFG.

"There are some Germany-specific elements like welfare, which is a 365-day deal for us. Unlike the UK, where many people can go home at weekends, we have to provide the full spectrum of welfare services. Ease of access to facilities is important because many people are still intimidated by using public transport in Germany with the language difficulties."

Then there is Naafi's relationship with the Army, which is different in Germany compared with the UK.

"Here they are much closer to the

defence community, bringing home comforts and brand names we want. In the past three years Naafi has improved in what they deliver."

To turn outdated cookhouses and restaurants into modern attractive eating outlets requires significant investment. At Elmpt that's about €750,000 from Naafi, so they want as much exclusivity as they can on the camp.

The new bistro at Elmpt is a refurbishment of the bowling alley and Shannon's Bar.

While full PAYD is set to start on June at Elmpt, trials in Germany don't end there. Another is set for Fallingbostal later in the summer.

"At trial sites in the UK soldiers saw PAYD as a positive thing."

"At Hyde Park, home of the Household Cavalry Mounted Division, where a trial was launched in September 2002, the soldiers feel they are between £60 and £70 per month better off."

But what of the soldier who runs out of cash before payday? Can he still be fed?

"At Hyde Park they had fewer than ten cases in 14 months. There is a system where if they do run out of cash they can eat from the core menu that Naafi will have to provide and the money to pay for that food will be taken from their next pay packet."



What it costs

"Under the present scheme the food charge is £3.46 per day," explained Lt Col McCall. "Soldiers will be able to eat that same menu at the same price as they pay today under PAYD."


A main meal will cost about £1.20, still very good value for money attracting a significant public subsidy that will continue under PAYD.

Soldiers will continue to feed free on exercise or operations.

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My
Army

ANTONY BEEVOR

A long way fr

This former officer's account of the battle for Stalingrad has sent him to the front line of military historians

Interview: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

ANTONY Beevor is affable, charming and humorous. How, you wonder on first meeting him, can he tackle the serious subjects he writes about?

But when he opens up about his work his intensity leaves you in no doubt that he knows exactly what he is talking about.

The historian acknowledges a debt of gratitude for his time in the Army. From the comfort of his study at home in South-West London, he told *Soldier* that despite his own time in uniform and his passion for military history, he does not come from a traditional Service family.

"My father was in the SOE [Special Operations Executive] during the Second

World War and I did have one distant ancestor in the 11th Hussars, so that was my choice of regiment when I joined," he said.

He had wanted to enlist from a young age despite a debilitating illness as a child that left him on crutches for three years. "I think a lot of my desire to join was wanting to prove myself.

Although he completed the then two-year officer cadet course at the Royal Military Academy, he admits he didn't like Sandhurst.

His feelings about the Army changed radically when he joined the 11th Hussars at Hohn. "I loved my regiment . . . the 11th was special because it was very relaxed," he recalls. "I remember how visiting officers were shocked at the casual salutes from soldiers that were more of a friendly wave.

Fact file

Born: Dec 14, 1946.

Service: 11th Hussars.

Books: *Crete: The Battle and the Resistance*; *Inside the British Army*; *The Spanish Civil War*; *Paris After the Liberation 1944-49* (written with his wife, Artemis Cooper); *Stalingrad*; *Berlin: The Downfall, 1945*; *Moscow Diary*.

Awards: Runciman Prize, Samuel Johnson Prize, Wolfson Prize for History, Hawthornden Prize. For *Paris After the Liberation, 1944-1949*, the French Government appointed Antony and his wife Chevaliers de L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres. *Berlin: The Downfall* was shortlisted for the British Book Awards 2003.

Other work: Contributor to the King's College, London series of seminars on Armed Forces into the 21st Century, commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council.



Expert: When it comes to Stalingrad, Moscow and Berlin, Antony Beevor knows his stuff

"Although it was a relaxed and happy regiment, the soldiers never took advantage of the informality."

He recalls one personality with particular affection. "Sgt Gormley was a fantastic character and a superb troop sergeant, a man I will never forget," he said. "We had a system where you were not allowed to take command of the troop until your troop sergeant said you were ready.

"There was no messing with Sgt Gormley – he had a black sense of

humour. I remember the great moment of pride when he finally told the squadron leader I was ready to take command."

The 11th, the first regiment to be equipped with Chieftain tanks, exercised on the nearby Hohn ranges, which prompts an anecdote about a fellow officer. "Nicholas Soames, later the Armed Forces Minister and the current Shadow Defence Secretary, joined the regiment on the same day I did," he said.

"I remember once, during a winter

Cave 'rescue'

Army captain lifts the lid on headline-grabbing Mexican expedition

Report: Graham Diggines
Pictures: Jonathan Sims,
Toby Hamnet, Steve Whitlock

RESCUE is not a word Capt Toby Hamnett likes to use in connection with his recent caving trip to Mexico.

His team may have been trapped underground for seven days by raging flood water only to be plucked to safety by expert divers flown in from England - but he still shuns the 'R' word.

In fact, while the world's media looked on with baited breath Capt Hamnett and his caving pals were happily playing whist several kilometres below ground using a deck of cards fashioned from a logbook.

The 32-year-old even laughs off the diplomatic row that erupted during the 13-man trip to explore a complex cave system five hours' car ride from Mexico City.

"A four-foot-square map of the caves was displayed on a wall in one of the bars that we drank in during the trip - that kind of knocks into a cocked hat the argument that we were mapping the area illegally," he said dismissively.

But Capt Hamnett, who serves with Army Legal Services in Warminster, does well to play down the drama of his headline-grabbing expedition.

He insists the cavers were never in danger and explains the emergency mission to extract them was planned with amazing foresight weeks before a single man set foot underground.

The trip, mounted by the Combined Services Caving Association, began according to plan with the team staging a number of forays into a massive cave complex near the idyllic Mexican town of Cuetzalan during which an unprecedented five kilometres of new passages were discovered and named by the group.

With temperatures underground a pleasant 20C and an endless string of breathtaking rock formations to marvel at, the opening stages of the expedition were marked by a shared sense of euphoria.

"More people have walked on the moon than set eyes on what we saw down there," Capt Hamnett said with a smile.

"It was an amazing sight - stunning white rock formations, breathtaking lakes, and 60ft-high caverns.

"It was quite an honour to witness the delicacy of some of the stalactites and stalagmites."

But the group's luck dramatically ran



Down below: Civilian caver Simon Cornhill and Capt Toby Hamnett take a break while exploring the Mexican cave system

out when a freak storm caused a key subterranean passage, known as a sump, to flood, trapping Capt Hamnett and five of his fellow cavers below ground.

What started out as a 48-hour descent into the bowels of the Cuetzalan cave system had developed into a ten-day drama played-out beneath the media microscope.

"When we entered the cave system the water in the 200m-long sump, which regularly floods, was ankle-deep and so wasn't a problem.

"But flooding caused the water to rise to the ceiling - if we had tried to swim out we would have been dead," Capt Hamnett explained.

"We had been told there would be a five-day window of good weather so the flooding took us totally by surprise.

"It was so bad that we initially couldn't even get back to the sump. "To do that we had to climb down an underground river we named Horror Inlet.

"It had been transformed into a torrent of white water.

"It took about 36 hours for the water of Horror Inlet to drop to a manageable level so that we could descend safely.

"By that stage, in our heart of hearts, we knew the sump would be totally flooded and our exit barred."

A less-practised group of weekend adventurers might have buckled in such a tight spot but the rising floodwater was simply a cue for the group to launch their well thought-out emergency plan.

Not only was the expedition crewed by experienced pot-holers, it included an off-duty member of RAF Mountain Rescue and was equipped with an experimental two-way radio known as the Hey-Phone, which is capable of penetrating up to one kilometre of solid rock.

"The first day of the trip we realised that the sump was the key to safety within the cave complex so we took a number of precautions.

"We built what we referred to as Camp One which took us one hour to get to from the cave mouth.

"Here we ensured there were enough provisions for a couple of weeks underground including sleeping bags, stoves, fuel and carry mats.

"At the other end of the cave system we built a similar set-up we named Deep Camp.

"We realised from the outset that if the sump flooded, or if someone was injured,



Tunnel Team: The trapped men wait for the waters to recede
Left to right: Capt Toby Hamnett (AGC) SSgt Chris Mitchell (REME)
Warrant officer Charlie Milton (RN) Maj (Ret) Jonathan Sims (RLC)
Sgt John Roe (RAF) and civilian caver Simon Cornhill

— the real story

‘More people have walked on the moon than set eyes on what we saw down there’

Sight for sore eyes: An expedition member marvels at a stalactite cluster
Below right: Cavers waded through the Cueva del Alpzat, close to the cavern entrance

we might well need the help of some expert cave divers.

“The only two divers who knew the cave system were two Brits who had explored the area previously.

“At the very start of our trip we asked them to plan a dive just in case they were needed and they, in turn, gave us instructions to lay dive lines for them to follow should the sump flood.”

The trapped men initiated their contingency plan with a series of six-hourly broadcasts on their HeyPhone and soon made contact with the expedition leader on the surface.

The next eight days were taken up with regular checks on the sump water level, sleeping, and playing games.

“Initial attempts to play board games

scratched into the cave floor were pretty frustrating because only two people could play at a time,” Capt Hamnett said.

“Then someone had the brainwave of making a pack of cards from a logbook. We played nomination whist and hearts after that.”

The saga finally ended when the two standby divers were mobilised from Britain by team leaders at the cave mouth.

The trapped men were given a crash course in scuba diving and swam to safety alongside their rescuers.

As Capt Hamnett emerged into the sunlight he was astounded at the crowd that had gathered at the cave entrance.

“We’d had been warned that there was a bit of a media circus but nothing had

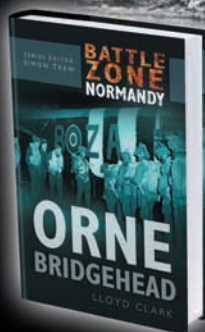


prepared us for what was waiting.

“There seemed to be a battalion of Mexican Special Forces holding back the press.

“It took me about ten minutes to decide that I’d rather be back underground.”

BATTLE ZONE NORMANDY HAS LANDED!



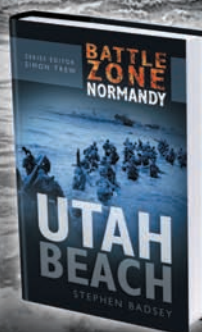
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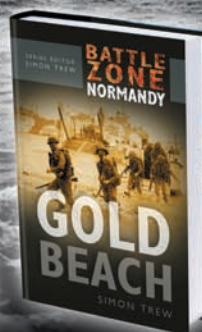
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MG range - Fuel consumption mpg (l/100km) ranges from: Urban 15.8 (17.9) - 39.2 (7.2), Extra Urban 27.2 (10.4) - 68.3 (4.1), Combined 21.5 (13.2) - 53.8 (5.2), CO₂ emissions range from 150 - 314 g/km.

Prize portfolio

Army's snappers produce a wealth of high-quality imagery



MASTER Photographer WO2 Giles Penfound, based at Media Operations HQ Land Command, has been judged Army Professional Photographer of the Year for a powerful portfolio of black-and-white pictures taken when he covered the Iraq conflict. Some of the set are shown here.

His entries for the Army Photographic Competition, the results of which were

announced as this issue of *Soldier* went to press, also included the picture used as a background on this page. He wins a silver cup and £500 for his winning portfolio.

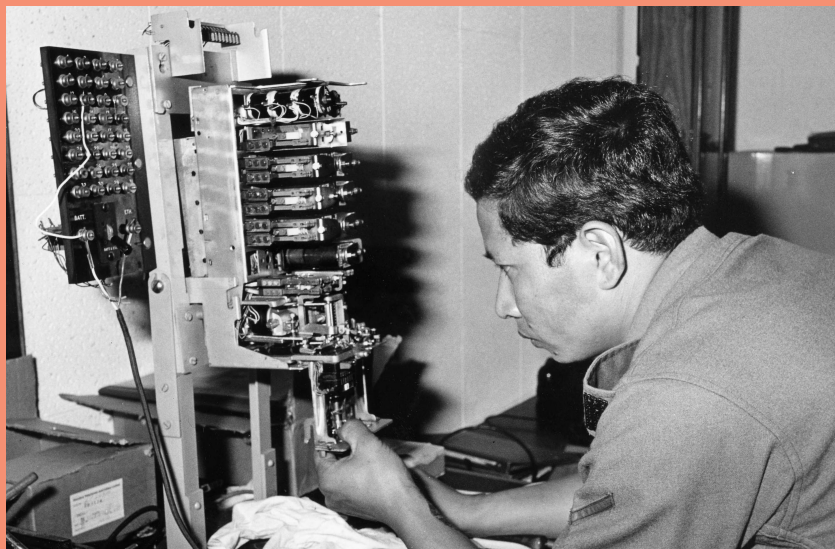
Soldier magazine photographer Graeme Main scooped three awards.

Maj Pete Griffiths, MOG(V), who helped organise the competition, said the standard of photographs was extremely

high, with more than 500 pictures entered by 70 contestants in the eight categories, netting prizes worth more than £5,000 for the winners.

Look out for more stunning pictures in next month's edition of *Soldier*. The winning entries can also be viewed online at www.army.mod.uk

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, May 1979: LCpl Narayan Tamang (above) adjusts communications equipment at the new British Forces HQ, HMS Tamar, Hong Kong. After the busiest programme undertaken by signalmen anywhere in the world The Queen's Gurkha Signals are now fully responsible for British Army communications throughout the Far East.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, May 1954: Thanks to the Army, thousands of British wives – the ex-radar operators of the Second World War – know far more about electricity and electronics than their husbands. Today in the Women's Royal Army Corps women are pioneering in technical jobs Pte Caroline Clatworthy, for example, is the Army's only woman telecommunications mechanic.

To keep my home will cost me

HAVING lived in my own property for four years I am now due to be posted 120 miles away. When applying for the posting I assumed I would get the over-37 package, as I am after all over 37, and I wish to carry on living in my property at weekends and during leave.

This package is only available to soldiers owning their own home who are married. As a single soldier I am not entitled but I am allowed a travel warrant once a month, so I can go and visit my property.



PS10(A) responds: The Over 37 Provision was introduced to give married Service individuals the opportunity to settle their family in a home in UK in preparation for their retirement. This ensures that any children starting a GCSE or A Level curriculum in the last three years of service life are not moved at a critical stage of their education. (Those choosing the over 37 provision are not entitled to Boarding School Allowance).

It also allows individuals to accept council accommodation prior to their retirement when such accommodation may not be available. There is a continuing commitment to maintain the family home, which is considered the prime residence. Therefore, they are accorded a waiver of accommodation charges.

As SSgt Cappleman does not have dependants she does not have this responsibility. She is therefore not in the same situation, therefore can hardly compare herself equal in circumstance. Her prime residence

I have served for more than 20 years. I wish to keep my property, I do not want to rent it out, I want something more than a small room to call my home. To keep my home it will cost me around £300 extra for food, accommodation and fuel.

If I were married I would not have to pay for accommodation, just food, and I'd be allowed more travel warrants.

I should have the same rights as any other soldier. – **SSgt P Cappleman, Bulford Camp.**

is considered to be the Mess where she lives.

SSgt Cappleman could have chosen to sell her present property and buy at her new duty station. She would have received Furniture and Relocation Expenses (FREs) in line with her married counterparts. She has chosen to live in the mess and because it is recognised that she is the sole maintainer of the property she is eligible to Get You Home (stability allowance) (GYH(SA)), which consists of 12 warrants a year. Married personnel who live away from their family receive a daily payment Get You Home (posted) GYH(P) to assist them make two journeys a month to the family home. They do not receive warrants. The value of each type of assistance can be debated and in some circumstances the monthly warrant has more value than the daily payment, in other circumstances it does not.

We are working with our Service colleagues to introduce one allowance to replace GYH(P), GYH(SA) and GYH(D) (detached duty).

PS...

Well done, APT

I was recently invited to attend a presentation by the Army Presentation Team on the present-day British Army. The team, ably assisted by several other soldiers and a brigadier, put on a very impressive, professional and informative show.

Given the images of Army life as portrayed to the public by media, it was refreshing to hear "from the horse's mouth", full and frank answers to the many questions from the audience.

I have always considered Britain's Armed Services to be the best in the world. This event confirmed that opinion and I am now more convinced than ever that you are putting the taxpayers' money to good use. Well done all concerned. – Ron Capes JP, Billericay, Essex.

Payback time

FURTHER to my letter about Pay 2000 follow-on work discrepancies, which *Soldier* was dealing with on my behalf, I have now received my back-payments.

I am very grateful for your help and hope that others who may have been in the same situation have also had their discrepancies rectified. Once again, thank you. – Cpl, BFG.

To be safe get it right in all environments

IN the feature on page 27 of April's *Soldier*, Lt Col Wolsey comments, "If your admin is not up to scratch in the jungle you'll get wet, bitten, miserable and uncomfortable. If you slip up in a desert environment you get dehydrated and sunburnt. Get it wrong in the Arctic and you can die – which highlights the extreme nature of the soldiering out here."

Surely experience shows if you get it wrong in the jungle or the desert you can also die. It all comes down to the soldier's personal admin and soldiering skills. These are the attributes that should see a soldier come out of an operational or exercise environment, injury free. – Cpl J P O'Keefe R Signals.

Nell says thanks

THANKS to Andy Simms for the time and effort put into the article in April's *Soldier* following our interview to promote SSAFA Forces Help and Team SSAFA. I am really pleased with it as it is one of very few articles that have actually been written with the correct facts and quotes.

I am running in the London Marathon and SSAFA is one of the four charities, which will benefit. I will let you know how much I have raised when I find out the total. – Nell McAndrew

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Medal setback

Plans for Army Office closure 'a disgrace' says Suez Canal veteran

Report: Graham Diggins

CONTROVERSIAL plans to scrap the Army Medal Office (AMO) will cause chaos and lead to large numbers of Suez veterans dying without being honoured, *Soldier* has been told.

The AMO, which has overseen the complex process of awarding Army medals for many years, will be closed in favour of a money-saving tri-Service organisation at RAF Innsworth, Gloucestershire.

A worried member of the AMO staff told *Soldier* the move, planned for March 2005, could ultimately deny ageing Suez veterans their hard-fought-for Canal Zone medals.

The staff member said: "At the moment there's an approximate backlog of ten years for the Suez medal.

"Let's face it, Suez veterans aren't getting any younger and we are involved in a race against time to get their medals out to them before they die.

"Scrapping the Army Medal Office is going to make that backlog much, much bigger and sadly a large number of people are going to miss out."

The employee said Afghanistan and Iraq medals would also be hit, adding: "We have a small but dedicated team of 55 people at our offices and they are really rather scared for their jobs.

"It seems that a lot of us are headed for the scrap heap.

"The Army Medal Office has a long history of issuing medals and all that is going to be lost. The process can be quite complex and quite frankly we have a great deal of expertise and knowledge about our records.

"A person from the Royal Navy or Royal Air Force wouldn't know where to start."

Defence minister Ivor Caplin said the "phased closure of the Army Medal Office" was part of a modernisation programme.

He added that staff had been consulted about the closure.

Mr Caplin said: "In order to provide continuity of service and to build up the necessary expertise at Innsworth the transfer of responsibilities will be phased.

"I cannot rule out a programme of early retirement and redundancy that may be



Outraged: Suez Canal veteran Charles Golder and, left, the medal he has campaigned for on behalf of his comrades for 50 years

Picture: Mike Weston

required in particular at [the Army Medal Office] in Droitwich."

A MoD spokesman said: "We hope the changes will make the operation more efficient and lead to more medals being issued quicker.

"If veterans believe they have compassionate grounds for their application to be processed quicker they should contact us."

However, Suez veterans met the news with anger.

Charles Golder, 76, who has fought for 50 years for the Suez Canal Zone Medal said: "Veterans, like me, just want to see our medals before we die and to be honest we are dropping like flies."

Mr Golder, who served with the Royal Engineers during the Suez Campaign, added: "The decision to scrap the Army Office is an absolute disgrace and I'm livid.

"During the past 50 years we have

fought successive governments for the Canal Zone Medal and now it seems we will be denied by backroom bureaucracy.

"I get letters every day from the families of Suez soldiers who have died without getting their medals and the situation is just going to get worse."

All three services currently have their own independent bodies charged with awarding medals.

The RAF and the Royal Navy employ around a dozen experts each.

But the Army boasts a 55-strong team that not only processes soldiers' medals, but also oversees the manufacture and stamping of medals for the RAF and Royal Navy.

The Army Medal Office staff member said: "The logical solution would be to make us the backbone of a new body but that suggestion has been ignored."

Seeing for themselves

Phase One trainees take time out to visit Normandy beaches

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Graeme Main

EIGHTY Phase One recruits just four weeks into their training spent a weekend in France to relive the experience of D-Day soldiers on the Normandy beaches.

Despite roaring winds and torrential rain, the young soldiers enjoyed treading in the footsteps of the heroes of 1944.

They stood on the sands of Gold Beach on the trail of hero Sgt Stan Hollis, VC and saw the Mulberry harbour at Arromanches, the German coastal defence batteries at Longues-Sur-Mer and Pointe du Hoc, and the battle sites at Omaha and Sword Beaches. They went to Pegasus Bridge and visited the Café Gondrée.

They also paid their respects at the US military cemetery at St Laurent and the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Ranville, where they held a short ceremony of remembrance.

Capt Helen Dingsdale, AGC (ETS) and 2ic HQ Sqn at ATR Winchester, who organised the trip, said: "Tours started at Winchester in 2001 and have expanded to other ATRs and are endorsed by the initial training group.

"The recruits receive some background in the classroom about the tour and are given handouts as they go."

The ATR runs three tours: Ypres, Somme and Normandy. She added: "This visit to Normandy has special significance this year with the 60th anniversary and everyone is enthusiastic despite the weather."

The recruits produce a report of the visit which contributes to their core skills certificate in communications.

They are in the expert hands of Royal British Legion guides John Ross, ex-PWRR TA, from the Department of War Studies at Kings College London and Col Mike Bradley, the Commander Regional Recruiting South Eastern Home Counties.

"I specialise in Normandy mainly because I am a Green Howard," said Col Bradley, who has been visiting the beaches for 25 years. "I get something new on every visit, particularly with ATR Winchester. Only a few weeks ago they were leaving my recruiting offices and it gives me great pleasure to see them here."

Capt Dingsdale added: "One of the reasons we do the tours is to emphasise core



Organiser: Capt Helen Dingsdale, inset, and the trainees are greeted by M Arlette Gondrée and Bill Higgs at Pegasus Bridge café

values such as loyalty, integrity, and moral and physical courage. This happens when they hear the tales of individuals like Stan Hollis and his selfless commitment. When we focus on an individual it brings it home to the recruits that it is one individual who made a difference. I think they can relate to that a lot more.

"The tour also gives them both a sense of pride in the Army and a sense of history."



Pte Matthew Cowins finds the grave of his American grandfather. Matthew's father changed his name by deed-poll

The pilot's story

FORMER Staff Sgt Bill Higgs, 84, was a glider pilot on D-Day, one of more than 60 who made the night landings near Pegasus Bridge.

Called up in 1939, he was based at a depot near Yarmouth and volunteered for the Glider Regiment in 1942.

Months of day and night training followed before a briefing where they were shown a map of the Caen Canal and Orne River.

"Six gliders were picked to land right up at Bénouville Bridge, later renamed Pegasus Bridge" he said. "Three of those

six gliders landed just a few feet from the bridge.

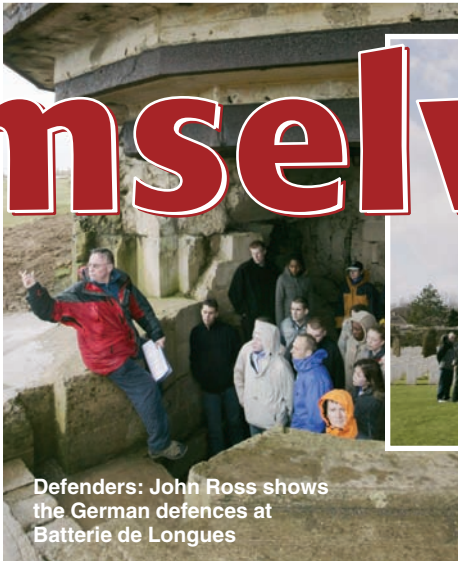
"I set off with 64 gliders and we had to arrive with guns and men to prevent the bridge from being retaken by German reinforcements based near Caen.

"We picked up some ack-ack over the coast but landed on target, and I ripped off my starboard wing hitting the stakes that had been put in the ground by the German defenders."

He had to use all his training, flying a glider in pitch darkness into a battle and with no second chance of a re-run. It took both courage and a great degree of skill.

"As soon as we landed we got everyone

mselves



Defenders: John Ross shows the German defences at Batterie de Longues



Solemn: The ATR Winchester trainees hold a short service at the Ranville cemetery



Reunited: M Gondrée and Bill Higgs



Bill Higgs describes the D-day action to the trainees from the comfort of the Cafe Gondrée, at Pegasus Bridge

out and made for Pegasus Bridge. Glider pilots were trained to fire any arms they took and I became what was called a total soldier."

After D-Day, Bill was on stand-by for a number of missions, then came Arnhem, which "really was a bridge too far".

Bill was seriously wounded and captured at Arnhem. He was held as a prisoner-of-war near Fallingbomel until it was liberated.

The Pegasus cafe girl's story

THE Cafe Gondrée stands alongside the Pegasus Bridge and was the first building in France to be liberated on D-Day.

Today it is run by M Arlette Gondrée. She was four years old in June 1944 and told the ATR Phase One recruits about her experiences.

"My parents bought this cafe in 1934 and when the invasion came we had 54 Germans in the village to guard the bridge," she explained. "We had little food or clothes and we lived in fear. Daddy hid champagne and wine in the garden so the Germans could not get it.

"My mother came from Alsace and understood German, although they didn't know that. Once she was taken away for interrogation and came back very traumatised. My father spoke English and both would pass information to the resistance.

"One night there was a tremendous noise, and my sister and I were taken to the cellar. We were petrified and after some banging on the door, Daddy came down with two monsters wearing strange clothes and with black faces and Mummy started to kiss them. I was frightened, then one gave me a piece of chocolate.

"They used our dining room as an operating theatre and Daddy let them dig up some of his precious wine.

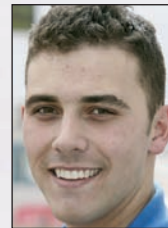
"As the soldiers have returned to this cafe over the years, my parents endeavoured to make this a home and a shrine and I have continued with this work.

"You are the next generation of soldiers and whatever missions you are going to undertake, remember that life is a wonderful thing and you appreciate it when you have suffered and you might be killed."

What the soldiers think:

Pte Ryan Richardson

(Hopes to join the RAMC). The battlefield tour has been superb; it has really made me think. You have to come and see it to understand what really went on. The cemeteries were moving and I want to do more tours.



Pte Sarah Farrell

(Hopes to join the RAMC). This tour has been an eye-opener. Pegasus Bridge was fascinating and visiting M. Gondrée was special. I have a new admiration for the soldiers and the work of the Royal British Legion



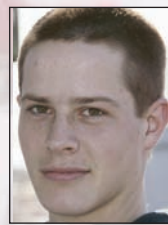
Pte Colin McCray

(Hopes to join the RAMC). You only had to visit the graveyards to see the impact the tour had on us. This visit has given me an appreciation of what these guys did.



Tpr Daniel Edwards

(Hopes to join the 9/12th Royal Lancers.) Although I read *Pegasus Bridge* by Stephen E Ambrose before I joined the Army, the part that touched me most was Gold Beach and picturing the advance by the Green Howards.



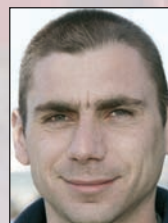
Pte Cherisse Chapman

(Hopes to join the RMP). My father was with the Green Howards and it was great to see what they did on Gold Beach. I think I will come back here in slow time and visit other areas



Pte Andy Yates

(Hopes to join the RMP). I was in the TA and served in Afghanistan, but I have got a lot out of this. The cemeteries really brought it home to me what sacrifices were made. There are no words to say thank you. M. Gondrée was a wonderful character and I could have stayed there all day.



Don't miss the special D-Day section in our June issue

● D-Day books Pages 76, 77 this edition

Every one a hero

Veterans of the Burma campaign recall some of their experiences

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

BANBURY in Oxfordshire is an unassuming town. It is just like many others in the south Midlands.

And like many others, it is home to a branch of the Burma Star Association, which aims to provide welfare aid, financial advice or support to all people who hold the Burma Star and are in need.

The Banbury branch is typical. It started 20 years ago with 160 members. But time, the great leveller, has witnessed that number fall to 59 with 20 active members. Every one of them, those who have gone and those who are left, is a hero. They endured unbelievable hardship in a campaign that many of today's children have never heard of.

Five of them came forward to speak to *Soldier* and recall their experiences fighting the Japanese in the deadly jungles of Burma.

Former Sgt Alan Orchard, 77, ex-Royal Engineers
How did you arrive in Burma?

"I was 18 and went to Burma in January 1945. The landing strip at Minyang had British troops on one side and Japanese on the other. We landed in the middle. The pilot wouldn't stop and we had to jump out of a moving aircraft."

What about moving around the country?

"On one occasion on a train going to the front we went in the wrong direction. The Japanese had sneaked up during the night, uncoupled us from the engine and we rolled away."

"Another time the train was going much too fast and jumped the rails on a bend but we were saved because the heavy monsoon rains had built up silt alongside

the railway track which acted as a brake."

Was fresh water a problem?

"It was interesting. You'd fill the bottle with any water you could get and put in a purification tablet. It tasted so bad you'd put in another and a salt tablet, then you would drink it. It was always lukewarm."

Could you keep in contact with home?

"I went six months without a letter from home. We were in the Chinese Embassy in Rangoon when I received a bundle of mail, but it was dusk and after all those months I had to wait until the following morning to read them."



Maj Hugh Spottiswoode, 83, ex-Royal Hampshire Regt, later 19 Indian Division

Did you have any military experience before Burma?

"I was defending the coast of Kent one night in midwinter and a plane flew over. I fired a Bren gun but never hit it, which was just as well because I was told afterwards it was a Blenheim.

"A few days later I was sent on an aircraft recognition course."

How did you arrive in Burma?

"I was posted to India in 1942 into the Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC) and later joined 124 RIASC in the 19th Indian Division with whom I served until 1946.

"After combat training in January 1944 it was off to Burma but the hard work had already been done by others."

Was military discipline tough?

"We relied on supplies by airdrop. On one occasion a field security sergeant put one of my drivers under close arrest for 'stealing His Majesty's sugar'. The sugar had been dropped in a sack with no chute and the sack burst. The driver loaded the bulk of the sugar in his truck, but scooped spilt sugar from the ground into his handkerchief and put it in the glove box. That was why he was arrested. He got a year's rigorous imprisonment."

Transport moves must have been difficult and dangerous.

"The lorries in my company travelled a combined total of more than one million miles and it was only on the last convoy when the war was over that we rolled a vehicle and the driver was killed."

Former Sig Doug Hardy, 84, ex-2nd Dorsetshire Regt

How did you arrive in Burma?

"After jungle training in southern India in 1944, I spent two weeks in hospital with malaria before moving to Dimapur in Assam.

"The Japanese were just a few miles from the Indian border and we were sent to Kohima and there was an awful battle. 83 lads from my unit were killed."

Were conditions bad?

"As bad as the First World War. With



'We heard that a secret weapon was dropped on Japan and the war was over'

the monsoons, we were up to our knees in mud and a lot of fellows went down with malaria and dysentery. Death was all around us. I could be walking along the road and see someone lying in a ditch who I was with the day before. You got hardened to it otherwise you would have gone mad."

Were snipers a problem?

"I had two very good mates who were in a trench when the RAF dropped supplies. One of the containers got snagged on a tree and Jap snipers killed them as they tried to get to it.

"On another occasion one Japanese soldier had dug a hole 20 feet back from the top of a cliff which itself was about 20 feet high. He then tunnelled so he faced the Irrawaddy River. He held up half the regiment for two days with his sniping. A British chap on routine patrol discovered his hiding place."

Were the Japanese soldiers as fierce as their reputation suggests?

"They were fanatics. On one occasion a ladder appeared at a signal post on top of a cliff. Japanese soldiers appeared one-by-one and were just picked off. But they kept

coming."

Were there any lighter moments?

"I was a signaller and on one occasion I was told to go plug my headset into one of the lines running along the road to find out what was going on. When I got back the officer asked what I'd discovered. I didn't know. It was all in Japanese."

How long were you away from home?

"I was overseas from March 1942 until late 1945, three-and-a-half years."

Former Pte Lesley Legerton, 87, ex-7th Battalion, The Worcestershire Regiment

How did you arrive in Burma?

"After training in Bombay we arrived at Dimapur where we could see all of the parachutes that had been dropped to keep the Royal West Kents supplied."

Did you have any close shaves with the enemy?

"On one occasion in the jungle I heard some chickens and I thought I'd have one and went towards the sound. It wasn't chickens at all, but Japanese soldiers. They nearly caught me.

"And there was always the danger of Japanese snipers who would tie themselves up trees."



What was the food like?

"We lived on ration packs, usually tins of beef or mutton, and bars of chocolate. We ate whatever we were given."

Was the jungle tough?

"It was hard. In a place nicknamed Death Valley there were huge mosquitoes and biting flies."

Former Cpl John Giddings, 81, ex-RAF

As non-flight crew, could you expect to be a long way from the front?

"I was posted to Air HQ in Singapore but that fell before I arrived so was redirected to India and eventually joined 17 Fighter Squadron who flew Hurricanes.

"They had been chased out of Burma from Rangoon, linked up with the Fighting Tigers in China and reformed in Calcutta.

"I volunteered to become a dispatcher dropping supplies to the Royal West Kents at Kohima from a Dakota.

"In October 1944 the squadron moved to Imphal and then followed the Army all the way down flying Spitfires from rough airstrips."

So you moved closer and closer to the front?

"Along with another RAF engineer and a convoy of Army trucks I was sent to the air strip at Meiktila where I spent a rough ten days. Twice we lost the strip and twice the Army won it back so our Spitfires could come in. Eventually we were relieved and enjoyed a similar situation at Toungoo.

How did you hear the war was over?

"I was on a convoy bound for Singapore where I was to set up a radio station to get our Spitfires in. We were told our life expectation was 30 minutes.

"Before we reached it we heard that a secret weapon was dropped on Japan and the war was over."





Picture: John Gichigi/ALLSPORT

Close call: Reigning champ Steve Collins, left, forces back Cornelius Carr during their WBO super middleweight title fight at The Point in Dublin

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

ATHLETICS: Army half marathon championships, men's individual – 1, Sig Hagi Chepkwony (21 Sig Regt); 2, Pte Michael Sanchez (Royal Gibraltar Regiment); 3, Capt Tim Crossland (8 Inf Bde HQ). **Men's team standings** – 1, 21 Sig Regt (Sig Chephowny, Cpl Ian Smith, SSgt John Castle); 2, 25 Trg Spt Regt RLC (Mr Steve Weeman, WO1 Tony Arnell, Maj Steve Lonnen); 3, ASPT (Cpl Mark Campbell, WO2 Chris Howard, Sgt Mark Greenwood). **Women's individual** – 1, WO2 Sue Sharp (DMRC); 2, LCpl Erica Sheldon; 3, Capt Lindsay Courage (21 Sig Regt). **Women's team standings** – 1, RMAS (Maj Fiona King, Capt Ele Roynance, OCdt Anna Swales); 2, 25 Trg Spt Regt RLC (Cpl Beverley Robinson, Cpl Mandy Kirkpartick, Cpl Jackie Barlow); 3, ATR Pirbright (Bdr Sian Morgan, Lt Charlotte Argent, Bdr Helen Rider).

Inter-Services half marathon championships, men's individual – 1, Sig Chepkwony (Army); 2, Cpl Mark Croasedale (Royal Navy); 3, Pte Sanchez (Army). **Veteran's individual** – 1, WO2 Steve Payne (RN); 2, Lt Col Rob Herring (Army); 3, Capt Mark Gamble-Thompson (Army). **Women's individual** – 1, DSA Kelly Wharton (RN); 2, WO2 Sue Sharp (Army); 3, Cpl Erica Sheldon (Army).

MARTIAL ARTS: Army open champi-

onships, weapon's kata – 1, Capt Russ Kenyon (REME); 2, Spr Taitex Phlamachha (QGE); 3, LCpl Edward Wolfe (RE). **Kendo** – 1, Spr David Fisk (RE); 2, Col David Hopwood; 3, LCpl Bishnu Gurung (QG Signals).

Karate, junior kata – 1, Cpl Jitendra Shakya (RGR); 2, WO2 Antony Dickson (RA); 3, Maj Martin Chohan (RLC). **Junior kumite** – 1, Cpl Shakya; 2, SSgt Wiggins (RE); 3, Maj Chohan. **Senior kata** – 1, Spr Fisk; 2, WO1 Terry Stevens (REME); Capt Kenyon. **Senior kumite** – 1, Spr Simmons (RE); 2, Spr Fisk; 3, WO1 Stevens.

Taekwondo, junior joint patterns – 1, Rfn Nambahadur Gurung (RGR) and Rfn Jopindra Thapa (RGR); 3, Spr McNairn (RE). **Senior joint patterns** – 1, Capt Steve Brearton (REME); 2, WO2 Wayne Sibthorpe (APTC); 3, LCpl Gurung. **ITF junior sparring (10th–8th kup)** – 1, Sig Jamie Emmett (R Signals); 2, Spr McNairn; 3, LCpl Daniel Robinson (RE). **Junior sparring (7th–4th kup)** – 1, Spr Gaynor (RE); 2, Spr Robert Lander (RE); Spr Bennett (RE). **Senior sparring** – 1, WO2 Sibthorpe; 2, Capt Brearton; 3, LCpl Kevern Quinlan (RE). **Women's sparring** – 1, Gnr Hayley Bennett (RA); 2, Spr Lindsay McCann (RE); 3, Cpl Cerianne Chew (AGC). **Team sparring** – 1, 26 Engr Regt A; 2, 1 RSME A; Joint 3, 26

Engr Regt A and 1 RSME B. **WTF junior sparring (lightweight)** – 1, Rfn Kanaya (RGR); 2, Rfn Raju Thapa (RGR); 3, LCpl Wolfe. **Junior sparring (heavyweight)** – 1, Rfn Jagprasad Jugjali (RGR); 2, Rfn Gobindra Gurung (RGR); 3, Cpl Coyle (RGBW). **Senior sparring (lightweight)** – 1, Rfn Thapa; 2, Spr Irvin (RE); 3, Rfn Lil Roka (RGR). **Senior sparring (heavyweight)** – 1, Capt Brearton; 2, Pte Racule (BW).

REAL TENNIS & RACKETS: Army tennis championships, singles final – Lt Christian Barker (R Signals) beat Maj Andrew James (Gren Gds) 9-7. **Regimental doubles** – Lt Barker & Sig Daniel Lewis (R Signals) beat Maj James & Maj Michael O'Dwyer (Brigade of Guards) 14-8. **Combined Services (past and present) doubles** – Jonathan English & Michael Hough beat Maj James & Maj Johnny Wheeler (Household Division) 10-7. **Army rackets championships, singles final** – Lt Ollie Craven (RN) beat Lt Barker 8-15, 15-9, 3-15, 15-11, 15-11. **Regimental doubles** – Maj Max Lytle & Maj Paul Tennant (AAC) beat Lt Barker & Sig Lewis (R Signals) 7-15, 10-15, 15-8, 15-10, 15-9. **Combined Services (past and present) doubles** – Mark Nicholls & OCdt Richard Palmer (RMAS) beat Paul Nicholls & Tom Pugh 16-13, 15-4, 9-15, 15-6.

Living ambition

Former king of the ring wants to return to boxing with the British Army

Interview: Andy Simms

HAVING traded blows with Steve Collins and sparred with Chris Eubank, former world middleweight champion Cornelius Carr knows a thing or two about the fight game.

Forced to hang up his gloves and relinquish his world crown in 2001 because of a niggling hand injury, the Middlesbrough-born pugilist is keen to pass on the knowledge he gleaned from a professional boxing career that spanned more than 14 years, and has revealed that he would relish the opportunity to coach and train Army fighters.

"Apart from one bout against a soldier before turning pro, I've never had any dealings with the British Army, but I do know that they have always been a force in the ABA national championships and helped to produce a world champion in Nigel Benn," he said. "To be a top amateur you need help and support – you can't live on fresh air – and the Army gives its boxers that stability."

"I'm sure there are loads of young lads in the Army who are interested in the sport. They may never make it as a top amateur or pro, but they're enthusiastic about giving it a go, and that's the kind of person I want to work with."

His credentials for a second career as a coach speak for themselves. Introduced to the ring at the age of 11 after being spotted brawling in the street by trainer Marty Turner, Carr attracted the attentions of British boxing's top promoters when he reached the finals of the senior ABA championships and won a multi-nations gold for England as a 17-year-old.

Frank Warren eventually won the race for his signature in 1987 and launched the Teessider's professional career in a middleweight division already boasting the talents of Benn, Eubank, Collins, Michael Watson, Gerald McClellan and Henry Wharton, to name a few.

Now 35, Carr told *Soldier*: "I knew from an early age that I could make a living out of boxing and my goal was to become a British champion and build from there."

"Over the years there have been some great fighters who failed to win a British



Former WBF champ: Cornelius Carr Picture: Graeme Main

title so I always kept my expectations in check."

With so many big names vying for bouts and belts, Carr had to wait until 1994 before being granted his shot at a British title – a showdown with the much-fancied James Cook, who had already beaten Michael Watson and went on to become a European champion. Stepping up to super middleweight for the contest, Carr put his opponent and pre-fight favourite onto the canvas in the tenth before going on to record the first points victory of his career.

Ownership of the British belt established the gritty box-fighter as a serious contender for a world title and on November 25, 1995, he stepped into the squared-circle with Steve Collins and came close to relieving the Celtic Warrior of his WBO crown.

"I was only given five weeks to prepare for the Collins' fight – the biggest fight of my life – and had to bulk back up to super middleweight," explained Carr, who never lost a professional bout as a mid-

dleweight. "It was a very close fight and I genuinely believe that with a little bit more experience I would have beaten him."

"Steve and I never spoke after the fight, I was gutted after losing and was contemplating retiring, and, if I'm honest, I didn't have much time for the guy anyway – I found him arrogant."

"However, we met years later at the film premiere of *The Boxer* and he introduced me to his wife as the guy who nearly took away their house in one of the hardest fights of his career. It was a real compliment to be remembered by a great champion for the right reasons."

While Collins went on to fight both Benn and Eubank for multi-million-pound purses, Carr had to wait five years before being given the opportunity to exorcise the ghost of losing a world title contest. In 2000 he took on Commonwealth champion Steve "The Viking" Foster and, ignoring a cut eye and constant goading from his opponent, won the vacant WBF middleweight title courtesy of a unanimous points decision.

Sadly Carr's next bout on April 10, 2001 – a successful title defence against the durable South African Dingaan Thobela, who prepared for the fight by voluntarily signing himself into a tough Soweto jail – was to be his last as champion.

Having signed a six-fight deal with the BBC and with possible unification bouts on the table, Carr was on his way to becoming a household name when he tore the tendons from the metacarpals in his right hand during a training session.

"I simply could no longer throw my right hand and it quickly dawned on me that my career was over," Carr told *Soldier*. "The hand still hurts today and there's no chance of me making a comeback."

"But I've been involved in boxing for more than 20 years and want to stick with what I know and enjoy. I genuinely believe that I have a lot to offer as a trainer and who knows, I might be able to help discover the next Nigel Benn."

♦ Any individuals, units or boxing teams interested in speaking with Cornelius Carr should contact *Soldier's* sports desk on 01252 347362.

'The British Army helped to produce a world champion in Nigel Benn'

'I've been in boxing for 20 years and want to stick with what I know'

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Picture: Graeme Main

Tale of the title: Pte Chris Pacey, left, progressed to the later stages of the ABAs with a win over Adam Lancey in the Inter-Services championships

Army's pacesetter

Maida Gym produces new national champ

INTER-Services lightweight champion Pte Chris Pacey (RLC) became the latest in a long line of Army boxers to win a national title when he beat Olympic hopeful Michael Grant in the finals of the Senior English ABA Championships at the Wembley Conference Centre, **writes Alex Narey.**

Despite the gulf in experience between the pair, Pacey never looked troubled by the Haringey Police England international and secured his first ABA crown with a narrow points victory.

Army boxing coach Sgt Chris Bessey (RLC), himself a winner at national level six times, said: "Chris boxed out of his skin, but he had to as he was up against a seasoned international campaigner in Michael Grant.

"His work-rate was phenomenal and although the judges' scores were even

going into the last round, I actually felt that he deserved to be ahead on points throughout."

Unfortunately, Pacey's run of good fortune did not extend to the British Four Nations Championships at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall, where he was handed the toughest possible first-round draw in the form of Scottish captain Mark Hastie.

Once again faced with a more experienced opponent, Pacey battled through four gruelling rounds before eventually losing a 27-15 points decision to the Scots' skipper.

Hastie, who has almost 50 international caps to his name and is Scotland's big hope for Olympic qualification, went on to beat Welshman Peter Ashton and win gold.

However, Pacey did not return south of the border empty-handed after being presented with a bronze medal at the final bell of the third- and fourth-place box-off following a bizarre overturn of the referee's decision.

The man in the middle originally gave a tight decision against Pacey, only for the

official in charge to step in and award the bout the other way because of the persistent fouling of the soldier's Irish opponent.

Also given the chance to show his class on the international stage was Pacey's Army teammate Pte Steven Briggs (1 PWO), who received an eleventh-hour call-up to the England squad after his ABA victor Martin Murray withdrew from the competition.

Boxing at welterweight, Briggs was drawn against Ireland's Jamie Moore – the 2001 World Championship bronze medallist.

Floored by a telling body shot in round three, Briggs recovered well enough to take Moore to points but could do little to turn the score in his favour. There were no such problems in his third- and fourth-place box-off with Wales' Aaron Thomas – a bout he won convincingly to take bronze.

◆ 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets' boxing team were declared major unit novice champions after it was discovered that fellow finalists 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment had fielded an ineligible fighter.

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ig Julia Cartwright (21 Signal Regiment) is being hotly-tipped to emulate one day the successes of three-time World Cup champion Alex Coomber

o 39 Regt RA]

AS the self-proclaimed "old man winter" of Great Britain's skeleton squad, Sgt Jack Baldwin is at ease with the knowledge that he will not be selected to slide at the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin.

Despite only making his ice sports debut – the result of a mess bet – in 1999 as a 33-year-old, Baldwin has enjoyed an expeditious rise through skeleton's ranks and has now represented Great Britain on the Europa Cup circuit for the past two seasons. However, now 39, the veteran athlete concedes that it will, and should, be the sport's future stars who are given the opportunity to shine on the world stage in two years' time.

"I fully accept that I will never become an Olympian at my age," explained Baldwin, who finished fifth at this year's British championships and second behind only LCpl Stu Hayden (17 Port

and Maritime) at the Army skeleton championships in Lillehammer.

"Even though my push-starts are still improving and in terms of fitness and determination I'm still up there, I don't expect to be given the same opportunities as the younger athletes.

"The reality of the situation is that representing Great Britain on the Europa Cup is my ceiling, but one that I am immensely proud to have reached."

While the chance to compete at the very highest level may have escaped him, Baldwin insists that he is not yet ready to contemplate his retirement from the sport.

"Skeleton takes you through a whole

spectrum of emotions, from standing at a bob-start feeling terrified and wanting to be anywhere but on the ice, through to

the huge adrenalin-rush of going down the track. When you get a clean run the natural high is like nothing else I have experienced.

"I have now been part of the Army's novice coaching team for two years and have found it equally rewarding to see newcomers going through the same emotions as I once did and emerging as competent sliders.

"Helping people like Sig Julia Cartwright (21 Sig Regt) come through the system is what I call real job satisfaction."



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SHORTS

Squad changes

THE Army Football Association is set to make wholesale changes to its coaching and backroom staff this summer.

As a result of the impending reshuffle, personnel are required for the following vacancies: Army senior team coach (level 3 coaching certificate required); Army women's football team secretary; Army women's football team admin NCO; and Army youth football team assistant coach (level 3 coaching certificate required).

Applications for the posts should be sent in writing to: The Army Football Association, ASCB, Clayton Barracks, Aldershot GU11 2BG. Closing date for applications is June 1.

Angling for competitors

OPEN to all soldiers, dependants and civilian employees of the Army, this year's British Army Carp Classic will be held in France from June 26 to July 3.

Entry to the competition costs £150 and interested anglers should contact WO2 Tim Gray on 07813 965712 or by e-mail at tjgray24713575@hotmail.com

Fighting for a good cause

THE Army Training Regiment at Sir John Moore Barracks, Winchester, hosted a charity boxing gala that raised more than £30,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund and the British Forces Foundation.

Former world champion John Conteh was among the 200 guests who watched the Army boxing team beat the Scottish national team 6-4.

Rugby league recruits

LEEDS Rhinos' under-18 and under-21 teams were put through their paces by members of the Light Infantry Recruiting Team at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick. The young rugby league stars underwent a fitness assessment and completed a gruelling obstacle course during the intense two-day programme.

Military milestone

TO mark the 50th anniversary of Roger Bannister's sub four-minute mile, an Army veterans' mile will be run at the Army individual athletics championships on June 9. Anyone over 35 who is interested in competing in the event, which will be held at either Aldershot or Tidworth, should contact the Army Athletics Association on mil 94222 3575.

Celebrities on the ball

AS *Soldier* went to press a team of television stars and former first division footballers were preparing to take on the Royal Air Force in a charity match at Brighton's Withdean Stadium on May 2 to raise funds for St Dunstan's.

Service rivals

Army basketball celebrates treble



Sporting all-rounder: LCpl Kelly Morgan (AGC)

IMPROVING on last season's double, the Army won all three trophies on offer at this year's Inter-Services basketball championships at HMS *Drake*, Plymouth.

The Army's under-23 side set the winning precedent, successfully retaining their 2003 crown with a resounding 96-52 victory over their Royal Air Force counterparts and a 71-61 win against the Royal Navy.

In a winner-takes-all women's match, the Army doubled their trophy count by overthrowing reigning champions the RAF. Despite falling behind to an early flurry of air-force baskets, the Army, who boasted British javelin record holder and Inter-Services netballer LCpl Kelly Morgan (AGC) in their line-up, finished 65-53 winners.

Under the watchful eye of player-coach and former Thames Valley Tiger star Sgt Carl Black (REME), the Army senior men's team completed the whitewash.

Skippered by 22-year-old Pte Clayton Milner (RLC), the Army beat the RAF by ten clear points before securing the hat-trick of silverware with a 85-72 win over the Navy.

Thumping win puts Ro

Report: Roger Thompson

THE reigning holders of the Babcock-sponsored Inter-Services rugby championship trophy hammered in a statement of intent ahead of their decisive showdown with the Royal Navy at Twickenham this month.

On a rain-swamped Newbury pitch, the Reds recorded a comprehensive 46-6 victory over the Royal Air Force.

In what proved to be a challenging first half, the referee was justifiably tough on crime and even tougher on the potential causes of crime. A series of penalties worked to the airman's advantage preventing the Army from developing an expansive game.

However, the Army scored two good tries through Cpl Bruno Green (RE) and man-of-the-match LCpl Georgie Kemble (RWF), and in the second half started to exert true influence at the point of contact.

The ball-carrying wallop of Pte Apolosi Satala (IRS) and Hldr Isoa Damudamu (Hldr) injected powerful direction into the attacks and only heroic individual efforts by the RAF prevented the light blue pack crumbling completely.

The arrival of LCpl Chris Budgen (RWF)

certainly added "snap and crackle" in the rucks and mauls, but mistakes around the hinge prevented delivery of the expected "pop".

In the second half the Army started to pour over and through the crumbling ramparts of the light blue defences.

Budgen, LCpl Darren Ball (RE) and LBdr Andy Dawling (7RHA) clattered forward to gain many yards, but only at the expense of skipper Cpl Mal Roberts (RLC), Cpl Bruno Green and Pte Saula Roko (RGBW). The attack force was poised with more open space than the Russian Steppes.

The final 20 minutes saw some excellent Army rugby with forwards and backs orchestrating excellent tries for Roberts, Dawling, Ball and Budgen. By this time LSgt Chris Scarf (WG), Sig Phil Littlehales (R Signals) and Cfn Daryl Slade Jones (REME) had come on to win their first caps – each doing so with distinction.

After the final whistle Army coach Lt Col Andy Hickling (R Signals) said: "The job has been done and we can now concentrate on Twickenham.

"We are almost ready and just need to do a bit of fine-tuning to counteract the Navy's expected strengths."

slam-dunked



Captain marvel: Army player-coach Sgt Carl Black (REME), right, on the attack against the RAF

Royal Navy on red alert



Picture: Mike Weston

Pacesetter: Cpl Bruno Green (RE) opens the Army's scoring against the Royal Air Force

SHORTS

Ping-pong player?

SOLDIERS interested in playing table tennis at unit, Army or Inter-Services level should contact the chairman of the Army Table Tennis Association, Maj Bob Meldrum, on mil 94641 8664.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to May . . .

ATHLETICS: 5 – 2 Div championships (Catterick); 13 – London district championships (Battersea); 26 – Army sprint triathlon championships (ATR Basingstoke), HQ NI championships (Lisburn), 5 Div championships (Tidworth); 4 Div championships (TBC); 26-27 – BF(G) championships (Sennelager).

BASKETBALL: 7-9 – Founders Cup semi-final/final (Bushfield Sports Centre, Peterborough).

CLIMBING: 13-14 – Army championships (WICC).

CRICKET: 5-7 – Army men's festival (Dummer); 14-15 – Army women's festival (Dummer/Aldershot); 20 – Army v Sussex 2nd XI (Aldershot); 22 – RMAS v Army U25 (Sandhurst); 23 – Army v Free Foresters (Aldershot); 25 – Army U25 v Isle of Wight (Aldershot); 26 – Army U25 v Stragglers of Asia (Aldershot); 28 – Army v Stock Exchange (Aldershot); 30 – Army women v Hampshire women (Aldershot).

EQUITATION: 2 – Clear round cross-country (Warminster Saddle Club); 10-15 – Show jumping course (Warminster Saddle Club); 16 – Dressage and summer show (Warminster Saddle Club); 24-28 – Novice course (Warminster Saddle Club); 26 – 14 Regt RA point-to-point (Larkhill).

FENCING: 8 – Metropolitan Police invitation epee (TBC).

FOOTBALL: 6 – Army six-a-side championships (Aldershot); 7 – R Signals v AGC, AMS v RE; 10 – RE v R Signals, RA v REME; 12 – RE v REME, RA v R Signals; 14 – RE v RA, R Signals v REME.

MARTIAL ARTS: 13-14 – Army squad selection (Aldershot).

REAL TENNIS: 9 – Seacourt v Army (Hayling Island).

RUGBY LEAGUE: 22 – Swansea Bulls v Army U23s (Swansea); 26 – Army nines competition (Bordon).

RUGBY UNION: 1 – Army v RN (Twickenham), Army veterans v RN (Kneller Hall); 4-10 – Army veterans tour (Benidorm); 12 – Army Sevens finals (Aldershot).

SHOOTING: 1-3 – English Open (Bisley); 13 – Inter-corps target rifle match (Bisley).

TABLE TENNIS: 5-6 – Inter-Services championships (Aldershot).

TUG OF WAR: 1 – Jack Smith Memorial (Newbury).

WINDSURFING: 12-14 – Forces open championships (Hayling Island).

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

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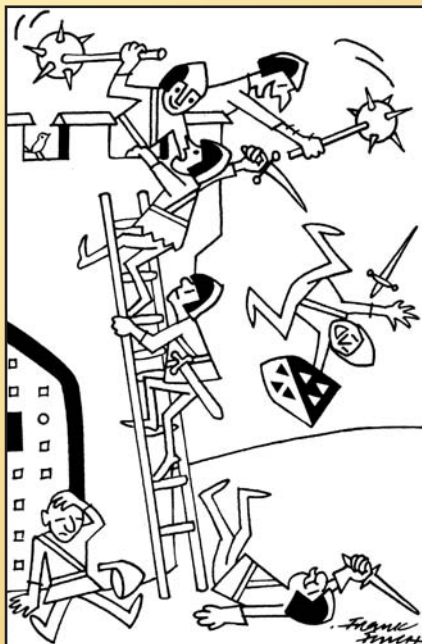
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No 750

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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 750, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by June 1, 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 July issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

March competition (No 748): First correct entry drawn at random was from Mr K C Sharp, of Breaston, Derbyshire, who wins £100. Runners-up Mrs V Bowyer, of Solihull, W Midlands, and Mr P Springham, of Swindon, Wilts, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: snowflake, left; dog's tooth; shadow under dog; sausage to right of dog; sausage being sold; pattern around base of hotplate; wheel hub; soldier's right heel; rolls; cap badge.



Freeze frame



WINNER of the March competition, above, is **Capt Bryan Smith**, of D Det, 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital (Volunteers), Birmingham, with "That sandstorm may scupper our chances of a well-deserved win, old boy."

Imaginations ran riot – another entry that caught the eye was "The officers contemplated how to get the best use of their new delivery of Arctic combats in Cyprus", from SSgt G E McLorie, Medical Branch, HQ 5th Division, who also suggested "Porton Down subjects were forced to

play by themselves again".

P A Clarke, of Wokingham, Berks, came up with "To the uninitiated the chairs looked empty but it was the sniper platoon that had been tasked with guarding the Army Cricket Cup", while for WO1 (SMI) S Horridge APTC, of HQ UKSC(G) the picture took on a whole new dimension with "The new wide-screen TV went down a treat in the officers' mess".

A touch of irony came from Graham Harris, MoD Civilian Staff, 11 Royal Signal Regt, Blandford – "The Brigadier's been in for hours – can't understand why nobody's got his wicket" and, finally, Mr D Gibbs, of Trowbridge, offered "The standard of the chefs' annual drill competition definitely seemed to be slipping", adding in his letter: "Making a chef do drill is just not cricket!"



"Private Snellgrove always wanted to give up smoking but never thought it would happen so soon."

Write a caption for the photograph, above, published in *Soldier* in October 1952.

The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection.

Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by June 1.

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Sue, (39), 5'4", medium build with olive complexion. Enjoys DIY, the cinema, gardening, meals out and pubs. Seeking pen pals with GSOH, but not married or engaged men, 40+. P086

Carrie, (42), curvy blonde. Enjoys nights out, music, pubs, travel and socialising. Divorced no children and works within the media. Seeking pen pals, 38+. P087

Linda, (36), 5'6", brown hair and green eyes. Enjoys the gym, eating out, pubs, clubs and having lots of laughs and fun. Seeking single, honest soldier pen pals with GSOH, any age. P088

Christine, (21), 5'5", beauty therapist with long brown/black hair. Enjoys going out and rugby (only watching). Seeking pen pals, any age group. P089

Samantha, (33), 5'2". Enjoys keeping fit, reading, watching footy, going out and having a good time. Would like to write to anyone who is interested, any age group. P090

Evelyn, (39), 5'2", medium build with dark brown hair. Pretty female, extremely young looking for genuine pen pals that enjoy writing, the cinema and socialising, 30-45. P091

Jenni, (41), 5'7", teacher. Enjoys reading, walking, the theatre, music, history and gardening. Would like to correspond with someone around the same age who is friendly, honest and genuine. P092

Sam, (35), pint sized, dark, pretty and curvaceous. Enjoys football (a girlie who likes football), the cinema, dance, cuddles, eating out and loves to laugh. Come on write to me, in the words of Del Boy, you know it makes sense, 27-45. P093

Donna, (31), 5'8", long brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys night in or out, the cinema and socialising. A single parent, seeking pen pals, 28-45. P094

Carol, 5'7". Enjoys reading, pubs, travelling, the cinema and theatre. Honest, romantic and kind seeking pen pals, 37+. P096

Paula, (40), 5' cuddly lady with brown eyes and short highlighted hair. Enjoys reading, socialising, walking her dog and chatting. Single working mum with two children, one about to leave school so lots of time on her own. Nice lady who would like to meet a nice guy. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P097

Andrea, (32), 5'7", attractive single mum. Enjoys reading, music, films, nights out and having a laugh. Wishes to correspond with someone in the Forces for light hearted chats and a good laugh. Want to know more? Why not drop me a line and find out. P098

Stacey, (37), 5'8", short blonde hair, slim build and single. Enjoys music, travel, eating out, swimming, exercising and enjoying herself. GSOH, honest and romantic seeking pen pals, 37-40. P099

Bubbly, independent 35-year-old brunette seeks writing pal. Must have sense of humour. Enjoys music, live gigs, festivals, socialising, reading, cooking and more music. P100

Donna, (38), 5', brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys reading, music and meeting people. Looking for a sincere gentleman in the Army for friendship, maybe more, must like children, 31-45. P101

Steve, 5'7", slim/medium athletic build. Enjoys outdoor pastimes, sports (playing/watching), travel and driving. Seeking ladies (28-38) to help with my spare time. P102

Sue, (40), 5'3", petite, dark hair and blue eyes. Enjoys literature, the arts, music, travelling, history and DIY. A wacky sense of humour and looking for a non-smoker male 'serviceman pen pal, 35-50. P103

Diane, a young 38-year-old, divorced, slim blonde 5'5". No children, just a dog and a cat. No ties, a good job, own home and a sporty motor. Enjoys writing letters, shopping, pubs, meals out, the cinema, astrology, eBay and taking her dog for a walk. Seeking genuine single guys with GSOH to make her laugh, 33-46. P104

Meg, (19), 5'2" with long dark hair. Enjoys keep fit, walking, the cinema, music, animals and socialising. Looking for single soldier pen pals, 21-26. P105

Jacque, (35), 5'2", medium build with brown hair and hazel eyes. Enjoys nights out, quiet nights in and watching rugby league. GSOH and all letters received will be answered, any age group. P106

Kimberley, 5'6", medium build with brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys nights out, quiet nights in, going for walks, singing and dancing. Done modelling and TV extra work and will answer all letters received, any age group. P107

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20 March 2004

6-way tie for 1st Place (22 Goals, £2,750.00 each): Sgt SP Dodman 7 Air Assault Bn REME, Ipswich; Cpl MR Hutchison ATR Basingbourn, Royston; Cpl B McClean Depot R Irish, BFPO 808; LCpl TL McDonagh ATR Basingbourn, Royston; SSgt PR Roberts DPA HQ, Abbey Wood; Brig RMMcQ Sykes DGCC Management Unit, London 29-way tie for 7th Place (21 Goals,

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27 March 2004

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Franks 2 RTR, BFPO 38; SSgt PS Smith 26 Engr Regt, Ludgershall; LCpl J Wainiqolo 3 CS Regt RLC, Abingdon. 11-way tie for 5th Place (22 Goals, £390.91 each): Maj MJ Broomhead 5 Regt AAC, BFPO 808; Cpl IA Cameron SEME, Bordon; SSGT PA Cantrill HQ Episkopi, BFPO 53; LCpl M Carty 1 KORBR, North Luffenham; Capt MA Charles 517 STRE (BP), Chilwell; Maj S Gartland WDSU & HQ Winchester, Winchester; Sgt GJ Goodall 30 Sig Regt, Bramcote; Maj CP Groves DGES (L) D Tech 2, DLO Andover; CSgt CM Henley-Hunter BATUS Main, BFPO 14; SSgt W Morris BOWTAG(S), Bulford; Pte J Ravueta 1 BW, BFPO 38.

03 April 2004

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Beds & Herts Regt Assn of the Royal Anglian Regiment: Reunion dinner/dance in Hertford on May 15. Contact johnbaggaridge@yahoo.com or tel 01234 294853.

CORRECTION

Italy Star Association 1943-45: Events to be held on May 16 (not May 6 as previously published). **Chichester Cathedral service** in presence of Fd Marshal Lord Inge, (all to be seated by 1320 hours); **followed by parade** led by band of 1 RGR. All welcome. Details from Graham Swain on 01425 614884.

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RMAS Intake 15 Platoon Rhine Company SMC 20 (passed out Aug 1979): Reunion to be held in London May 27. Details darren.jordan@bbc.co.uk or 07740818047.

Defence Dental Agency: Clinical day and formal dinner at JSCSC Officers' Mess, Shrivenham May 21. Open to past and present military dentists, civilian dental practitioners and support officers employed within Service dentistry. Contact Capt Paul Leighton 01296 656407 or at ddo-ppcc@defence.mod.uk

Army Medical Services: WO's and Sgts' Mess past and present dinner club annual reunion Jun 4 at RMAS. Further details from WO1 (CRSM) Parkes on 01276 412759 or WO2 Foster on 01276 412618.

Herts and Beds Yeomanries: Reunion at 1800 hours at the TA Centre, Marsh Road, Leagrave, Luton on Jun 12 for ex-52nd HAA RA, 79th, 86th, 135th, 148th and 191st Fd Regts RA, 286th, 305th, 479th Fd Regts RA TA, 286th (Herts & Beds Yeo) RA TA plus past

and present 201 Bty (100th Fd Regt RA (V)). Details Hon Sec Ron Currell 07799 417083 or e-mail misteron@ntlworld.com

The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Aden Veterans' Society: Thirty-seventh reunion Jun 18 at the Three Bulls' Heads, Percy Street, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear from 1200 hours. Contact Society President Alan Jonty Batey tel 01302 772044 or mobile 07960175667.

721 Car Company RASC to Rhine Area Wksps REME: 50th anniversary celebrations on Jun 19, open day, evening function for all past and present serving and civilian members. Details from WO2 (SQMS) G B Calland, Rhine Area Wksps REME, Javelin Barracks, BFPO 35 or tel 0049 (0) 2163 972271/972329.

Queen's Lancashire Regiment: Somme Service and reunion for all members of the regimental family past and present, to be held in Blackburn Cathedral Jul 4. Lunch at Somme Barracks, Blackburn, after the service, is by ticket only. Details and tickets available from RHQ on 01772 260362.

Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW Regt Assn: Reunion to be held at Salisbury Jul 10. Cathedral service, AGM and lunch on Jul 11. Details from 01722 414536.

British Korean Veterans' Association: Armistice commemoration on Jul 27 at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffs. Service 1000-1630 hours. Free non-alcoholic refreshments. Details from Bob Edwardson on 01527 833505.

RAOC/RLC Commandos: Reunion to be held Jul 30 to Aug 1. Details from WO1 (SSM) Geoff Murray on 01271 857103.

RLC Band and Corps of Drums 1993 to present day: Reunion to be held Sep 11 at Deepcut. Enquiries to the Band Office on 01252 833494 or e-mail office@rlcband.co.uk

Gordon Platoon RAOC Apprentices College Sept 1970 intake: Reunion at Ironbridge, Telford, Sept 15. For further information, e-mail graham.harvey53@ntlworld.com

Northern Ireland Veterans' Association: Service of Remembrance, Ulster Grove, National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffs to be held Sep 23. Registration and details contact chairman@nivets.co.uk or

Watch out for your new-look *Soldier* next month. Bulletin Board and all your other favourite pages will continue, along with some exciting extra features.

write to Chairman, NIVA, PO Box 318, St Helens, WA10 4WZ. www.nivets.co.uk

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.

1 RTR: Reunions are held in Scarborough every autumn, this year Oct 1-3 at the Drill Hall. Organiser is Paul Ramsay, details at www.mikekemble.com/1RTR/index.html

Junior Leaders Regiment RA Sept 1981 to Sep 1982: Was Spike Bell your Junior RSM? Reunion for all ex-JLs and staff, serving and retired Oct 4. Contact Trevor Gutteridge on 01980 845756 or Geoff Cooke (military 94342 3323) or geoff.cooke@tesco.net

Royal Artillery band musicians: Reunion for past and present members and wives of all RA bands to be held Oct 30. Further information from Bandmaster on 0208 7813219 or at info@raband.co.uk

HELP FOR RESEARCHERS

HISTORICAL documentary producer researching Aldershot Military Tattoos held from 1894 to 1939, is keen to talk to eyewitnesses or participants of tattoos at Rushmoor Arena. Please write to Andy Wheatcroft, 118 Grove Park, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 8QD or e-mail andy.wheatcroft@virgin.net

NORMANDY landings and invasion Fortress Europe veterans or their surviving relatives are asked to contact the Scottish Daily Mail to share their memories. Write to John Cooper, Scottish Daily Mail, 200 Renfield Street, Glasgow G2 3PZ.

Author seeks personnel from Battle School, Brecon, now ITC Wales from late 1980s. Instructors and students on Basic Wales course Parachute Regt, with stories and/or photos are asked to write to Christine Rodgers, 4 Penland Court, College Road, Bexhill on Sea, TN40 1TL or email christian@penland2003.freeserve.co.uk

Get away with the Hive

DROP into your local Hive Information Centre BFG and pick up one of their free city guides. The delights of Amsterdam, Berlin and Prague are featured in the pocket-sized guides which hold up-to-date information on transport, accommodation, shopping and cultural venues. The guides are compiled by the Hive Core Information Centre and information coordinator Jan Rowland invites suggestions for other guides to be considered. Contact: hive.library@bfgnet.de STOP PRESS From May 2004 for all BFG Hives a new website: www.hive-bfg.co.uk

COMPETITIONS

From the March issue:

The True Glory. Winners: (DVDs) S Garland, Isle of Skye; P Cowen, Harrogate; (VHS) K Mixer, Selsey; L G Gray, Ramsgate. Answer: Gen Dwight D Eisenhower.

M*A*S*H Series 3. Winners: R Smyth, Finaghy, Co Down; J Simm, London; D Roberts, Banbury; E Henderson, Waltham Abbey; G Hill, Huddersfield; A J Moutray, Southampton; R Pettie, Eastleigh; Sgt B D

Botwright, Colerne; K Hall, Pontypridd; D Jones, BFPO 15. Answer: Alan Alda.

X2: The Threat. Winners: W Harding, Twickenham; M O'Shea, Wembley; K May, Cardiff; J Ramsay, Newport, IOW; J Matthews, Forres, Morayshire; A Paling, Colerne; J Marriott, Edinburgh; H R Timothy, Warminster; Pte M Ulyyott, Catterick; R Cook, York Answer: 1969.

Secret Weapons Over Normandy. Winner: Lt M Rodger, Catterick. Answer: Battle of

e. See them at www.soldiermagazine.co.uk

UPDATE EXTRA

UNIT DISPOSALS

● In August the **Army Technical Foundation College** will cease Phase 1 Training for apprentice tradesmen. Although Hazebrout Officers' Mess will continue to serve Arborfield Garrison, presentations made to the college in the past may be reclaimed. Those wishing to do so are asked to apply by July 15.

Write to 2nd Lt Wade Hankins, Military Studies Department, ATFC, Rowcroft Barracks, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9NU; tel 0118 9763473 or dehankins1@tiscali.co.uk

● **Emblem Station** has a large amount of presentations made to messes and units in the past. Due to drawdown and passage of time, many of these pieces are probably not fully appreciated as their provenance is unknown. Former Emblem personnel who would like to reclaim items or have them redistributed (perhaps to their regimental museum or HQ) are asked to apply with a full description of items. Write to WO1 (SSM) R J Wong RLC MCWO, UK Movements and Liaison Staff (Low Countries), BFPO 21.

ROMANIAN Armed Forces links with British Forces are sought by Defence Attaché, Col Anthony Beattie, of the British Embassy Bucharest, to assist the Romanian National Military Museum. Regiments or units with historical ties to the old Romanian Army, Royal Colonelcies or with Romanian artefacts in their collection; similarly, modern units serving in recent history with Romanian allies in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan or Iraq may be able to contribute photographs or mementoes of shared experience.

Contact Col A A Beattie, Defence Attaché, British Embassy Bucharest, c/o FCO King Charles Street, London SW1 2AH. Tel 0040 21 201 7209, Fax 0040 21 201 7299 or e-mail defence@bucharest.mail.fco.gov.uk

SEARCHLINE

The **All Arms Veterans Motorcycle Club** is the official motor cycle branch of the Royal British Legion and is open to all serving and ex Regular forces members from any branch of the armed services. The club has been in existence in one form or another for about 30 years, having its roots in Germany. The ethos is one of a social family-orientated club with strong Service links. Ex-Royal Marine Graham Barber would like to hear from anyone who may have some useful input or interest. Grahamb106@aol.com or check out <http://aavmc1.homestead.com>

National Serviceman 1953-55 Pete Wiltshire served at **Horsley Hall**, North Wales and **233 Coy, Marchwood**. He is hoping to track down old mates including Brian Foster, Maxy Maxwell, Jack Carney, Pete Magurn and Bert Dunt. choochibabe@aol.com

Windsor Girls' and Boys' Schools Hamm 1953-1983: For all ex-pupils and staff, thriving society, regular reunions, members' register and newsletters. Details from Ann Blunn, 6 Merry Tree Close, West Wellow, Romsey, Hants SO51 6RB. rwblunn@aol.com

Steve Molloy seeks lost buddies from **RPC Training Depot** in Northampton, June 1981

including Brian Maybin; **522 Coy CAD Kineton** including John Churton; **Oct 1982-84; 207 Sig Sqn, Soltau** including Pete Clarke and Patrick Hamilton. Write to Steve at 3 Warton Drive, Newall Green, Manchester M23 2GH or telephone him on 0161 998 1691.

1080696 Gnr Leonard Bailey fought with **126 Fd Regt RA in Africa and Italy 1943**. His daughter seeks information from this period of her father's life. Dorothy Palmer, 44 Morven Road, Leura, NSW 2780, Australia or dp@pnc.com.au

Any news please of **Jorge Mare, 1 Canadian Para Bn**, at Carter Bks Bulford as part of 3 Para Bde, 6th Airborne Div in July 1943. May and June 1943 at Enschede, Holland, where he befriended parents of Lydia van Eijl. Write to Lydia at Burg, Topstraat 20, 3366 Wijngaarden, The Netherlands.

Malaya veterans 1946 to Mid-July 1948 or surviving relatives are asked to contact Mr Dennis Fletcher, 19 Egdon Road, Wareham, Dorset BH20 4DA. Telephone 01929 556015.

Former **112th Light Anti-aircraft Regiment RA**, particularly from **364 Bty**, are asked to contact octogenarian George Collingwood

who was at **Tielt, Belgium in 1944**, who has a photograph of the battery which may be of interest to survivors and/or their relatives. cottwood@shafton.fsnet.co.uk

Ex-Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Aden and Saudi Arabia 1966-67 are invited by Alan Jonty Batey to visit the Fighting Fifth website: www.icadenvets.co.uk

Parachute Regimental Association Thames Gateway: New branch established this year, meetings held at Bexley Heath TA Centre, every second Thursday from 2000 hours. All past and present airborne welcome. Details Andy Falconer on 07984 356713.

Lou Lister, former Postal and Courier Regt RE RSM, seeks old mates from WO's & Sgts' Messes in Hannover 1988-92 and at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill 1960s-1993. **Reg Balchin RAMC, Steve Tole RTR and Gordon Duke ACC** are particularly sought. E-mail liester-ian@aol.com

Any **ex-Windsor platoon** trainees, **Jan to June 1992** particularly **John Bates, Mark Downey and Sam Parker**, are asked to contact former Coldstreamer Marc Chambers for possible reunion marcboro@msn.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-Service 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 725; 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

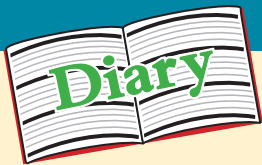
SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783; www.ssafo.org.uk

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

MAY

23: Tankfest 2004, the Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset. Will include an operational Tiger tank. For information phone 01929 405096.

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, Queen's Avenue, Aldershot. For information call 01252 349539 or see www.armyshow.co.uk.

9-10: 'Music on Fire' spectacular, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, 1930hrs. Massed bands, an orchestra, pipes and drums and a choir accompanied by an array of special effects. Proceeds going to the Army Benevolent Fund. Ticket hotline 020 8675 3582 or visit www.musiconfire.com.

17: The 2004 Military Tattoo, Manchester Evening News Arena, 1400 and 1930. Music from the Band of The Parachute Regiment, Pipes and Drums of the Scots Guards Association, and the GMP Band. Ticket hotline 0161 4839395 or e-mail tony@silkh8025.freemove.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. Also hosting tri-Service Defence 2004. Advance tickets £24.95 until Mar 1, £29.95 thereafter, £35 on day. Available at www.airtattoo.com or call 0870 758 1918.

AUGUST

6-28: Edinburgh Tattoo. Booking on 08707 5551188 or at www.edintattoo.co.uk

28-30: Military Odyssey. Kent County Ground, Detling. Enquiries 01829 730830. www.military-odyssey.com

SEPTEMBER

23: Northern Ireland Veterans' Association Service of Remembrance, National Memorial Arboretum, Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffordshire, 1120. Further details: chairman@nivets.co.uk

Top guns hit target

FIREPOWER, the Royal Artillery Museum at Woolwich, celebrated its third birthday last month with a major new addition opened by Dame Vera Lynn. It is now the only museum in the UK with a gallery dedicated to the Cold War.

The largest and rarest guns from the post-war period are displayed on a timeline from 1945 to the present and include the 7.2in Howitzer and the monster AA gun, Green Mace, along with many others such as the 175mm M107, the M40, M109, SP70 and AS90. There also is a good-as-new Centurion OP tank.

Huge, symbolic backdrop images, ranging from John F Kennedy's assassination through to the September 11 atrocities in America, place the exhibits in their historical context.

A second gallery showcases the finest pieces from the museum's collection of trophies and foreign guns, including a magnificent 12-pounder smoothbore cannon presented to Queen Victoria by the Emperor Louis Napoleon in Paris.

Now officially owned by Queen Elizabeth II, it has never been fired so is in mint condition and came complete with limbers and ammunition.

An upstairs gallery is a great attraction for children, with its paintball system, Rolling Rock climbing wall and Andersen shelter.

Opening the new galleries, Dame Vera said: "Museums of this sort – or any sort – are much needed and tell children what it was all about. I am sure it will be very popular."

In a second, open-air, ceremony, a square on the Royal Arsenal named after author, film director and former RA officer James Clavell, who died ten years



Dame Vera: "This museum will be very popular"

ago, was opened by his widow, April. Her late husband, whose first book, *King Rat*, was based on his experiences as a gunner officer in Changi Jail, Singapore, served at Depot RA Woolwich twice during his Army career.

Respect can lead to romance

AN on-line dating service has been launched which caters specifically for men and women in uniform. The website www.uniformdating.com, set up by ex-police and military personnel, enables those in the armed forces, police, fire service and the NHS to get in touch with one other.

The site is also available to members of the public wishing to make contact with someone in uniform. The service is being run by Network Services International Ltd, which manages the MoD Oracle and Police Oracle sites and ran the popular "Pen Pals" system for the UK military during the height of Op Telic.

Business development manager Andrew Perkins, a former member of the RMP, said: "There is a long-standing tradition of romance between nurses, police officers, armed forces personnel and fire-fighters.

"This affinity comes from a mutual respect and

understanding of each other's working conditions and practices."

Recognising the difficulties members of the uniformed services face in forming relationships, Andrew said: "Many personnel live in areas they were not brought up in, they regularly work unsociable hours, at weekends and during public holidays so they aren't always able

meet new partners in conventional ways such as in pubs and clubs."

There has been a lot of interest from civilians wanting to get in touch with members of the armed forces.

Website users can search for potential partners by gender, employment, geography, hobbies and background. They can look at photos and profile, and send each other "Quick Hellos" and if they click they can then converse through the secure system offered by uniformdating.com.

UNIFORMdating.com

■ **WOMEN'S** fight for the right to serve their country is the subject of The National Army Museum's special weekend of events on May 15 and 16.

Women have worked with and around the British Army for centuries. Some dressed as men and enlisted in the Army as she-soldiers. Others fought a different battle – to work and win respect in the Army as women.

Films, video footage, historical interpreters, photographs, presentations and family activities will allow visitors to trace the changing status of

women and examine remarkable stories of individual courage and endurance, celebrating the contribution of women to the British Army past and present.

Record your story: Women who have served or have been involved with the Army during their lives are invited along to record oral histories of their own personal experiences for display in the museum's galleries.

For further details tel 0207 730 0717 ext. 2228 or email edu@national-army-museum.ac.uk



Tumbledown tribute

Falklands-based RAF crew from No 18(B) Sqn paid their respects to members of the 2nd Battalion, The Scots Guards and supporting units who fought on Tumbledown Mountain during the 1982 campaign. The Chinook crew retraced the steps of the battle to the summit where Flt Lt Steve Bell laid a wreath on behalf of his father, ex-WO1 Dave Bell APTC, who served with 2 SG during the conflict, while Flt Lt Cameron Machlachlan played *The Crag of Tumbledown* on the bagpipes.

Munster medics' long haul to Iraq

SOLDIERS from 1 Close Support Medical Regiment proved their fitness by running and cycling the equivalent of the 3,000 miles' distance between Germany and Iraq – where they deployed last month.

As part of a 48-hour charity event, the Munster-based medics covered the distance on March 9 and 10 at the gym in York Barracks,

raising about 3,000 for a local German school and the Army Benevolent Fund. The event went so well that CS Medical Squadron is to repeat it when they return to base in October.

The winner of the combined running and cycling total distance, Pte (???) Armitage, covered a distance of 202km.

Cyprus re-cycling

TWENTY-eight reconditioned bicycles were handed over to Larnaca Children's Home and other needy children in Cyprus by Jayne Bowen of HIVE and WO2 Ade Peel.

The Service community in Ayios Nikolaos made the donation to the HIVE after an appeal by Jayne, who got the idea when trying to decide what to do with her children's old bikes.

"I knew I wasn't the only one with this dilemma," said Jayne. "Christmas was a month away and I knew a few of my friends were buying new bikes for their children. I thought it would be a good idea to find a good home for the old bicycles, which were too good to throw away."

A total of 31 bikes were donated over a two-month period, 28 of which were recoverable. The hardest job fell to WO2 Ade Peel, who volunteered himself as a bike repairer and finished the job after three hours' labour per bike and at a total cost of £6.20.

Mrs Kiki Ioannou, headmistress of the Larnaca Children's Home, was delighted. "Many thanks to the Ayios Nikolaos service community for their generous donations," she said. "The children will be thrilled."



Wheel benefits: Jayne Bowen, centre, with Demetra Tempriou of Cyprus Social Services, left, Kiki Ioannou, right, and Ade Peel

Sandhurst Roman Catholics' call to alms

SANDHURST'S Roman Catholic community has launched an appeal to renovate the Chapel of Christ the King (an artist's impression is shown) which has been a temporary structure at the Royal Military Academy for more than 50 years. The chapel is currently entered by a fire escape, has no permanent font and baptisms are conducted in a champagne bowl. Building work will cost £350,000 and all donations are welcome. Cheques should be made payable to "Campion Fund", Christ the King RC Chapel Appeal, Freepost, NAT7305, Camberley GU15 4BR.



SOLDIERS from the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment have dedicated a memorial window at their base in Drumadd Barracks, Armagh. The window's striking stained glass design incorporates images and colours representing all the antecedent battalions. The memorial is a fitting tribute to the sacrifice of all those who died in the service of their country and an expression of hope for the future of Northern Ireland.



THE Military Vehicle Trust will play a key role in the D-Day 60th anniversary events. The MVT will start their remembrance activities on the Spring Bank Holiday, May 29-31, with a large historic vintage military vehicle gathering at the Overlord Show at Horndean near Portsmouth. This popular family occasion will have many collector's stalls, arena events and living history displays complete with authentic uniforms and equipment. Those interested in joining the MVT are asked to send a large SAE to: Membership Secretary, PO Box No 6, Fleet, Hampshire GU13 9PE.

TREADING in the footsteps of Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing 51 years ago, CSgt Paul Sherman is to take part in an Everest Challenge fund-raising expedition organised by SCOPE to help disabled people. Having already paid the £250 administrative cost, Paul now needs to raise sponsorship of £3,500 by September 24 to qualify. Readers who would like to make a donation can contact him on Mil 9491 43948 or tel 02891 812223.

THANKS to its fundraising efforts, the Ex Military Land Rover Association presented a cheque for £358.99 to the Army Benevolent Fund. Formed 12 years ago by enthusiasts, the EMLRA helps members to restore and preserve an important part of our military heritage. The Association attends numerous shows and events throughout the country and always carries ABF publicity material with it. The money was collected through bucket collections, camouflage face painting for children, taking photographs of children dressed in military gear and prize money won by members at displays for the best vehicle.

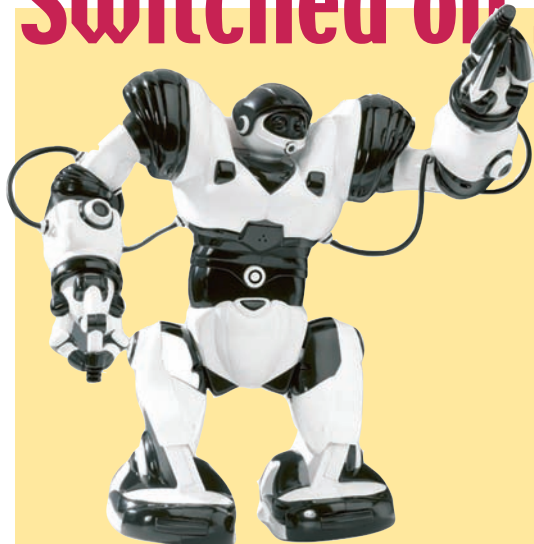
Maj Gen the Duke of Westminster, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets) visited Camp Dragocaj in Bosnia to meet TA personnel and assess operations. With him were Lord Glenarthur, Chairman of the National Employer Advisory Board, and Brig Patrick Davidson-Houston, Director of Army Staff Duties.

THE statue of Mary, Mother of Jesus from Little Walsingham, the country's most revered religious site, was the focus of military services in Aldershot last month as part of celebrations marking the 150th Anniversary of the British Army arriving in the town.

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

Retail reconnaissance

Switched on . . .



INTELLIGENT LIFEFORM ▲

THE brainchild of a NASA scientist, Robosapien has seven motors that let him run and walk at different speeds, perform 180-degree turns, dance, twist, blink and fight. With six sensors placed throughout his body, Robosapien also has an interactive reflex system which responds to both touch and sound signals from the environment.

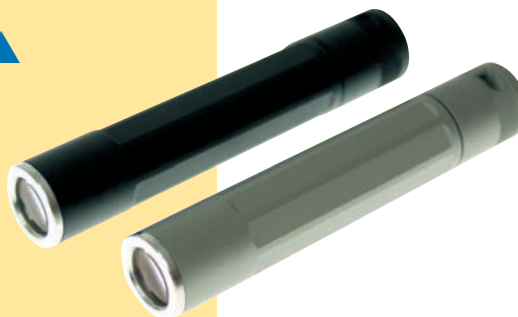
① £80, from www.gadgetshop.com (0870 8400567).

ENLIGHTENING ▼

CRUSH-proof and waterproof, the Inova X1 LED spotlight projects a uniform circular beam and offers up to one-mile signal visibility.

Designed for use in extreme environments and measuring just 3.9x0.72 inches, the X1's power-regulating circuitry provides maximum, non-dimming brightness for up to ten hours.

① £24.95, from www.h3products.com



SOUND PURCHASE ▲

WITH a choice of 128 or 256MB embedded flash memory, the Chic MP3 player can store more than 80 music tracks.

Quick and easy to use, it will run for up to 18 hours on one AA battery and has a full graphical LCD and EL backlight. The lightweight music box comes with a USB download lead, discreet earphones and will connect to most home stereos.

① £89.99, from www.nevada.co.uk (02392 313090).

Game on . . .

DESERT RATS VS AFRIKA KORPS, PC

TELLING the story of the North African campaigns of the Second World War from both an Axis and Allied perspective, Digital Jesters' *Desert Rats Vs Afrika Korps* combines narrative-based missions with real-time strategy gameplay.

Set across two campaigns and 20 missions based on historical facts, the game follows the destiny of a German and an English soldier, former friends constrained to fight each other in a "war without hate".

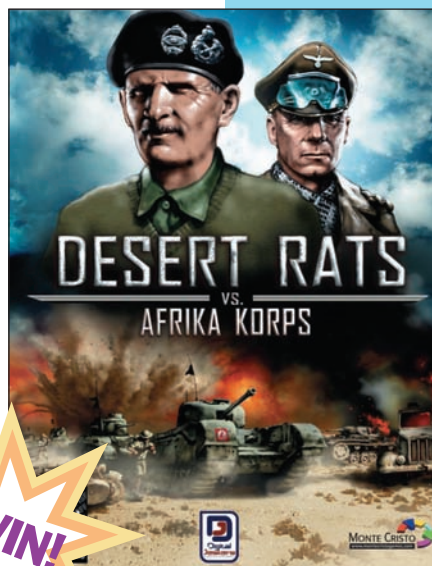
All of the game's missions start with a briefing and a recap of the historical background, and range from straightforward reconnaissance tasks and urban flush-out operations to large-scale sieges of desert fortresses.

Characterised by a high-level of combat realism, where every vehicle and building can be captured, and a vast array of combat tactics, *Desert Rats* features more than 70 different units, including eight specialized soldiers and seven categories of vehicles.

All of the game's action takes place in a fully 3D environment which boasts highly-realistic graphics, real-time shadows and damage and weather effects.

As well as offering a story-driven single-player experience, it also has five different multiplayer modes to explore.

VERDICT: Even those sick of the sight of sand will find *Desert Rats* difficult to put down. **8/10**



www.desertratsgame.com

COURTESY of Digital Jester, Soldier has five prize bundles containing a copy of *Desert Rats* for the PC and a T-shirt, up for grabs.

For your chance to win, simply tell us which British Army brigade is nicknamed the Desert Rats.

Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by May 28. Usual rules apply.

OUT NOW

BYTE-SIZE NEWS

SOLDIER has signed a deal with Groove Gaming, which will allow readers to enjoy mobile gaming on their phones at a discounted rate. See page 60 for details.

WIRELESS networking looks set to form a key part of Sony's grand plan for its next-generation hardware.

Industry rumours suggest that Sony intends to use wireless technology inside the PlayStation Portable (PSP) not only for multiplayer between devices, but also to link with their next-generation home console, PS3, and with wireless internet "hot spots" to enable online play and communication.

The European release date for the PSP has now been pushed back to the first quarter of 2005.

NINTENDO'S Dual Screen handheld console, which is expected to be launched next Christmas, will also feature short-range wireless connectivity for multiplayer gameplay.

EIDOS has revealed that it will release a further *Commandos* sequel within the next 18 months.



SINGLES: FLIRT UP YOUR LIFE, PC

EVER considered yourself God's gift to the opposite sex? If the answer's yes, here's a chance to put your "pulling" prowess to the test.

Deep Silver's *Singles: Flirt Up Your Life* introduces a slightly different kind of game to fans of the "life simulation" genre. Players assume control of the lives of two very different people apartment-sharing in a busy European city. Having just moved in, and with a small amount of money at their disposal, it's for the player to kit out the apartment to their liking, purchasing the necessities and making it as comfortable as possible. Gamers control the actions of both characters and are responsible for satisfying their everyday personal and physical needs, whether it be making breakfast, going to work, relaxing or sleeping.

In addition, the goal of *Singles* is to develop a bond between the characters, which is only possible if both are happy. What kind of relationship it becomes is entirely up to the player. A positive



relationship between the couple will start from friendship, moving through various stages which eventually justify the game's 18 certificate.

With more than 12 different characters to choose from and customise, the game's stars' varying personalities and careers have a constant effect on their everyday

OUT NOW

WIN!

"Excuse me, do you believe in love at first sight, or should I walk by you again?"

SOLDIER has teamed up with Deep Silver to offer readers the opportunity to hone their courting techniques.

For your chance to win one of ten copies of *Singles: Flirt Up Your Life* for the PC, simply tell us your best chat-up lines (keep them clean!).

The best, in the Editor's opinion, will be rewarded with a cosy night in front of a virtual log-fire.

Write your chat-up lines on a postcard or sealed envelope and send them to *Singles* competition, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by May 28. Usual rules apply.

needs, their favourite activities and the kind of relationship they prefer. So the player can throw together the femme fatale with a best friend, or a charmer with the cute librarian, and see how things develop.

VERDICT: Players' very own *Big Brother*. 8/10



CS: CONDITION ZERO, PC

OUT NOW

CONDITION Zero advances the award-winning *Counter-Strike* series by introducing a single-player career mode and special enhancements for online play.

Assuming the role of a squad leader in an élite counter-terrorist organisation in this first-person shooter, gamers must tackle a series of 18 progressively difficult missions against artificial intelligence-controlled opponents. The game's four difficulty settings cater for new, intermediate, expert and veteran players.



VERDICT: A great pick-up-and-play first-person shooter. 7/10

MTX MOTOTRAX, PS2 & XBOX

OUT NOW

FEATURING 13 professional riders and boasting high-speed racing action at 60 frames per second, gamers are offered a non-linear career mode as they challenge to become king of the track in Activision's *MTX: Mototrax*.

Alternatively, players can also take their motocross skills online and compete against up to seven other opponents through Xbox Live or PlayStation 2's network gaming service.

In addition, gamers can create their own unique tracks which can then be traded and ridden online.



VERDICT: Fast and furious. 8/10

DELTA FORCE: TEAM SABRE, PC

OUT NOW



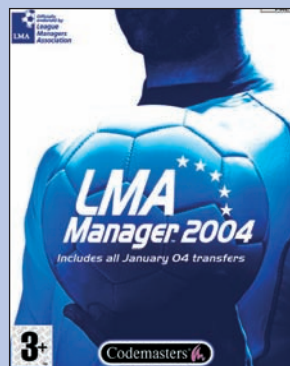
VERDICT: High-quality action. 7/10

SET in treacherous South American jungle terrain and the remote islands of the Persian Gulf, gamers again assume the role of a member of the US Army's special forces in this expansion pack for *Delta Force: Black Hawk Down*.

New mission objectives include attempting to destroy an underground drug refinery while rescuing hostage villagers, taking out a mountain stronghold, infiltrating enemy oilfields, and capturing a chemical weapons convoy.

LMA MANAGER 2004, PS2 & XBOX

OUT NOW



VERDICT: Premiership purchase. 9/10

SAY goodbye to your spare time – the latest addition to the best-selling football management series for consoles has arrived.

Complete with a whole new look and more flexible management options, *LMA Manager 2004* allows players to take over the reins of a football club from the game's playable English, Scottish, French, German, Italian and Spanish leagues. The game features all the 2003/2004 season statistics, including those from this January's transfer window, with updated profiles for every player.



The reality of D-Day: Terence Cuneo's dramatic painting drawing together the many elements of the Normandy landings. It was commissioned by *Soldier* to mark the 20th anniversary in 1964

France and eventually into Germany itself". Bowman's unobtrusive but valuable accompaniment to the everyday heroes' own narrative, in the form of fact boxes in the margins, provides essential detail about the forces involved, the cost in casualties and the achievements of the day.

Here you will find the plan of action on all five main beaches as well as the Red Devils' timetable for Winged Pegasus, possibly the element of D-Day mostly associated in people's minds with June 5.

The oft-told tale of how Bill Millin, aged 21, Brig Lord Lovat's piper, crossed the bridge in full skirl is repeated here in Millin's own words with additional colourful detail.

It seems his performance was not entirely appreciated by all. As he approached the water's edge he heard a bellowing in his left ear: "What are you ****ing well playing at, Piper? You mad b****d. Don't you think there's enough going on here without you attracting every ****ing German in France?"

The piper's tale pierces, with a brief flash of humour, a narrative at times darkly painful, although other gems such as Fd Marshal von Runstedt's retort to an anguished "What shall we do?" appeal from Keitel in Paris on June 10 – "Make peace you fool!" – will remain in the memory.

Certain passages make deeply disturbing reading. Amid the excitement and optimism stirred up by the realisation that

Allied Forces had at last returned to mainland Europe, the terrible cost in lives was not perhaps truly appreciated.

In the course of 60 years D-Day has been woven into the fabric of our national folklore, but *Everyday Heroes*, which could well be included as required reading for any history course on this subject, will reveal new insights and matter for "empathetic" reflection.

It is hard to find anything negative to say about this book or its presentation.

Evocative illustrations in the form of photographs and watercolours bring the scene vividly to life.

A more detailed map, perhaps with beachheads clearly labelled, would have been appreciated, but it is the lack of superfluous commentary that makes *Everyday Heroes* memorable.

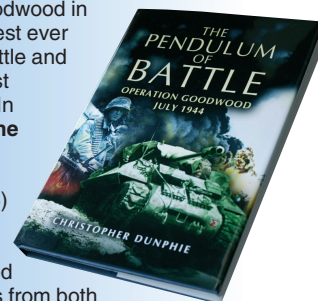
There is no introduction, for none is necessary, neither is there a conclusion except in the form of a few lines of poetry and a colour photograph of the stained glass memorial window in Portsmouth Cathedral. The thing speaks for itself.

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>

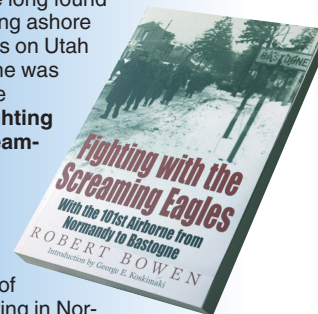
Operation Goodwood: success or failure?

AS a former senior Army officer and experienced Normandy battlefield guide, Christopher Dunhie is well qualified to produce an authoritative analysis of Operation Goodwood in 1944, the largest ever British tank battle and one of the most controversial. In researching *The Pendulum of Battle* (Pen & Sword, £19.95) he has walked the ground and interviewed many veterans from both sides. The questions he raises are intriguing: was the operation really intended to be a breakout, how far did it erode confidence in Montgomery's leadership, and was it a success or a failure?



US gliderman's 'trip through hell'

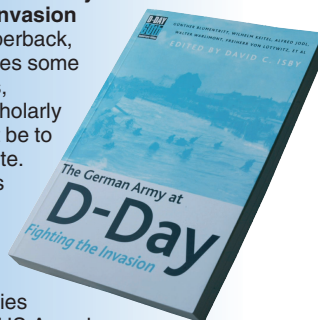
ROBERT Bowen was drafted into Company C, 401st Glider Infantry, 101st Airborne Division as the Second World War broke out and before long found himself storming ashore amid the chaos on Utah Beach. Later he was captured in the Ardennes. *Fighting With the Screaming Eagles* (Greenhill, paperback, £12.99) is his modest but stark account of the brutal fighting in Normandy (where he was wounded), Holland and the Ardennes, and of his despair as a prisoner-of-war – his "trip through hell". It is also a moving tribute to comrades whose "luck ran out".



View from the other side of the Channel

THERE have been many books about D-Day from the Allies' perspective, but what about the enemy's point of view? *The German Army at D-Day: Fighting the Invasion*

(Greenhill, paperback, £12.99) provides some of the answers, although its scholarly style might not be to everyone's taste. David C Isby is the editor of this rather dry, yet informative, collection of military studies written for the US Army by senior German Army officers after the war. Black-and-white illustrations show some of the personalities, fortifications, defences and equipment.





WRITE TO: SOLDIER, ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT, HANTS GU11 2DU
 ● E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Post Operational tour leave: has the system changed?

HAVING recently returned from a four-month tour in the Falkland Islands I have been told by my squadron that although the Army sent me away from my wife for more than 16 weeks, I am not entitled to one single day of Post Op Tour Leave (POTL).

Prize letter

A sergeant who served with me in the Falklands and who is in the same regiment (different squadron) has had his leave application signed for POTL and a lance corporal who is at 2 Sig Reg has also had his POTL granted.

I have been told through my chain of command that, "The system has changed" and, "It's a new thing."

On arrival in the Falklands in Septem-

ber last year, we were told on an arrivals brief that we were entitled to one day of POTL for every nine days served in theatre. This was also highlighted in literature



PS4(A) replies: Post Operational Leave (POL), as it is now known, is a leave entitlement granted to individuals returning from roulement operational tours, the key qualifying criteria here being operational, and is intended to allow time to adjust to a non-operational environment. It is not a new allowance and the system has not changed.

The allowance, which is in addition to an individual's annual leave, is granted irrespective of marital status and in proportion to the length of deployment at the rate of one working day of POL for each nine calendar

we were issued. Please could you clarify this for me, and let others like myself know where we stand regarding this issue. – **LCpl, Germany.**

days served. Therefore, a six-month deployment would normally attract POL of 20 working days.

A full description of the allowance can be found in Ch 2 of the Army Leave Manual.

In discussion with Land it is confirmed that the Falkland Islands is not an operational deployment for Army personnel and as such does not qualify for Post Operational Leave.

Within the margins of JPA, PS4(A) will be seeking confirmation from the other services that their implementation of POL is the same.

Tri-service nurses' pay – spot the difference ...

WHY are Army student nurses paid in the lower pay band while our Royal Navy and RAF counterparts are in the higher?

Recently all military nurses were given new terms of service to remove the differences in allowances and pay between nurses in the three Services.

Student nurses fell under the remit of this new policy. However, there is still this difference in pay.

We work in a tri-Service environment and do exactly the same job. The only difference is that the Army has to do twice the number of fitness tests per year and pass them to a higher standard – **Name and address supplied.**



PS10(A) replies: Reference the difference in rates of pay for Army student nurses compared to the RN and RAF. I am pleased to inform *Soldier* readers that this discrepancy has already been rectified. It transpires that a simple difference in interpretation of the relevant pay regulations between the Services was the cause and a policy amendment was promulgated in March 2004.

From April 1, 2004, Army student nurses on their three-year Phase two training course will be paid in the higher pay range. Agreement has also been given for this policy to be backdated to April 1, 2001. Therefore nurses who have already commenced their training will have their pay re-assessed in the higher range and any back-pay due calculated. Over 160 personnel are affected and work is underway to make these back payments as soon as possible.

We want to hear from you ... but please be brief

YOUR letters provide us with 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

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.

I was a bit put out

WHEN I was promoted to corporal in May, 2003, I was expecting to have a pay rise in line with the minimum of two per cent promised in Pay 2000. I was a bit put out to receive just £129.58. That's not per month – that was my overall pay rise.

This happened because I was promoted just before my incremental due date (IDD)



PS10(A) replies: Concerning the effect of being promoted from LCpl Level 8 to Cpl Level 2 in the Higher Pay Range, shortly before an incremental due date (IDD). Cpl Allen is correct – had he not been promoted, he would, on his IDD, have moved to Level 9 for a LCpl, the same as a Cpl Level 2. It is also correct that his reward in financial terms for that year, when compared with what he would have earned as a LCpl, amounted to £166.10 before tax.

One of the principles of Pay 2000 is that levels of pay should overlap between ranks. Under Pay 2000, levels of pay are based on the full range of responsibilities and experience that each job requires at each rank. This is achieved through a process known as Job Evaluation. The expectation that a higher rank must always earn more than a lower one

in June. There is no incentive for people to gain promotion if they are not going to be paid for it.

A corporal has more responsibility than a lance corporal. If I had not pushed myself to be promoted I would be earning the same for doing less. – **Cpl Stuart Allen, Chilwell.**

is not necessarily justified. Overlapping pay ranges acknowledge that the most experienced personnel in one rank are often as valuable as the most junior in the next. It is possible that someone newly promoted may, initially, be earning slightly less than the most experienced in the lower rank. Before Pay 2000, it was possible for a Cpl to be paid more than a WO2.

Cpl Allen is currently concerned over the level of his pay now. However, by being promoted his pay and career prospects are greatly enhanced. Annual progression rewards each complete paid year of service in rank subject to achieving satisfactory performance based on confidential report grading. Cpl Allen has not received any less pay as a result of his promotion and has significantly improved his long-term career, pay, and pension prospects.

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soldier



Film double billing

Win a Philips DVD player

COMMEMORATING the 60th anniversary of D-Day, MGM Home Entertainment is releasing the classic British war film **Battle of Britain** on two-disc special edition DVD. With restored picture and sound it includes many extras, also, for the first time, Sir William Walton's original score, used in its entirety. **Battle of Britain** Special Edition DVD is out from May 24 (RRP £19.99).

Also released by MGM Home Entertainment this month and featuring an all-star cast, **A Bridge Too Far** tells of the

attempt to capture several bridges in during the Second World War. Operation Market Garden, one of the most ambitious military operations ever mounted, involved dropping thousands of paratroopers into Holland to secure key bridges over the Rhine. A combination of faulty intelligence, poor weather and even worse luck meant the operation was a disaster. **A Bridge Too Far** Special Edition DVD is out from May 24 2004 (RRP £19.99).

Soldier has teamed up with MGM Home Entertainment to offer one lucky reader the opportunity to win a Philips 728 DVD player and a copy of each of the special edition two-disc DVD sets featured above. In addition five lucky runners-up will each receive a copy of both DVD sets.

For your chance to win, answer the following question correctly:

Which of the following stars did NOT appear in the film *A Bridge too Far*: a) **Dirk Bogarde**, b) **Anthony Hopkins**, c) **James Mason**.

Send entries on a postcard or small sealed envelope marked 'ABTF/BOB DVD Competition' to the *Soldier* address on page 86. The winners will be drawn at random from all correct entries received by the closing date of May 28.



Military Music by Gordon Turner

TO mark the anniversary of D-Day, the Band of the Dragoon Guards have recorded a well-chosen programme of nostalgia. There are selections of songs made famous by Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra, two marches by Eric Coates, **The Dambusters** and **Calling All Workers** (Music While You Work) and film music. As this is also the 60th Anniversary of the disappearance of Glen Miller it is appropriate that they should include **Moonlight Serenade**, **Little Brown Jug**, **In The Mood** and several other tunes associated with the American bandleader.

The War Years (Clovelly) CLCD 13203 is available from The Band of the Dragoon Guards, Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4TX price £13 incl p&p.

Compared with the cavalry and infantry of the line The Parachute Regiment is a relatively young regiment dating back to the Second World War. The regimental band have put together a programme of music written to commemorate many of the actions that they have taken part in. Included are the marches **Red Devils**, **Airborne Warriors**, **Bruneval Raid**, **Pegasus**, **The Dakota**, **Red Berets**, **Operation Pallister**, two works titled

Arnhem and film music **A Bridge Too Far** and **The Longest Day**. Montgomery referred to the men of The Parachute Regiment as "every man an emperor" and this is the title of the recording.

Every Man an Emperor (Droit Music) TRCD 241 is available from Droit Music Ltd, PO Box 2638, Eastbourne, BN20 7HU price £13 incl p&p.

The Beating or Sounding Retreat is one of the most evocative ceremonies performed by bands, bugles, drums and pipes. The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas and the Pipes & Drums of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles are featured in a new recording. On the pipes there are many old favourites such as **Cock of the North**, **79th Farewell to Gibraltar**, **Atholl Highlanders** and **Skye Boat**, while the military band play **Swing March**, **Il Silenzio** and **Night On A Bald Mountain**. Combined they play **Ode to Joy**, **Highland Cathedral** and **Amazing Grace**. The programme ends with the various regimental marches. **Sounding Retreat** (Bandleader Recordings) BNA 5182 is available from Discurio Ltd, 46 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1LD price £13 incl p&p.

Classic movie themes collection

PRIME Time presents **The Longest Day**, a stirring and inspirational four-CD boxed-set of 53 movie themes. There are classic scores to well-loved First and Second World Wars films, featuring the unforgettable **Bridge on the River Kwai** and rousing **Dambusters**. Also themes to modern favourites like **Schindler's List**, **Band of Brothers** and **Saving Private Ryan**.

Released on May 17 by Prime/Silva Screen Records, this outstanding collection is available at all good record stores or directly from Silva Screen. Telephone 020 7428 5500.

Thanks to Silva Screen, *Soldier* has four copies of this excellent four-CD collection to give away. To be in with a chance to win, simply answer the following: **What is the popular name for the theme to Bridge on the River Kwai?**

Send entries (with your name and address) on a postcard or small sealed envelope marked "Longest Day Competition" to *Soldier* address on page 86. The winners will be drawn at random from all correct entries received by the closing date of May 28.



■ A new release from BBC Worldwide, **D-Day**, comes in VHS and DVD and tells the story of the tragedy and courage of the ordinary people behind the most extraordinary military operation in history. The epic events leading up to D-Day are described from all sides of the conflict.

The Allied operation involved a deception of breathtaking audacity, relying on the absolute discretion of many. This is an ambitious feature, combining documentary techniques with dramatic narrative, compelling archive photography, film and sound footage.

Official government documents, only recently released, provide background, explanation and understanding of a defining moment in world history.

Prices: VHS £12.99. DVD £15.99.

■ **The Nazis – A Warning From History** is another BBC Worldwide VHS and DVD release, due out at the end of May. It exposes the popular myths surrounding the rise and fall of the Third Reich.

People interviewed recall the true extent of Hitler's power; eyewitnesses describe the horrors perpetrated on the Eastern Front; specially shot film in Lithuania reveals the development of the "Final Solution" and ordinary Germans shed new light on the relationship between the party and the people.

Prices: VHS £12.99. DVD £15.99.

SOLDIER to soldier

Time is the new enemy

FOR half a century, supported by this magazine, veterans of the Suez Canal Zone fought with unwavering determination to secure medal recognition for their service in the early 1950s.

But their elation when at last their campaign succeeded turned to frustration for many when it was realised that it would take so long to process all the medal applications that they might die before they received them.

As we report on Page 43, there is a further setback with the news that the Army Medal Office (AMO) is to close.

Last month we carried the news that AMO staff were working flat-out against the clock to process the medal applications. Those dedicated people now fear that their jobs may go.

It seems that the brave veterans and conscientious AMO staff alike have been fighting a losing battle – a race against time.

◆ ◆ ◆

THE British Army's commitment to continuing to provide its workforce and the general public with a high quality magazine takes another step forward next month.

As we explain on Page 7, from the June issue *Soldier* will have a new look, new feel and new features, while retaining all the current favourites.

One of our chief roles is to provide a popular and efficient means of two-way communication. We hope you enjoy the "new" magazine – but whatever you think, please let us know.

◆ ◆ ◆

IN its relatively short life the influence of the Army Families Federation has grown immensely. When it raises its voice (however rationally and reasonably) the "powers-that-be" have to sit up and take notice.

As one chairman prepares to step down to make way for another (see Page 11), it is perhaps a good time to thank Lizzie Iron for her achievements and to wish Sammie Crane well.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Make sure your voice is heard

AS Him Indoors is sometimes driven to point out when I am shouting at the radio, one of the few constants in life is change. It doesn't earn him any brownie points (it usually earns him a direct hit with whatever missile comes to hand, in fact) but it's undeniably true.

If you have a soldier in your life, change isn't something you can avoid. Most of us are faced with a change of location on a regular basis, which brings with it changes in jobs, schools, doctors, dentists (if you can find one) and friends.

This may not be all bad. There are places and jobs you just can't wait to leave (not to mention bosses), and a change, as they say, is as good as a rest.

But a move can happen at just the wrong time – when a wife has finally found a job with career prospects, or needs to finish an educational course, or a child is very happy and progressing at school.

It's at those times when an Army family might want the option to stay put for a bit. If you can quote a legitimate reason, it may be possible to hang on to your quarter – but in most cases, the family has to consider staying put in their own house (if they can afford one – and they may only be able to do so if the wife sticks with the job) while the soldier moves on.

It's hard to tell, and I don't think anyone has yet got any figures on it, but I suspect the number of families in this position is increasing. Which may mean things have to change again in the future, especially if the Army's role continues to be that of dashing off unaccompanied to all manner of foreign spots to stop the local citizens killing each other.

As a member of AFF staff once memorably said to me a few years ago: "What's the point of being accompanied if he's never there anyway?"

Many spouses and partners already manage to lead their own lives independently of their soldier's career, which is



A personal view
from Sue Bonney,
Editor of the AFF
Families Journal

no longer necessarily the one that comes first. If more spouses continue to want their own careers and/or stability for their children without boarding school, can this be reconciled with accompanied service?

Even if it can, will the MoD be able to provide houses for all those legally entitled – houses of a decent standard across the board, with showers and kitchen units manufactured in this century? It's all a question of how far society's and families' chang-

ing expectations and needs can be met within the Army lifestyle and the MoD budget.

Some things, of course, will never change. The worries and fears of families when their soldiers are involved in action, and their instinctive need to be with and talk to others in the same situation, will always be there. Indeed, as we saw during Op Telic 1, it is more openly acknowledged and expressed than ever before.

So how do we reconcile that with the prospect of Army families living apart from their soldier's unit, detached on the sidelines?

Decisions about the future are being made now, with white papers and housing strategies

being pored over at the MoD. So if you and your significant "other" have an opinion on how things should be, now is the time to air it.

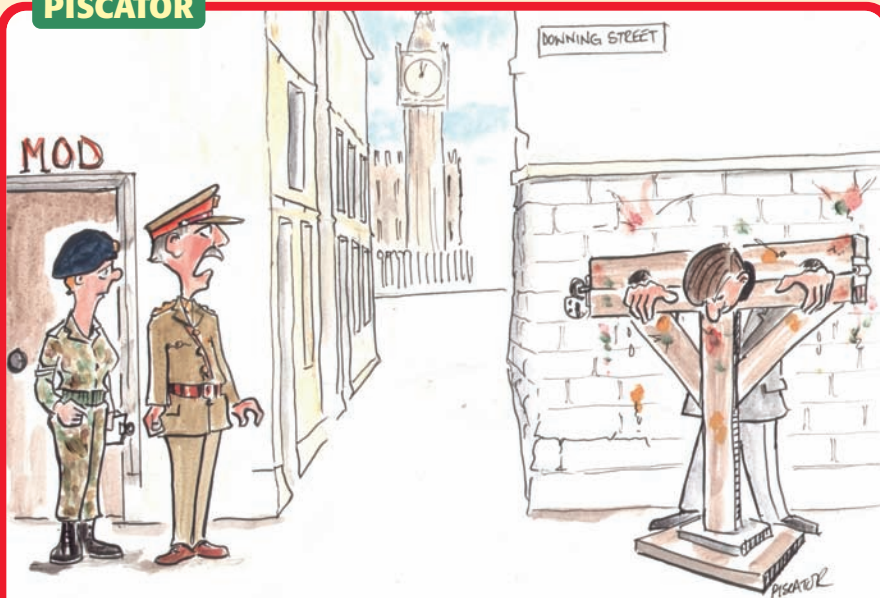
And thanks to AFF, you can! The Open Debate in the afternoon at our London Conference next month will be about Army families in the future – and senior politicians, generals and policy-makers will be taking part.

Grab the chance and be there.

'As someone memorably once said to me, what's the point of being accompanied if he's never there anyway?'

For more details on AFF's Conference 2004, and to book your tickets, 'phone 01980 615525.

PISCATOR



"Who would be a politician?"

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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Losing leave, losing money?

LOSING leave is like losing money which should be in my pocket.

Due to commitments of all three Services it is increasingly difficult to fit annual leave entitlement in, especially when there are courses, overseas exercises and RAAT tasks not to mention operational commitments.

This year I stand to lose 19 working days' annual leave and ten working days' re-engagement leave. I have been told it is the commanding officer's policy that no leave is to be carried over to the new working year. I stand to "lose" a considerable amount of money, which I feel

should be in my pocket. If I had been able to take the leave I would have spent this valuable time with my wife and children. Either way the family loses out.

I understand the Armed Forces are paid 365 days a year, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, but we honestly can't be expected to work all the time.

Leave entitlement should be honoured, carried-over or, like civilian firms, a payment in lieu made.

I know I speak for many and this issue is raised constantly at the Armed Forces Pay Review Body. – **Sgt D E Smyth, Inverness.**



PS4(A) replies: Leave is under constant review and commanders at all levels are keen to ensure it is taken.

Where, for Service reasons, leave has to be denied the commanding officer may authorise the carrying forward of up to 15 days leave. PS4(A) are not in a position to comment on particular COs' policies as we are not informed of all the facts such as unit circumstances and commitments over the last year and the next year. However, it has been found that robust management of leave by COs is

generally most effective. When a CO says that no leave may be carried forward it is often a successful way of encouraging all ranks to identify time in the calendar and take leave. Acknowledging the comments from the recent AFPRB report, lost leave is being monitored. A number of options have recently been investigated to address the subject of lost leave, including financial compensation. None are by any means straightforward. Sgt Smyth should rest assured that his comments are not falling on deaf ears.

Where's my IT driving licence?

ALTHOUGH I completed the European Computer Driving Licence last December I am still awaiting the certificate issued on successful completion.

It is hard to believe that the ECDL, implemented by the DLO in order to meet the Armed Forces requirement for its personnel to reach the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) standards, cannot provide an efficient and coherent administrative system to deal with the delivery of certificates.

The system is apparently recognised as the fastest growing IT user qualification in more than 125 countries, though obviously not in the MoD. – **WO1 Keith Walters, Blandford.**



Amanda Gilbert MoD ECDL Management Centre (MEMC) replies:

Unfortunately, WO1 Walters's completion of the ECDL coincided with a data import error at the British Computer Society. We continue to pursue BCS for outstanding certificates. I am sure his certificate will be with him shortly.

I am sorry that WO1 Walters feels we are not providing a coherent and efficient administration procedure. The last year has seen a period of considerable upheaval and growth for MEMC, not least of which has been the move to an on-line system that gives immediate feedback to candidates. We strive to provide the best level of service possible and continue to work towards improving the service as a whole.

ECDL is growing dramatically within the MoD. New registrations have increased over 750 per cent since June 2003, the number of ECDL completions has also increased by over 650 per cent in the same period. It is clear the MoD ECDL scheme is immensely popular reflecting its international reputation.

We appreciate feedback from candidates and test centres and would encourage individuals to raise concerns or queries via our Helpdesk, tel 0845 330 9643.

PS... Not fooled

REFERENCE page 31 of your April issue, "High Level Deceit" appears the only true wording of the article.

Apart from the last paragraph, "This is a joke". The whole thing is a joke, but as usual you didn't fool me with your April fool attempt. Keep trying *Soldier*. – **Alec Coleman, Wickford, Essex.**



WRITE TO: SOLDIER, ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT, HANTS GU11 2DU
● E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

In the Army's eyes I don't count

REGARDING the bill going through parliament which will give legal status to same-sex partners (*Soldier*, March 2004) Colonel Max Marriner says: "... it will not include heterosexual partners because they have the option to marry."

Sadly this is not always the case. My partner and I have been together almost five years, we have a two-year old and would love to have been married years ago.

Due to my partner being married before and his ex-wife not agreeing to a divorce,

we have been in this situation for the last few years.

We were both serving when I found out I was pregnant. I was entitled to a quarter but my partner was not allowed to live with me. To care for my son I chose to leave the Army but stay near my partner.

I had to find a job and accommodation on the German net. I may not shop in the Naafi, drive my partner's car, or live in an MQ – despite being an ex-British soldier.

Why does the Army not look at individ-

ual cases? We have been to every welfare service, but to no avail. We have had the most stressful 18 months in order to keep our family together.

If my partner had been killed in the last five years, his assets would have gone to his ex-wife, leaving my son and me with no home, no job, no money and no Daddy, as in the Army's eyes I don't count.

We are at the end of this nightmare and will be married soon. For others who may be in a similar situation is there a better way? - **Joanne Scott, Germany.**

No reassurance on insurance

BEFORE deploying on Op Telic, I took the necessary step of checking with my life insurance company (Norwich Union) to ensure my policy was valid while serving in Iraq.

My premiums were increased from £12.97 to £44.68 a month. In the event of something happening to me my house would be paid for and my family secure.

On my return I made inquiries at my RAO regarding the reimbursement of the increase in my premiums for that six-month period, which resulted in blank faces. My broker, Forces Life, seems to think I am entitled to claim it back, so why does my RAO not know anything about the procedures? - **Name and address supplied.**

PS10(A) replies: It is hoped the individual's RAO was able to advise him of the current provisions of Section 6 of Chapter 15 of the Regulations for Army Allowances and Charges (RAAC), which refers to the procedures for the Partial Refund of Extra Insurance Premiums for Particular Service Risks. If he was informed by his FSA that, officially there was no specific claim under the current regulations, then he was correctly advised.

However, it should not be forgotten that, as with all allowances, wherever it is considered that legitimate circumstances outside the provisions of current regulations have occurred, a case may be submitted for exceptional authority. Therefore, the individual is quite at liberty to raise a case for consideration through the chain of command to PS10(A).

Future regulations in this respect, agreed by the Services, are more wide-ranging and will specifically allow exceptional authority to be sought through the chain of command. This policy is due to be published shortly, under Joint Service Publication 519, which will ultimately replace the provisions of the RAAC.



Major David Rainey, PS4(A) replies:

I have some sympathy with Joanne who has been at the very heart of the married/partnership dilemma. While she has established her family within a partnership, her future husband's wife was seeking to retain her marriage which is recognised as a legal entity and clearly provides her with rights and entitlements. Although the outcome of this difficult situation has been resolved, it is clear that individual choices are not easily accommodated within current UK law. Regardless of whether the period of five years' separation (before divorce proceedings can take place

without joint consent) appears arbitrary, it is the law. Ironically this body of family law also frustrated Joanne's aim in establishing her own marriage.

Equally, the Army is currently bound to apply UK law, which recognises marriage as the primary form of legal partnership between two people. This will of course be extended in law through the provision of same-sex partnership registration. However, we are not aware of any legislation in prospect to further assist partnerships, other than drawing attention to the recent and automatic extension of pension entitlements to partners.

Soldiers or Boy Scouts?

READING the materiel regulations I noticed that the Combat 95 clothing was designed not to have badges/flashses sewn all over it, due to the nature of the fabric.

As a tailoress employed in BFG, I and many soldiers I speak to are bemused by the amount of badges now worn on unit uniforms. An individual item of clothing, subject to qualifications, could be worn sporting on the right arm, Para wings, regimental flash, a tactical recognition flash (TRF) and a colloquial German badge. On the left arm a Union flag, brigade flash and a commando dagger, not forgetting a name-tape.

Personnel are initially issued five TRFs, brigade flashes and regimental flashes. The rest they have to buy.

On arrival or issue, soldiers often glue their flashes on, or we sew them on but on changing units they must remove their own flashes. I would estimate 90 per cent of them ruin the garment in the process.



PS12(A) replies: Entitled personnel are at liberty to sew badges onto Combat field and light jacket, but are not allowed to do so on cotton t-shirts, Norwegian shirt, fleece liner or the stashaway rainsuit jacket. (Annex B Sect 5 Pam 4 Vol 3 of Mat Regs refers).

The problem of having to change badges on combat kit is recognised by the Army Dress Committee, but in fact it is only the authorised formation badge, worn on the left arm under the Union Emblem, which has to be changed

Not a problem, as they can exchange it – but at what cost? In these days of careful budgeting, surely this is costing a small fortune? **Mrs D McMahon, Tailoress, BFG.**



"I told you super-glue wasn't a bright idea!"

when an individual is posted from one formation to another. Regimental and corps TRFs are approved qualification badges (in most cases) and of course like the Union Emblem itself are worn in perpetuity.

Badges worn in perpetuity should therefore be sewn on, and the affixing of formation badges will be at the direction of the local commander – but the use of glue would clearly not be the preferred option. I hope that will set minds at rest. Common sense must also prevail.

TALKBACK

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

Willkommen nach Deutschland

British soldiers have been living in Germany for 60 years. Is it easy to live in the German community? What can we learn from them, and they from us?

Sgt Steven Burrell, AGC, Hohne

I live off camp with my wife in Bergen. We are part of the German community but have mostly English friends. We use the local shops and prices compare well. What I would take back to the UK from here is the recycling system. It makes such a difference to the environment. What I miss from home are shops being open on Sundays.



Gdsm David Hunter, Scots Guards, Munster

The most difficult thing for me is the language barrier in the shops but I can now order a beer. I want to learn the language and the regiment are planning classes. What has impressed me is their transport systems, especially the trains which are cheaper and faster than in the UK.



Cpl Andrew Grant, Scots Guards, Munster

I live in the barracks but spend time in the community with my German girlfriend. Apart from the streets being cleaner, they have a different culture. They are generally sociable and friendly people.



Cpl Roy Lawer, RLC, Hohne

I live outside the camp and have become part of the local community. I have done a couple of German courses and have a German girlfriend. They are strict on recycling and refuse disposal and as a result Germany is cleaner than the UK. I do miss Sky football though. Germany is what England could be with more effort and social responsibility.



Gdsm Tam Johnston, Scots Guards, Munster

I enjoy socialising in the community. It is cheaper to go out here than in London, our last base, but I feel a bit intimidated by the language. I'd love to take the trains home. They are clean, fast, efficient and cheap – which is everything ours are not.



Pte Stuart Armstrong, 14 Sqn, RLC, ARRC Support Battalion, Rheindahlen

I live in JHQ but have been out to places like Cologne. I don't think the shopping is as good here as the UK. If I wanted something really fashionable, I'd buy it from home over the internet. The most noticeable thing about the country is how clean the streets are.



2nd Lt Anna Hallsworth, 14 Sqn RLC, ARRC Support Battalion, Rheindahlen

I live in the officers' mess but have visited Düsseldorf and Mönchengladbach. Shopping can be confusing. What is displayed on the outside isn't necessarily what you will find inside. I wish they were a little clearer.



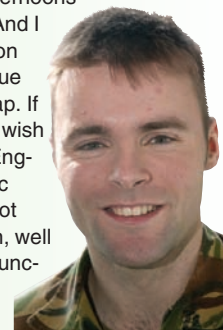
LCpl Kelly Williams, 14 Sqn RLC, ARRC Support Bn, Rheindahlen

I have been in Germany for more than seven years and enjoy it. I live behind the wire but get out to the local towns like Düsseldorf and Roermond. There are good shopping facilities and the towns are fine to socialise in. The Germans are more environmentally friendly than we are in the UK and do recycling in a big way. And it shows.

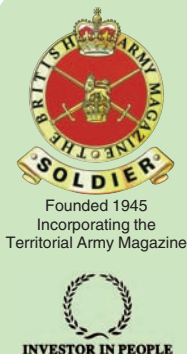


LCpl Tony Winstanley, AGC, Hohne

The big drawback here is that many shops close on Saturday afternoons and all on Sundays. And I miss Sunday afternoon sports, Premier League football and Sky on tap. If there was one thing I wish I could take back to England it would be public transport, which is a lot better here. It is clean, well maintained, cheap, punctual and efficient.



Interviews: Ray Routledge Pictures: Steve Dock



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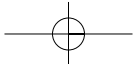
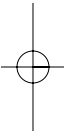
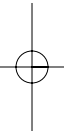
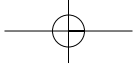
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