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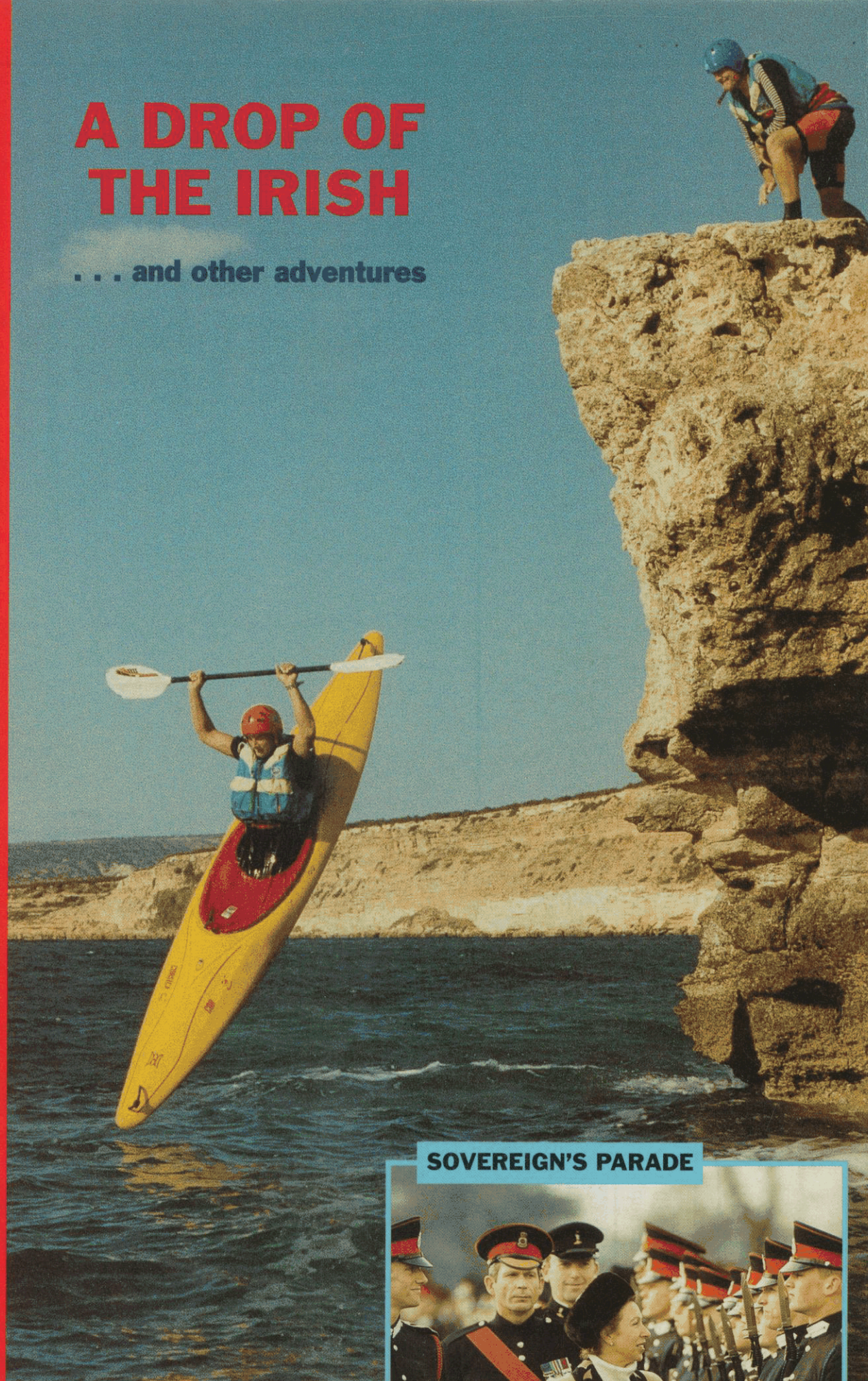
SOLDIER

MAGAZINE
OF THE
BRITISH
ARMY



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Incorporating the Territorial Army magazine

January 23, 1995

Vol 51/2

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FRONT COVER: (Main picture) – A soldier of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment “takes off” during adventurous training at Paramali Beach in the Western Sovereign Base Area, Cyprus. More reports of adventure in Pages 28-29.

(Picture: HOBFC Cyprus)

(Inset) – The Princess Royal reviews the Sovereign's Parade at RMA Sandhurst.

(Picture: Terry Champion)

● **GULF WAR SYNDROME:** An RAF doctor is examining Op Granby veterans who suffer from a mystery illness. *Pages 11-13.*

● **5/8 KINGS:** TA soldiers found the going hard during a training camp on Ascension Island's volcanic slopes. *Pages 14-15.*

● **HUMOUR:** Capt Chip Wood RE, award-

winning cartoonist, takes a wry look at the value-for-money Army. *Pages 16-17.*

● **UP THE JUNGLE:** Soldiers of 1 QLR on exercise in Belize. *Pages 26-27.*

● **FAMILIES:** New deal for lone parents, and more flight choices for Germany-based children at UK schools. *Pages 32-33.*

Peace sword for Nienburg sappers



Maj Gen Roddy Cordy-Simpson (centre), GOC 1 (UK) Armoured Division, accepts the Wilkinson Sword of Peace from Mr Derek Wooler of Wilkinson Sword before presenting it in turn to Lt Col Mark Mans, CO 21 Engineer Regiment. The Nienburg-based regiment received the prestigious award for its extensive and wide-ranging human-

itarian activities in former Yugoslavia and Belize. Sappers from the unit had also been involved with an orphanage in Nienburg and with the rescue of white rhino in Zimbabwe.

Special mention was made in the citation of 45 Fd Sp Sqn and 21 Regt REME Wksp in supporting the regiment's deployments.

'Extraordinary' courage earns QCB

TWO Royal Logistic Corps soldiers have been awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery.

Pte David Hall, then serving with 2 Close Support Regiment RLC and now attached to the Warminster Support Unit, saved the lives of two people trapped after two cars collided and burst into flames outside Princess Royal Barracks, Gutersloh.

Despite flames spreading across the road, Pte Hall freed a female passenger then returned to help the driver

who was strapped in. Although the petrol tank exploded, Pte Hall displayed great courage in removing the driver with the help of ATpr Geordie McCullough.

The man had stopped breathing and Pte Hall could find no sign of a pulse. While ATpr McCullough pumped the driver's chest, Hall gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation

until German rescue services arrived.

A British medical officer who attended the scene attested to Pte Hall's "quite extraordinary" courage. His "cool bravery and quick-thinking" was also witnessed by a senior officer of the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps.

His Queen's Commendation for Bravery, one of the highest awards for non-operational gallantry, was gazetted on January 10, as was a QCB to Cpl Shaun Taylor, also of 2 Close

● **Turn to Page 5**

CMH closure to go ahead

ARMED Forces Minister Nicholas Soames has confirmed that Front Line First proposals for Defence Medical Services – including the establishment of a core hospital based on Haslar at Gosport, Hants, and the closure of the Cambridge at Aldershot – will go ahead.

Secondary care needs for the Armed Forces in the UK will be provided by the single tri-Service core hospital based on Royal Naval Hospital Haslar and supported by a “continuing presence” at the Duchess of Kent Military Hospital, Caterick and by the MoD medical staff working in three military district hospital units.

One of the units will be located at Plymouth’s Derriord District General Hospital, with the remaining sites to be chosen by the end of February.

The Princess Mary’s Hospital, Cyprus will form part of a tri-Service Secondary Care Agency, and the future of the two Service hospitals in Germany is to be considered further, following the completion of a market testing programme.

All secondary care, he pointed out, will be managed as a tri-Service Defence Agency, which will continue to develop

Gen Rose to be AG

LT GEN Sir Michael Rose will become the new Adjutant General in July after returning to Britain later this month following a year as United Nations Commander in Bosnia.

Instead of returning to his previous appointment as Commander UK Field Army and Inspector General of the TA he will be promoted general and replace Gen Sir Michael Wilkes, who is retiring to become Lieutenant Governor of Jersey.

● Britain is considering a request to send more troops to Bosnia following a decision by the United Nations to ask for an extra 6,000 soldiers to monitor the latest cease-fire.

increased links with the National Health Service.

The agency will be headed by a chief executive reporting through the Surgeon General to the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff responsible for personnel matters.

Under the Front Line First measures, dentists from all three Services will be brought into a single, tri-Service agency which will be submitted to a market test.

Another potential candidate for market testing will be the Defence Services Medical Rehabilitation Unit at RAF Headley Court, while the scope for alternative uses of the

Royal Army Medical College at Millbank will also be examined.

“The reorganisation of the Defence Medical Services, including the closures of the Cambridge Military Hospital and the Princess Alexandra’s RAF Hospital (Wroughton), is intended to be complete by April 1996,” said Mr Soames.

“Because of this, the closure of the Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital at Woolwich will be brought forward to the spring of 1995, at which time we expect to transfer the hospital to the NHS, although a Service presence will remain for some months afterwards.”



Paisley sappers SSgt Archie Essler (front) and Spr James Turner (back) help police to ferry residents to safety

Sappers float to rescue in Paisley floods

COMBAT engineers from Paisley-based 102 Field Squadron (V) found themselves in urgent demand last month when the worst floods in living memory hit western Scotland.

The TA sappers, members of 71 (Scottish) Engineer Regiment (V), were rapidly diverted from conventional training to deploy trucks, Land Rovers and dinghies to help hundreds of residents of a low-lying estate where homes had been swamped after 48 hours’ continuous rain.

For more than two days, the soldiers, operating in support

of the emergency and social services, worked to get stranded people to safety and took police and social workers into the worst-hit areas.

Resources Troop commander Capt Brian Simpson said: “Our taskings have been many and varied, including taking supplies into the area. And we have rescued all ages of people, from a two-week-old baby to a 97-year-old lady.”

Germans welcome proud Poachers

MEMBERS of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment were given a rousing official welcome home by the German city of Celle after their six-month tour of duty in Bosnia.

Watched by families and friends, the Poachers paraded in front of the City Hall, where they were inspected by Lord Mayor Dr Herbert Severin and Brig Andrew Ridgway, Commander British Forces in Bosnia at the time of their tour.

“The City of Celle would like to thank you for trying to maintain the peace under the most difficult and dangerous conditions,” Dr Severin said.

He, like Brig Ridgway, paid tribute to Capt Stephen Wormald, who was killed by a land mine early in the tour.



Lord Mayor of Celle, Dr Herbert Severin, escorted by commanding officer Lt Col John McColl (far left) and company commander Maj Alasdair Wild, inspects soldiers of B Company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, as Celle accords the soldiers a civic welcome on their return from Bosnia



Fd Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, presents a commendation to Sgt Graham Hickson at Hohn for distinguished service during a Grapple tour. Based at Gornji Vakuf, he helped to keep supply routes open while vicious fighting took place between warring Croat and Muslim factions

Dragoons on UN medal parade

SOLDIERS of A and B Squadrons, The Light Dragoons, newly returned from their duties in Bosnia, paraded for a UN medal presentation at their Hohn base.

As medium reconnaissance troops, their lightly armoured Scimitar vehicles were ideal for the remote areas which they

patrolled. Both squadrons spent some time in Maglaj, where the British base frequently came under fire from Serb positions.

Six soldiers from the regiment – which has had troops serving in Bosnia for more than 18 months – received a second medal for good conduct at the medal parade. They included the RSM, WO1 (RSM) Mel Tazey.

A commendation was presented by Fd Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, to Sgt Graham Hickson for his outstanding work on the supply routes during an earlier deployment.

RLC soldiers commended for bravery

● From Page 3

Support Regiment. He was leading a group of heavy trucks on a German motorway in atrocious weather when one skidded on black ice.

The truck burst through the central reservation and crushed two cars on the opposite carriageway. Other vehicles

ploughed into the wreckage, and one car burst into flames.

While extinguishing the blaze, Cpl Taylor saw that fuel was leaking from the crashed truck. He managed to switch the fuel off seconds before the car re-ignited.

While putting out the fire for

a second time, he noticed a casualty in the car, but a quick check showed the person was already dead.

He offered assistance to a second car in which two more people had died before getting the driver and crew out of the crashed Army lorry and securing their weapons.

Cpl Taylor got his remaining soldiers to control the traffic until German emergency services arrived on the scene, then accompanied the injured men to hospital.

Throughout the incident, says the commendation, he exhibited the highest standards of leadership and initiative.

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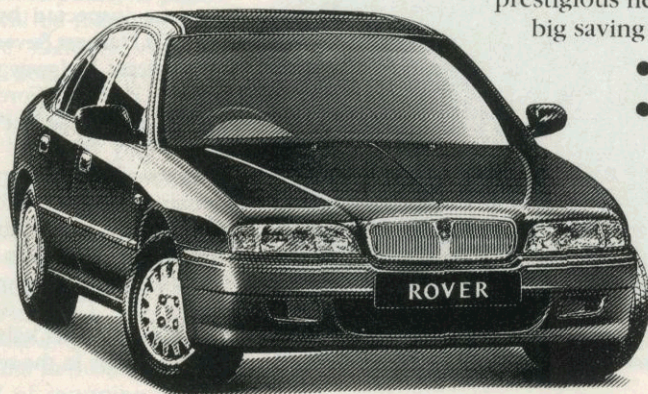
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Taking a leaf out of the Brits' book

THE British Army is at the forefront of efforts to draw up clear operational guidelines for future UN peacekeeping operations.

Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said in a Commons written reply last month that the United Kingdom had played an active part in discussions aimed at enhancing the capacity of the UN to mount peacekeeping operations.

"In addition, the British Army is developing a manual on peacekeeping on which there has been consultation with the United Nations."

● In 1993, 20 per cent of other ranks worked in excess of 60 hours per week in Bosnia, said Mr Soames in a separate answer on December 20.

● ● ●
Shadow Defence Secretary David Clark asked in a written

question how much the MoD had spent on fox hunting for members of the Armed Forces in each of the last five years. Mr Soames replied: "Fox hunting is undertaken by some members of mounted units as part of normal training and costs are not separately identified."

"No additional costs are incurred by my department as a result of participation in this activity since these are met by the individuals concerned."

● ● ●
Turning the Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot into a tri-Service hospital instead of RN Hospital, Haslar, as has been decided, would have cost more than £66 million, said Armed Forces Minis-



A summary of Defence topics from Westminster

ter Nicholas Soames.

Replying to a question from Aldershot MP Julian Critchley, he said that while disposal and redevelopment decisions for the Aldershot site had not yet been taken, any future plan would take account of listed buildings. The hospital is due to close next year.

Overall savings from the reorganisation of the Defence medical services would be £50 million a year from 1996-97.

● ● ●
Salisbury Plain will not be used for live firing of the Multi-Launch Rocket System (MLRS) in the foreseeable future.

Live firing of both MLRS and AS90 will be carried out at the Otterburn training area. A propor-

tion of AS90 live firing and tactical movement and MLRS manoeuvre training will continue on the Plain (see back cover).

The Armed Forces Minister said the decision had been taken "because the Salisbury Plain training area training area cannot accommodate all the training demands placed on it and has to be managed at a level which will not cause unacceptable environmental damage".

● ● ●
Cost of modifying the SA80 rifle to bring it to operational standard is estimated to be £13 million.

● ● ●
The MoD's telephone bill fell for the second year in succession in 1993-94, to £61.4 million. The figure for the previous year was £64.9 million and for 1991-92, £67.1 million.

RAMC to bear brunt of cuts

THE Royal Army Medical Corps will bear the brunt of 400 remaining redundancies to be made as part of the Defence Cost Studies announced by the Ministry of Defence on July 14.

Most of the original reduction of 2,200 has been found through natural wastage but the final 400 will be found by nominations for involuntary redundancy.

RAMC other ranks and officers will comprise approximately three quarters of the total, which was announced on December 16.

Details of the requirement, timetable and compensation terms will be announced in April and the process should be completed by April 1997.

RWF for Bosnia

THE 1st Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, commanded by Lt Col Jonathon Riley, (not the 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales as previously reported), will replace the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment in Bosnia.

New Year honours

Order of the Bath

GCB – Gen Sir Charles Waters KCB CBE ADC Gen, late Glosters.

CB – Maj Gen S W St J Lytle, late AAC; Maj Gen A L Meier OBE, late RCT (now ret'd).

Order of the British Empire

KBE – Lt Gen A A Denison-Smith MBE, late Gren Gds.

CBE – Col P R Barry, late 17/21 L; Col (Hon Brig) C H Bond OBE, late QDG (now ret'd); Col S D Lambe, late RA; Brig C J Marchant-Smith, late Green Howards; Brig E P O Springfield, late Int Corps.

OBE – Lt Col (now Col) T G French TD, LI TA; Lt Col G K Geddie RLC; Lt Col D L Hooper, Gib Regt (now ret'd); Lt Col R C J Martin RGJ; Lt Col R J Rimmer RGJ; Lt Col W F Shuttlewood MBE, RGR; Lt Col R J S Smith QGM, RA; Lt Col M S Vine RGBW; Lt Col G C Grosvenor, Duke of Westminster, QOY TA.

MBE – Maj N Le B Allbeury PWRR; WO2 D O Allen R Sigs;

Sgt R J Beards RAMC (now discharged); SSgt (now WO2) T A J Bennett RLC; Capt R L D Booles RAMC TA; SSgt S B F Bradley AGC(PS); WO2 A D Carter LI TA; Cpl D J Clayton, Kings (now disch); Maj L A Cooke SASC; WO1 D L Cox, Gren Gds (now disch); Sgt S G Cozens, Int Corps; Capt D M Cullen RA; Cpl M S Dale AGC(PRO); Capt (Actg Maj) J A Donovan PARA; Maj B J M Draper KRH; WO2 J Drury RA; Sgt B W Duncan AGC(PS); Maj T J Dyer RA; SSgt J Eaton RLC TA (now disch).

WO2 G N Ellwood AGC(PRO) (now disch); Maj J M K Erskine BW; WO1 D B Evans AGC(PS); Maj M D Fogg, R Sigs; Maj S A C Frere-Cook PWRR; Gnr P S Furby RA (now disch); Maj J W Garnett RTR; SSgt G W Grant AGC (PRO); Maj M J Henderson, D and D; Cpl (now Sgt) M L Hickey QLR; SSgt C D Hodson BEM, AGC(PS); Capt (Actg Maj) M A Jenkins REME; WO1 B Keenan REME TA; Maj M P King, D and D; Maj (QGO) Lalbahadur Gurung RGR; WO2 (Actg WO1) K C G Lamb REME; Maj A R Mackie LD; Capt T Marsh LI TA; Maj R Martin, Green Howards; Maj (now Lt Col) G J Meacher RLC; SSgt K Miller

REME (now disch); Maj C R D Morpeth, Hldrs; Maj Ombahadur Chhetri BEM, RGR; Sgt J C Porter REME; LCpl (now Cpl) M A Potter, Int Corps; SSgt Rachhabahadur Gurung RGR; LCpl J Runciman AGC(PS); Capt J A Sandison QGM, Gren Gds; SSgt (now WO2) Shivakumar Limbu RGR; Sgt M Smith RLC; Maj B S Smy REME.

WO1 (now Lt) D Stewart RAMC; SSgt G J Stoker RCT; SSgt S A Stout QLR; WO2 J C J Strachan RA; WO2 (now Lt) J W R Swanson AGC(PS); Maj T H P Taylor RA; Cpl (now Sgt) C P Teesdale QDG; WO2 (now WO1) R S Thornton RAVC; Capt Chun Ying Tse HKMSC (now ret'd); WO1 H B Ward AGC(PS) (now disch); Maj D V Watson PWRR; SSgt (Actg WO2) P J Watts, Corps of Army Music; Maj L R Wilson RA; Capt (Actg Maj) L Wood, R Sigs; Maj P T Wood RAMC; WO2 P P Woods RLC; Capt T W Worster RA; Maj T W Wye RE.

Royal Red Cross

RRC – Lt Col P M Watson QARANC.

ARRC – SSgt (now Capt) P F Macdonald QARANC.

Exit bandsmen – enter musicians

A NEW corps – the Corps of Army Musicians – has been formed.

All 1,113 active members of the British Army's 29 bands are members, although their loyalties and ties will be to their individual cap badges.

Given the Royal Assent on September 1, the Corps of Army Musicians has no badge of its own.

One effect of the formation of the corps, whose director is Col Timothy Hoggarth, Commandant of the Royal Military

School of Music at Kneller Hall, Twickenham, is that the term "bandsman" has now been superseded by the rank of "musician".

The official abbreviation for the new corps' name will be CAMus.

Blue Helmets' 'final' appearance



The Cyprus Polo Association secured the services of the Royal Signals parachute display team, the Blue Helmets, on their last public display, when they "dropped in" on the polo ground at Happy Valley, Episkopi, to open the final of the Gynane Cup. Seen with guest jumpers Capt Alan Wright, 1 PWO (2nd left) and Sgt Graham Pemberton RLC (far right) are team members WO2 John Williams, Sgt Lynne Doughty and Cpl Eddy Smerdon.

Birthday buglers



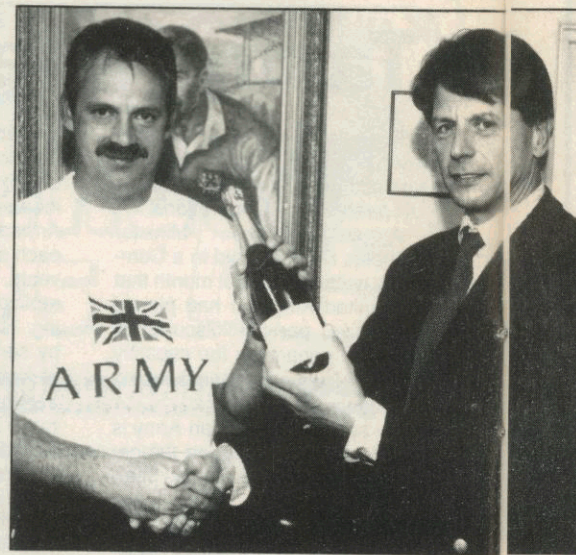
Father and son, Cpl Jimmy Barker and Pte David Barker, of the Bugle Platoon, 7th Battalion, The (Durham) Light Infantry, with other members of the battalion's Burma Band and Bugles, helped Capt Richard Annan, the Light Infantry's only surviving recipient of the Victoria Cross (he won the first Army VC of the Second World War at the River Dyle in Belgium in 1940) celebrate his 80th birthday by playing him in at a party at their barracks.



Weekend warriors

Helping to test the efficiency of the new operations room at Wyvern Barracks, Exeter - home of 43 (Wessex) Brigade - were Sgt Alison McEwen (left) and 2nd Lt Cathy Little, both members of 6th Battalion, The (Somerset and Cornwall) Light Infantry (Volunteers).

They were taking part in the brigade's Exercise Western Wyvern on Devon's Woodbury Common, during which the room was put into operation for the first time.



HAVING A BALL

Army Careers in the South West helped sponsor a cup match between Plymouth Argyle and Exeter City to raise the awareness of career opportunities in the Army. Presenting the Man of the Match award to Exeter goalkeeper and captain Peter Fox is Lt Col (Retd) Roddy Bridge, Army Careers Officer, Exeter.



Note-worthy Northumbrians

Northumbrian pipers from The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers descended on Alnwick, Northumbria, for three days of intensive tuition at their fourth annual pipers' convention, organised by Capt Fred Calvert, regimental admin officer of 6th (Northumberland) Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. Among them, wearing the traditional plaid of Northumbrian tartan, were (left to right) Dmr Stephen Poutney and LCpl Keith Black (both 2 RRF); LCpl Richard Johnstone (who won the intermediate class of a piping competition held at the Northumberland Gathering during the convention) and Sgt Stephen Holt (both of the Normandy Band); LCpl Darren Hardy (Volunteer (Northumberland) Band) and Cpl Stephen Hardman (1 RRF).



A first for Sandhurst



Cadets Crispin and Angie Driver-Williams became the first married couple to graduate together from the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst at the Sovereign's Parade on December 9.

Crispin, who passed out top of Rowallan Company, following his late father into bomb disposal with 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC at Bicester, and Angie, now a pay officer in the AGC, joining the Irish Guards at Chelsea Barracks.

The Princess Royal took the salute from cadets who included Prince Ali al Hussein of Jordan. King Hussein, himself a Sandhurst graduate, and Queen Noor, were present.



That's Brilliant, Dad

Coldstream Guardsman Lee Cochran was only too pleased to join HMS Brilliant, the regiment's affiliated Royal Navy ship, at Gibraltar with a small group from 7 Company on the last leg of the homeward voyage to Devonport. It meant that he was able to see something of his father, CPO Jim Cochran RN, a veteran of the Falklands conflict, who has another son, Jason, a guardsman serving with the 1st Battalion in Germany.

GUID EFFORT, GEORGE!

Cpl George Moles, Black Watch, came out tops in the Services solo bugling section of the annual beating competition held at the piping and drumming wing of the Army Training Regiment, Glencorse.

Core blimey!



Top man in the hotly contested annual Super Soldier competition at Romford's TA unit, 124 (Havering) Petroleum Squadron RLC (V), was apple farmer Cpl Barry Took. Contestants were tested on everything from skill at arms to night navigation.

PEOPLE PEOPLE PEOPLE



QLRs' ship comes home

Proving that there are "Active" inter-Service relationships in Lancashire are (left to right) Artificer Tim Robbins RN, WO2 Len Hamilton, Lt George Breslin RN and Lt Col John Downham, regimental secretary of The Queen's Lancashire Regiment.

The model is of HMS Active, a ship which, until she was decommissioned last year, had been associated with the town of Burnley and the regiment (during the past

13 years many QLR soldiers served aboard as "exchange sailors").

Her much smaller-scale counterpart had been gathering dust in a naval store-room until Army recruiter Len "rescued" the vessel and arranged for it to be displayed in a new home - the regiment's museum at Fulwood Barracks, Preston.

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D7

A British soldier carries out a "sniff test" during a Gulf War chemical alert. Far right - A blazing Iraqi BRDM-2 equipped with SA-9 missile launcher



Gulf War syndrome

- fact or fiction?

BLACK clouds of oil smoke from Kuwait's burning wells are still vivid in the memory for those who fought in the Gulf War.

Many, too, cannot forget the anxiety and fear they felt when it seemed Saddam Hussein would use chemical and biological weapons against the Coalition forces.

Now, if tabloid headlines are to be believed, there is a new enemy at the door.

Sensational stories on the effects of so-called Gulf War syndrome make it increasingly impossible to ignore claims that a mysterious debilitating illness is ruining the lives of soldiers who served in the region.

Thousands of US Servicemen are, according to these reports, suffering from ailments ranging from skin rashes and chronic fatigue to respiratory and heart problems and impotence.

More than 400 British ex-

Servicemen, suffering from unexplained illness which they claim is Gulf War syndrome, are preparing to seek damages against the Ministry of Defence.

Twenty-four have been granted legal aid in principle so their legal advisers can prepare their cases.

Wg Cdr Bill Coker RAF is the military physician responsible for examining Gulf War syndrome patients referred to him by their doctors.

His main concern, he told *Soldier*, is the health of those who serve in the Armed Forces.

"My role is to examine every person referred. I regard them as I would any other patient who is referred to hospital for assessment and diagnosis. I see them as individuals with a problem and symptoms that need explaining.

"I am absolutely open-

minded about it all. At the beginning we did not know whether there was such a thing as Gulf War syndrome or not, and we still do not.

"All I can say is that, having seen more than 60 cases. I have not identified any condition that is common to all the people I have seen. I have not been able to recognise a distinct condition that I would label as a 'syndrome' - a collection of signs and symptoms with a common cause which is unique to the Gulf.

"There is no evidence that a distinct syndrome exists as a result of Gulf War service.

In two separate cases, Wg Cdr Coker diagnosed kidney disease and inflammatory bowel disease, both conditions which could strike at any time and affect anyone. There was no evidence in either case to suggest that service in the Gulf precipitated

the diseases which, now properly diagnosed, could be treated.

According to him, most of the patients he had seen displayed symptoms typical of chronic fatigue syndrome or myalgic encephalomyelitis (commonly known as ME).

Their symptoms included feelings of tiredness, lassitude, malaise, irritability, increased aggression, poor family relationships, repeated headaches and hair loss.

"Those are all symptoms which are suggestive of what used to be called psychosomatic disease.

"In addition, there have been a small number of cases of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which have been referred to our psychiatrist for confirmation of the diagnosis," he said.

Although most of those he had seen are no longer in the Armed Forces, some serving

● Turn to next page

Report:
Laurie
Manton

Fact or fiction?

● From Page 11

personnel have also been examined.

"As a clinician, I would urge people to come forward," said Wg Cdr Coker.

"A myth has grown up that those coming forward will be seen as troublemakers. That is absolute nonsense. Our military medical services exist to deal with Servicemen who have problems.

"Everything they say to me is in confidence."

Col Chris Box, late RAMC, explained that many of the symptoms, including tiredness, lack of concentration, irritability and an inability to get up in the morning, were commonplace in everyday civilian life.

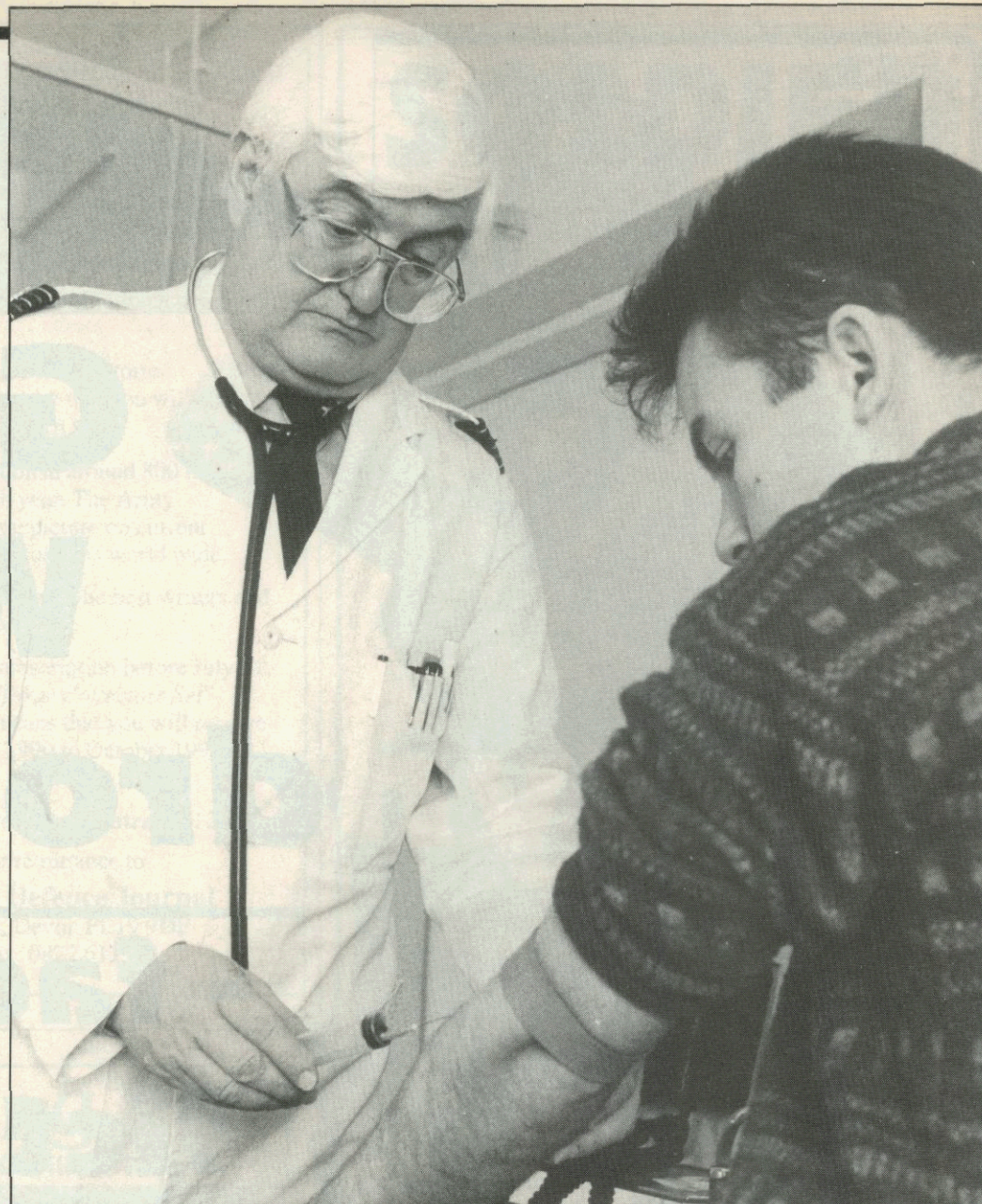
"For example, in a two-week period nation-wide, 38 per cent of people visiting their GPs complained of headaches; nerves, irritability and depression accounted for 21 per cent; and 16 per cent said they were suffering undue tiredness," he said.

Wg Cdr Coker stressed that he took all the symptoms, even the common ones, seriously.

Patients were examined and their conditions investigated using an array of tests including X-rays, scans, blood tests and electrocardiographs.

Not all who had been referred to him were front-line troops.

"There is a wide spread,"



Wing Commander Bill Coker takes a sample of blood from a Serviceman being screened at RAF Hospital Wroughton for signs of a Gulf War syndrome

he said. "Some people arrived at Al Jubayl, entered Iraq and were part of the ground forces that liberated Kuwait. Others worked at RAF Muharragh

war hospital in Bahrain or spent most of the war in Dhahran.

"One man who came for-

ward was on a ship that never got further than the eastern Mediterranean."

Was tabloid coverage of the

I still feel ill, says Gulf veteran Terry

Terry Walker (ex-RAOC) was attached to a forward repair group of 11 Armoured Workshop REME during Operation Granby.

He believes he is suffering from Gulf War syndrome, and is seeking compensation from the Ministry of Defence.

He told *Soldier* he been referred to a military physician and had undergone a battery of tests at RAF Hospital Wroughton.

"My blood was tested in various ways, a bowel biopsy was carried out, and my immune system was checked. I am seeing a psychologist and a psychiatrist. It is suggested I am suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

"The results of my tests proved negative, as I expected. I am happy with the way I was tested, but disappointed at the result. I still feel ill."

Pictures: Mike Weston



Flt Sgt Stevie Palmer checks an image on a magnetic resonance imaging scanner at the Royal Air Force's Princess Alexandra Hospital, Wroughton where Gulf War veterans are being screened

issue encouraging Gulf veterans to imagine symptoms?

"It is not helpful," said Wg Cdr Coker. "The press are not presenting a balanced view, but then balanced views don't sell newspapers.

"A so-called 'mysterious killer disease' makes good copy, like the necrotising fasciitis headlines - 'Killer bug ate my face'. You could write a thriller about the mystery disease that the Ministry of Defence is covering up. It is a marvellous story, but it is not good medicine.

"We have nothing to hide and really want to get to the truth of the matter."

Besides the Americans and British, of the other national forces represented in the Gulf, only a handful of Canadians had come forward, said Col Box.

In America several thousand former soldiers are claiming their health has been affected by service in the Gulf.

"The American authorities have stated publicly that they have no evidence to suggest a syndrome exists. The same applies in Kuwait. The Kuwaiti population and the Iraqis themselves are not suffering from anything similar."

Wg Cdr Coker spent six

months in Iraq with UN inspection teams immediately following the Gulf War, all the while taking nerve agent pre-treatment system (NAPS) tablets, which have been blamed by some as the cause of the syndrome.

"NAPS were used as a pre-treatment for nerve agent poisoning during the Gulf War. The dosage was one tenth of that given to sufferers of the nerve condition, myasthenia gravis, for the past 40 years.

"It is interesting to note that, of all the patients I have seen, only one was actually unwell during his time in the Gulf, which is when you would expect problems to arise.

"The tablets were extensively trialled by several hundred soldiers at Porton Down before being taken into service. I am happy that NAPS tablets are not to blame."

Some US troops have claimed that vaccinations given to them could be the cause of their illnesses.

In the United Kingdom,

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED

IF YOU are suffering symptoms which you link to your service in the Gulf you should see your medical officer (or civilian GP if you are no longer serving) and ask to be referred to Col C J Box at DMSD, Lacon House, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8RY.

He will organise an appointment with Wg Cdr Coker at Wroughton.

Normal rules of medical confidentiality apply - and everyone will be treated sympathetically.

the War Pensions Agency has accepted a claim from one soldier who suffered an adverse reaction from a vaccination, and had since developed a food allergy. However, there was nothing to suggest that the jabs could cause a syndrome to develop.

Those given to British troops deployed to the Gulf all have common application in civilian life.

HOUSE LINE

Written answer to House of Commons, October 31, 1994 by Armed Forces Minister, Nicholas Soames:

A medical assessment programme has been established for all former Gulf personnel who have come forward with concerns about their health.

As part of the assessment they are given a very detailed medical examination consisting of tests and investigations tailored to the patient's medical and occupational history, their reported symptoms and clinical signs.

In addition to clinical information gained through these assessments, we are kept informed of relevant developments by former Gulf allies, including the findings of the ongoing American medical assessment programme for US Gulf veterans.

Information from the medical assessment programme and from other recognised scientific sources is reviewed by medical and scientific experts in my Department covering a range of specialties, including general medicine, occupational medicine, public health medicine, pathology and psychiatry.

These investigations have produced no evidence of any medical condition peculiar to service in the Gulf.

Written answer to House of Lords, October 18, 1994 by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence Lord Henley:

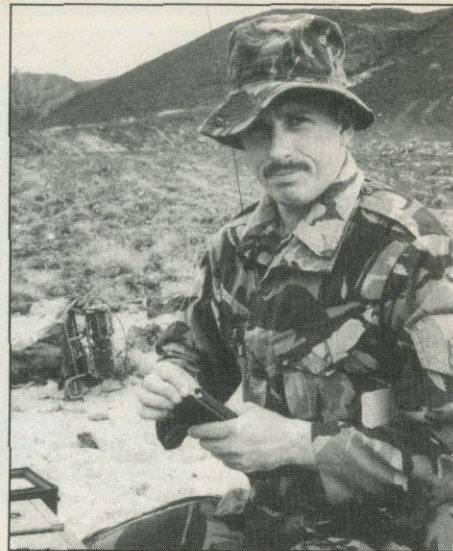
There is no evidence that chemical weapons were used in the Gulf War. Had they been used, their effects would have been early, severe and unmistakable.

The Government have repeatedly urged Gulf War veterans who are concerned that their health has suffered as a result of the Gulf service to see their general practitioners and ask to be referred to the Armed Forces medical services for assessment by a military specialist.

The diagnostic investigations employed in these assessments are tailored to the requirements of each patient after considering their medical history, reported symptoms and clinical signs.

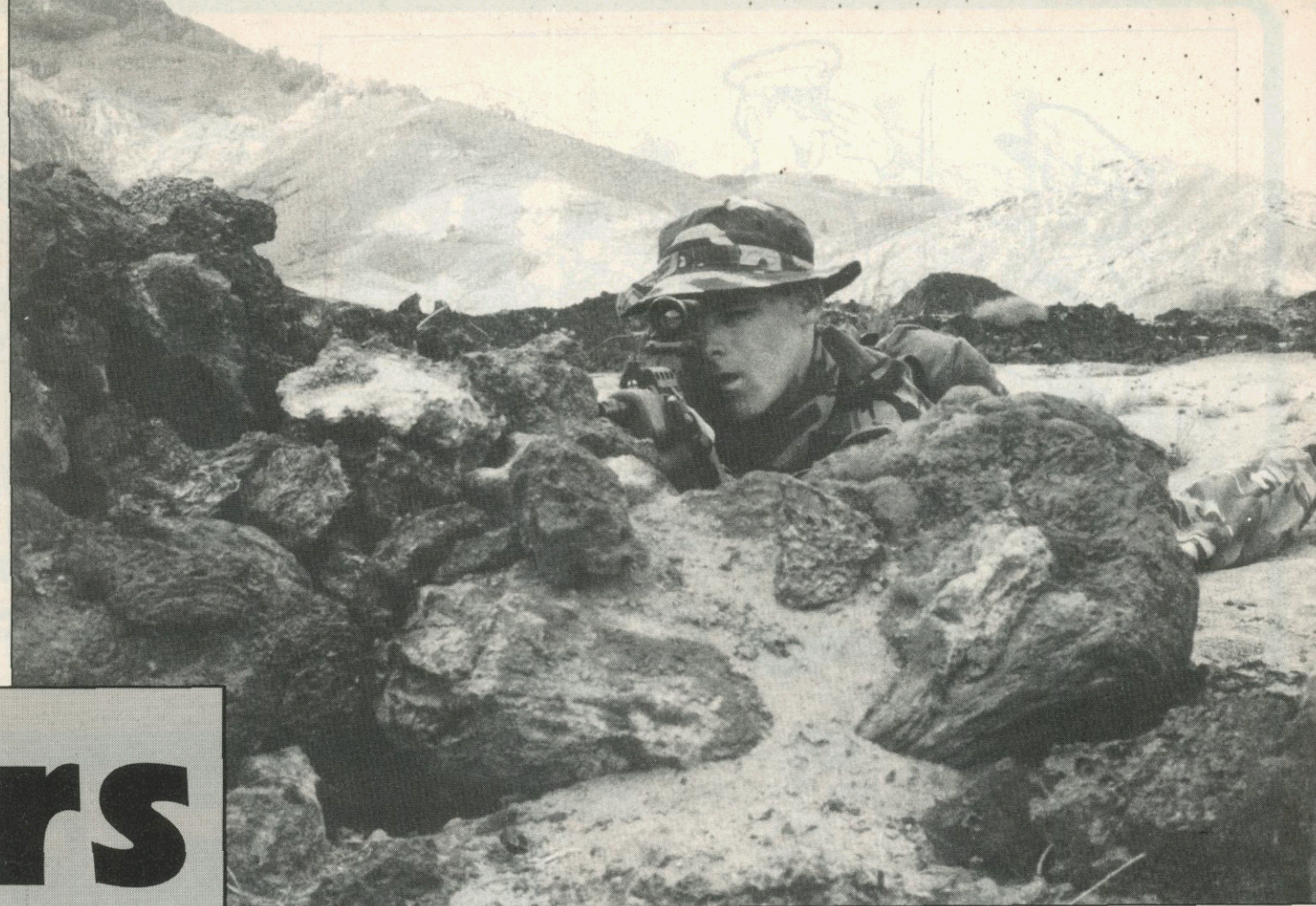
Further specialist investigations are, and will continue to be, potentially available to help determine whether a patient might be suffering from long term very low level contamination from chemical agents, although the tests are of limited reliability.

To date, however, the assessments have produced no evidence which would require such specialist investigation.



Above - Kgn John Thomas loads magazines on the range

Left - Feet of endurance. Army medic LCpl John Mayall (right) sorts out a footsore Cpl Tony Francis who had just completed a three-day tab across Ascension Island



Moonwalkers

Ascension gives 5/8 Kings a bumpy ride

THEY were the envy of everyone as they set off on their annual camp. By their own admission, they felt a little smug as they talked excitedly about their destination.

After all, they had spent previous camps freezing in damp woods or shivering in makeshift trenches on Otterburn training area - a bleak corner of Northumberland on the Scottish borders.

The new location held the promise of a warm and welcoming climate, sandy beaches and fascinating wildlife.

Ascension, a tiny volcanic island in the south Atlantic thrown into world focus as a stop-over point for British troops during the Falklands War, beckoned, and the men of V Company, 5th/8th (Volunteer) Battalion, The King's Regiment responded eagerly.

Four days later, as Exercise Turtle Reef began proper, their illusions had been tempered by reality. Sweat trickled through the dust and the grime on their already greasy, camouflaged faces.

They had just marched several miles across a nightmare landscape of fine sand, hardened lava clinker and moving plates of rock interspersed with shards of lethal volcanic spikes.

It was with some relief that

the company halted for a brief rest and water. Despite their previous training and several days of acclimatisation, nothing had prepared them for this.

Only one man knew exactly what they were going through - and he was sitting three miles away near the aptly-named Broken Tooth range, planning more agony. CSgt Barry Craib had arrived in Ascension a week earlier to finalise details of the final phase of Turtle Reef, a phase he called Moonwalker.

"Those lads will never have endured such a varied, difficult and dangerous terrain in one day anywhere in the world. They will have been to hell and back.

"I really rate this bunch as one of the best in the Territorial Army. You have to work with them to appreciate what they do," said the Highlander who joined V Company a year ago.

His praise would not have

been appreciated by the soldiers at that moment. Their next objective was Green Mountain (2,400m), five miles away.

Grim-faced the company headed towards Broken Tooth. By now they were exhausted and in no mood for games... the ideal time to set a terrorist trap.

Six brave souls, all stationed on the island with the Royal Air Force, volunteered to act as enemy and relished the opportunity of a bit of gamesmanship with some part-time soldiers.

They really enjoyed their roles as snipers until, that is, they were captured, searched and questioned by V Company.

"I had no idea the TA soldiers would be so professional. I was really impressed with the way they handled the situation," said SAC Dai Miller, nursing cuts and bruises

acquired when he was captured.

"I certainly wouldn't like to cross them for real."

SAC Miller joined the RAF five years ago after serving four years as a regular with The Royal Regiment of Wales.

By the following morning there were signs that the familiar Scouse sense of humour was returning to V Company who had made camp on the side of Green Mountain.

Medic LCpl John Mayall held his by now essential foot clinic, administering first aid to a variety of injuries.

Section commanders rallied their men and set off on reconnaissance missions. They knew there would be more attacks and would have to be prepared.

There was a minor incident when a couple of "terrorists" breached camp security. CSgt Craib was among those seized by an enthusiastic Sgt Billy Weir despite his earnest claims

of being friend rather than foe.

By late morning, the recon platoons had returned and settled down to eat from ration packs. There was an air of relaxation in the camp as strategically-placed look-outs, backed up by trip flares, were put in place.

Once again it was an ideal time for an ambush which was expected at the south end of the camp. But this time CSgt Craib planned and launched his most audacious attack to test the company's reactions.

Tension rose briefly when a trip flare was triggered by a woman hill walker south of the camp.

Her explanation was plausible - until all hell broke out at the north end.

With machine-guns blazing, the colour sergeant's insurgents attacked, taking one hostage for the loss of three of their own. It later emerged the walker was an RAF driver.

The set-back hit everyone, none more so than platoon commander 2nd Lt Carl Driscoll, Sgt Billy Weir and the junior NCOs.

They swore revenge and got it in a brilliant night attack on the enemy HQ. Using cloud cover and hillside mist they got within 30 metres of their target before a trip flare exposed



Above - Cpl John Brooks uses volcanic lava debris as cover while keeping watch during Exercise Turtle Reef

Left - Near miss. Cpl Tom Waddell shows Kgn Billy Cowan where his shots have landed at Broken Tooth range

there is more to it than just stamina. The crack, the humour and the comradeship is brilliant."

Cpl Tony Francis agreed. "Ascension is not exactly what I expected, but it has provided all of us with excellent training that we wouldn't get from a normal camp. It has been great fun."

LCpl Jimmy Cahill, a member of assault pioneer platoon, joined the TA in 1985. He is typical of the soldiers who join V Company. Fiercely protective of their unique status - once part of the former 1st Battalion, The Liverpool Scottish - as the only company in 5/8 Kings to have their own cap badge, that of the old battalion.

"We love pushing ourselves to the limit and once it's all over we have a good laugh about how challenging it all was. I really enjoyed this exercise because I felt I was put under great pressure and survived."

them. By then it was too late. Within ten minutes V Company had restored its pride - and it hadn't taken many prisoners.

Cpl John Brooks, perhaps the most vocal of the section commanders, had spent more than a week cajoling, encouraging and spurring on his men.

After it was all over, he said:

"The training has been superb. None of us really expected a holiday when we came out here, but I think some were surprised at the intensity of the training and the realism of the exercise."

"I think everyone coped very well. The faint-hearted don't last long in this company, but



'One man sick, one man absent, 32 men on Defence Costs Studies. Otherwise all present, Sir . . .'



'Perhaps it'll give you some idea of future force levels if I tell you that the next Chief of the Defence Staff is a major . . .'



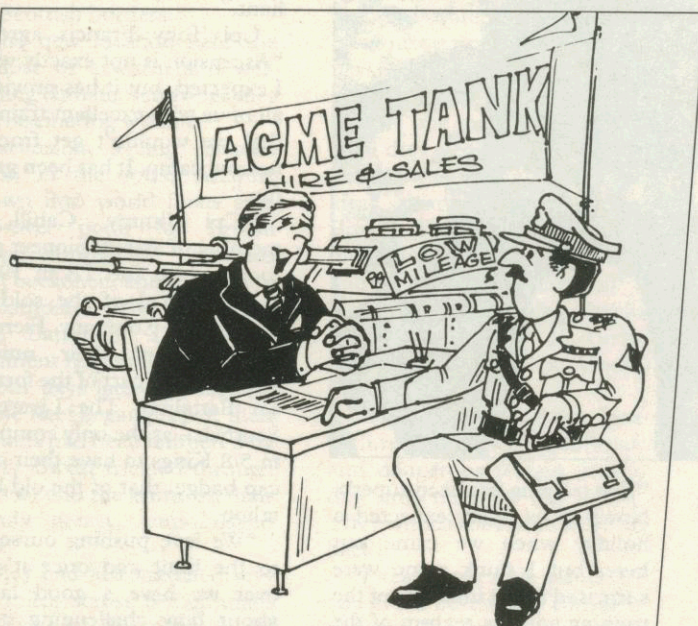
'Not quite the same impact since they privatised the Horse Guards.'



'Without it, no trooping this year . . .'



'And what, pray, did you do with the last shell we gave you?'



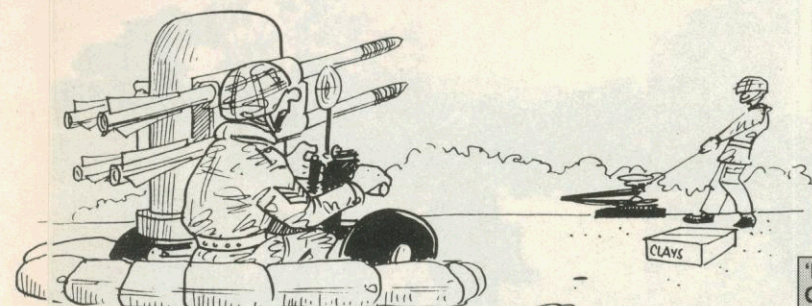
'Of course . . . if the Armoured Corps were a high-value customer, we would do a better deal.'

AWARD-winning cartoonist Capt Chip Wood takes a tongue-in-cheek peek into the future to see how the ever more Cost Effective Army will function.

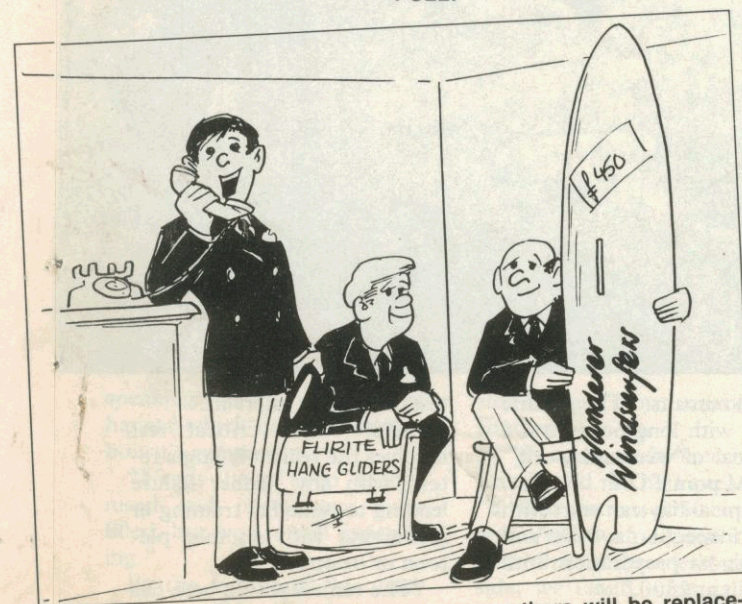
Chip, a Royal Engineers officer serving at Hameln with 35 Engineer Regiment, won a British Association of Industrial Editors award for his Gulf War cartoons published in *Soldier*. He hopes to become a full-time illustrator and cartoonist when he leaves the Army later this year.



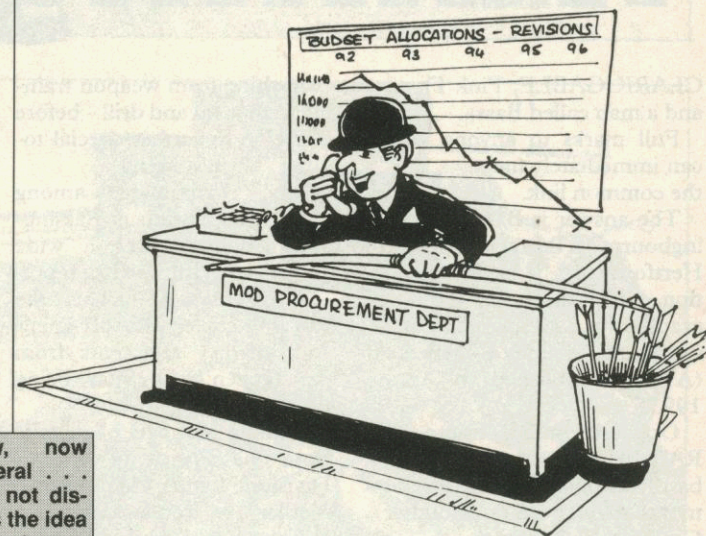
'The band was market-tested and the disc player has replaced it. Sign here, please, Guv . . .'



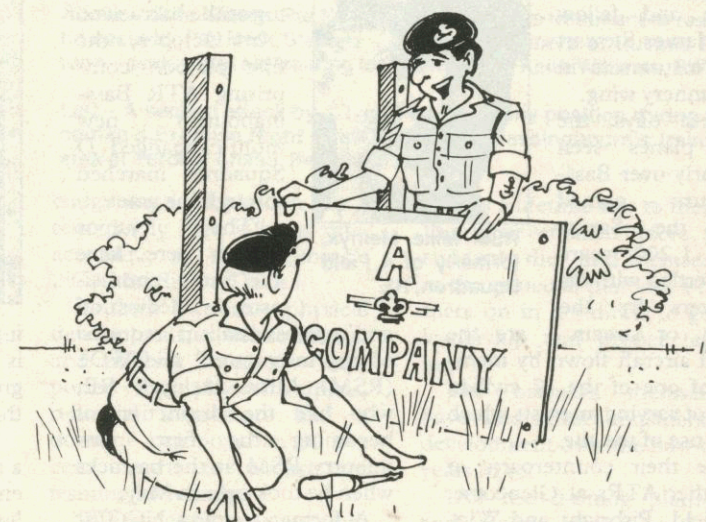
'PULL!'



'My dear chap, of course there will be replacements for the Royal Yacht and the Queen's Flight.'



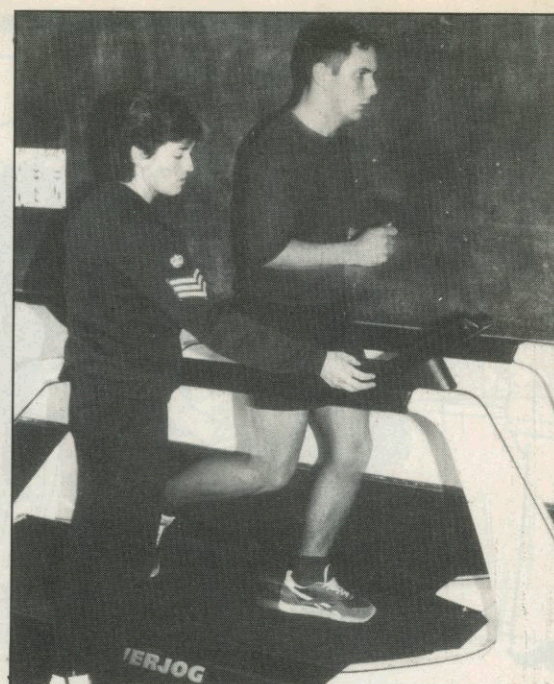
'Now, now General . . . let's not dismiss the idea without careful consideration.'



'QM said you'd better find the old screws because there's no funding for new ones.'



A healthy cross-section of cap badges in evidence outside the barracks



Rehabilitation training on the jogging machine for Pte Adrian Dyer, Royal Gibraltar Regiment. PTI SSgt Sue Smith gives encouragement



Sgt George Jay RRF gives Albuhera Platoon a few lessons in drill

Training to the manner "Bourn"...

CLARK GABLE, Pink Floyd and a man called Bassa.

Full marks to anyone who can immediately name the common link.

The answer is Basingbourn Barracks, Hertfordshire, location of the most geographically widespread of the five Army Training Regiments (ATRs) established in April 1993.

Originally built to house the RAF in 1938, the sprawling base was occupied for several months by the 91st Bomber Group, United States Airforce, from October 1942.

During that time, Gable and fellow actor James Stewart were instructors in the gunnery wing.

These days, the only planes seen regularly over Basingbourn - named after the Saxon who, 1,200 years ago, settled with his followers by the bourn, or stream - are the model aircraft flown by members of one of the 17 civilian clubs of varying interests which make use of the site.

Like their counterparts at the other ATRs at Glencorse, Lichfield, Pirbright and Winchester, recruits undergo a ten-week Phase One common military syllabus - covering

everything from weapon training to first aid and drill - before going on to further special-to-Arm training.

Cap badges among the recruits at Basingbourn cover a wide spectrum, with representatives from the

Royal Engineers, Royal Signals and infantry regiments from the Queen's Division being trained there.

Limited numbers of recruits from the Prince of Wales's Division and the Royal Artillery, as well as bandsmen and the Gibraltar Regiment have also recently been taken on for initial training at the barracks.

In October, the first platoon comprising ATR Basingbourn's new multi-capbadged D Squadron marched through the gates.

"The junior NCOs here have the same enthusiasm, dedication

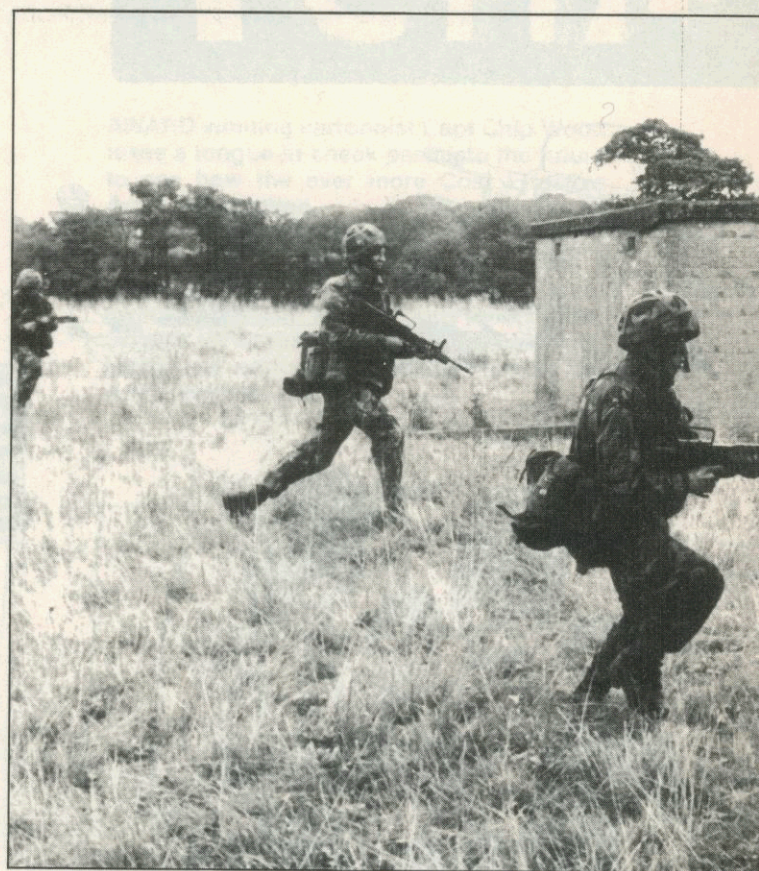
and professionalism required of any instructor," said WO1 (RSM) Mike Melnyk RE, who had the distinction of becoming the first non-infantry RSM at the barracks when he took over in May.

A former training NCO at Southwood Camp, Cove and at Minley, he therefore has first-hand knowledge of work-

Report:
Phil Wilcox
Pictures:
Mike Weston



RSM Mike Melnyk, formerly of 4 Field Squadron, RE



ing with recruits. "The routine is hard, with long hours and a great deal of weekend work," the RSM pointed out.

"A typical day can start with a room inspection at 0700 and end with kit preparation until lights out at 2300."

As with the other Army Training Regiments, standards are maintained by validation

tests at regular intervals.

Failure of a critical test involves the recruit facing a re-test, with any further failure leading to remedial training or re-training with another platoon or troop.

"The remedial side here has come a long way since the regiment was set up," said WO2 (QMSI) Steve Lancashire,



speaking in the enormous hangar which houses Basingbourn's gymnasium.

"Needs have been recognised and posts have been filled, but we are still expanding."

By the middle of this year, the gym will have undergone a substantial transformation, making its vast main area and

side-rooms more suitable for simultaneous use.

"We can train 200 recruits in here," said WO2 Lancashire, "in four sections of 50 if necessary. And, with a capacity for an additional three lessons outside, we could potentially be seeing 350 recruits here at once."

Basingbourn's multi-cap



Above - Gore blimey: Pte Neil Brace gives some treatment to realistic casualty Pte Mark Stevens - both are members of Quebec Platoon - during first aid training lesson from Sgt Keith Williams, PWRR

Left - A section attack by 4 Troop on an enemy position during the course's Exercise Night Hawk at the ATR Basingbourn's training area at Yardley Chase, Northampton

badge remedial platoon has a remarkably high success rate, according to the regiment's 2iC, Maj Simon Davies.

Its three sections - physical development, rehabilitation and military training - supported by physiotherapists, remedial instructors and a doctor - can boast an 80 per cent return to mainstream training by recruits.

"When one of the youngsters gets taken out of training due to injury it's a terrific blow to their morale," said Maj Davies.

"It's a lifetime low to them - they've never failed before, and suddenly they find themselves in the remedial platoon. From there on in it's down to good leadership and proper training."

The barracks themselves have undergone considerable development over the past two years or so.

"All the training platoons and troops are housed in recently refurbished or comparatively new buildings and

● Turn to next page

They are a cosmopolitan lot in Delta Squadron ...

Members of ATR Basingbourn's recently-formed Delta Training Squadron, fronted by its OC, Maj Ian Redwood, Royal Engineers, line up for the camera.

The squadron has been set up with two troops of Engineers (Whisky Troop and X Ray Troop), one troop of Signals (Yankee Troop) and an Infantry platoon (Korea Platoon).

Also contained within the squadron is Gallipoli Platoon, the regiment's remedial platoon, which has the vital role of ensuring that recruits who are injured or have difficulty with training are brought up to standard and returned to mainstream training as quickly as possible.

Delta Squadron is currently the only mixed corps/regimental training squadron within the five Army Training Regiments.

Since its formation on October 1 it has rapidly grown in size, with Gallipoli Platoon up



Picture: ATR Basingbourn

and running and Whisky Troop training alongside a platoon of Queen's Division recruits in Korea Platoon.

With many more recruits join-

ing at the start of this year and its mixed cap badge cosmopolitan outlook, it looks as though Delta Squadron – whose 2iC is Capt John Bisserru PWRR, and

whose SSM, WO2 Dave Whitaker is in the Royal Signals – has an interesting and rewarding time ahead, says Maj Redwood.

To the manner Bourn

● From Page 19

we have a good set of ranges – with an automatic marking system – and a small arms trainer,” said Maj Davies.

One of the few discernible differences between ATR Basingbourne and, for example, Glencorse, is that the change-around between lessons has to be programmed in – simply because of the sheer size of the place.

The old airfield, home at one time to the famous Memphis Belle, has a ski slope, golf course and two man-made fishing lakes within its boundaries.

Two youthful recruits, into the second week of their course, had found that the regiment was every bit as tough as they had expected.

“It’s hard work, and it’s mentally and physically challenging, but it’s fine” said one.

His fellow squaddie, a bandsman, said: “It’s not too bad. The instructors are tough, and sometimes bite your head off, but that’s to be expected.”

In a few weeks’ time, with any luck, they would join the

hundreds of successful recruits who have so far passed out from ATR Basingbourn.

As RSM Melnyk said: “A large Army exhibition for thousands of children is held regularly on the airfield over a period of three days.

“More than 20 years ago, when Basingbourn was a recruit training establishment for The Queen’s Regiment, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and The Royal Anglian Regiment, I was one of those schoolchildren.”

And the Pink Floyd connection? Along with other megastars such as Phil Collins, the pop group has been known to hire one of Basingbourn’s cavernous hangars to try out gigantic stage effects before taking them on the road...



Spr Candido Channel shows off the new National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level One certificate which he and fellow ATR Basingbourn recruits (front to back) Sprs Kevin Thomas, Paul Miles and Ben Smith, Pte Barry Sims, Fus Mike Taylor and Ptes Mike Walton and Sean Mason were among the first in the country to receive. Presentation of the new certificates – at the recruits’ passing-out parade – is the fruition of a “considerable amount of work” to have the Public Service (Armed Services) NVQ scheme implemented, says the MoD’s Initial Training Group.

Every recruit joining the Army is now offered the opportunity to get a foot on the NVQ ladder before leaving Phase 1 training, and the NVQ qualification is recognition of their hard work and training. Two platoons passed out at the parade, and 90 per cent of the recruits are on the scheme.

Naafi 'soldiers' get taste of Army life on Op Grapple

A SIX-strong Naafi team has been supporting Operation Grapple 5 as part of 3 Close Support Regiment, RLC in Croatia. Capt Tom Lafferty,

Sgt Helen O'Neill and Cpls Mandy Rigby, Roy Bell, Stef Glowienko and Fred Merrinton are serving in the Expeditionary Force Institutes –

Naafi's military wing. All six are civilians who have undergone basic military training and who bear military rank until their tour ends.

Main customers at their two shops are British, although Norwegians, Canadians, Malaysians, Kenyans and other nationalities also drop in.



Sappers from 23 Fd Sqn, normally based in Hameln, repair Stari Bila school in central Bosnia

Class act helps Bosnian children back to school

TROOPS of the Household Cavalry Regiment, normally based in Windsor, found themselves acting as Good Samaritans when they delivered school packs to Bosnian children eager to re-start their education.

"Each troop is responsible for three or four towns and villages," said troop leader Lt Simon Sporborg.

Based at Gornji Vakuf, the troops take a genuine interest, chatting to the villagers to find out how well the services such as electricity and water are working in areas hit by the conflict.

Two such villages are Lug and Gracac, where schools were short of basic teaching materials.

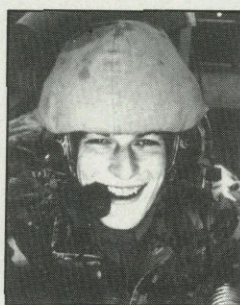
Backed by American aid

agencies, the soldiers distributed school kits containing books, pencils, rulers and rubbers from their heavily-loaded Scimitars.

They were subsequently invited to the home of a grateful family to share lunch.

Also helping children in Bosnia to continue their disrupted schooling are members of the Royal Engineers, The Royal Highland Fusiliers and, in a separate project, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment.

In a joint venture with local contractors, eight sappers and the newly-arrived fusiliers



Troop leader Lt Simon Sporborg, Household Cavalry Regiment

gutted a building in Stari Bila at Vitez, ready to refurbish it as a school.

Led by Cpl Damien Jones, a section from Hameln-based 29 Field Squadron RE blitzed the place, painted the walls and installed carpets. Villagers pounced on every bit of rotten timber discarded by the workmen. As firewood, even it has a value in this battle-weary community.

Sappers in Bosnia are bracing themselves for winter tasks such as clearing snow and repairing roads.

In Ozdak, near Bugojno in central Bosnia, men from Maj

Supplies – on the hoof

RESOURCEFUL soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment have been overcoming a fuel blockade of their Gorazde enclave by using mules to supply their observation posts.

"The first runs were very successful, as well as being quite a novel way of soldiering," said Capt David Brown.

"We have made some white saddlecloths for them, so that they even look like UN mules."

British troops plan to send the two mules – named Alexandria and Ferozeshah after the regiment's battle honours – about four times a week to UN observation posts in the mountains, providing a slow but reliable supply line for items such as radio batteries and food.

This is not the first time that the 325 soldiers from the battalion have shown a touch of ingenuity during their stint in Bosnia.

They have already constructed a water-wheel on the River Drina, also painted white, to supply water power to a turbine, and have rigged an exercise bike to generate power.

Farren Drury's C Company, 1 RGBW, renovated the small, two-classroom building which serves six surrounding villages.

Over a period of two weeks, the soldiers helped local people to weather-proof and re-decorate it.

Team member Lt Matt Way said: "Before we got to that stage, there was quite a bit of rubbish to be removed."

"We had to fix windows and walls, which were in a bad state. There were big holes, a lot of damp and much of the place had to be knocked away completely."

By begging, borrowing or stealing supplies, the soldiers obtained tables, chairs and a blackboard for the school, which caters for 100 children aged between eight and 12.

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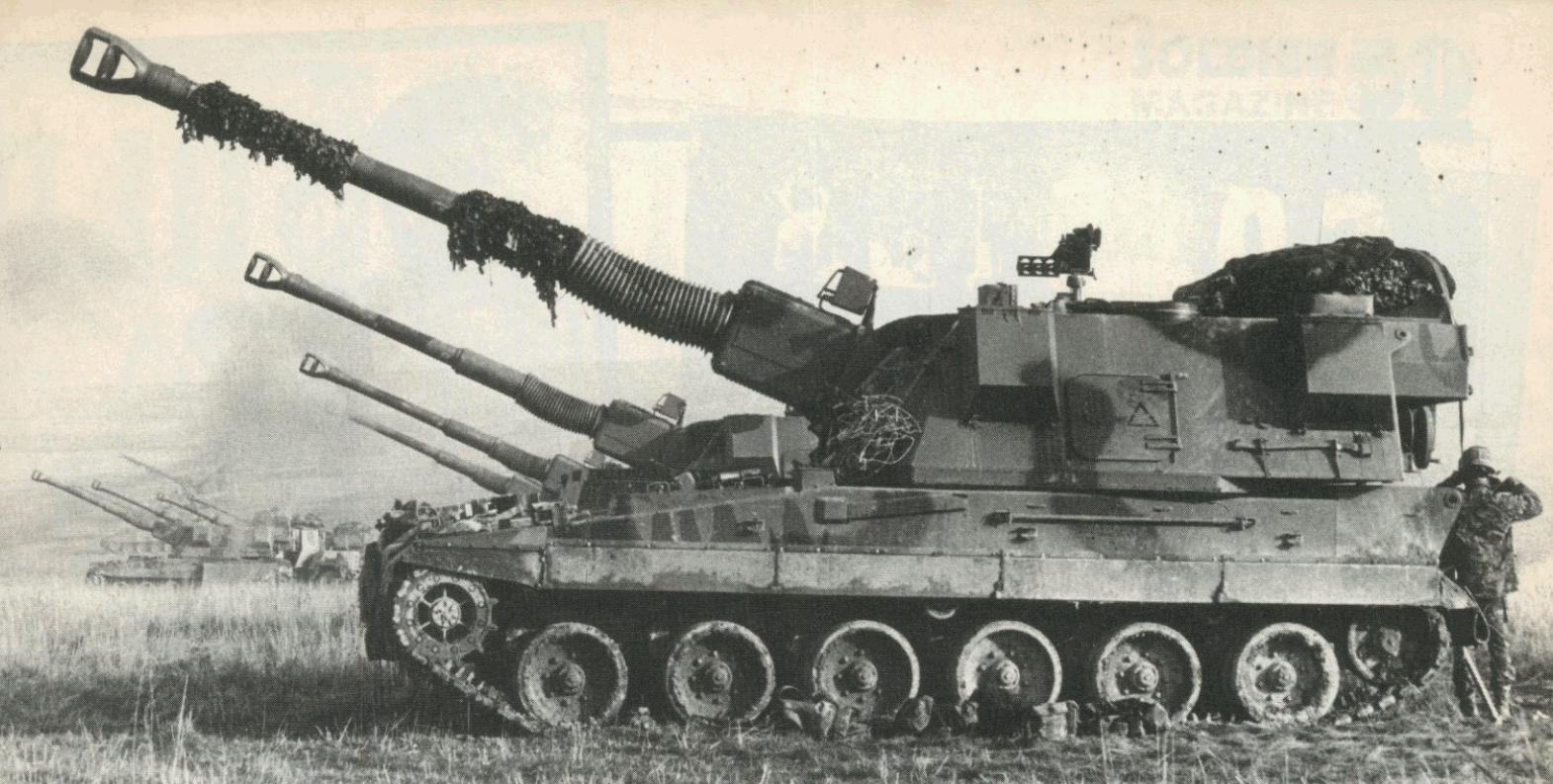
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The awesome sight of the Royal Horse Artillery's AS90s as they fire for effect on Salisbury Plain

Thunder of the big guns

THE AS90s of 1 and 3 Regiments, Royal Horse Artillery provided an awe-inspiring spectacle on Salisbury Plain on December 9.

Formed up almost track to track, the 32 deployed guns covered an area which could have been occupied by a battery in a tactical environment, writes **Gordon Skilling**.

The guns were taking part in a demonstration of their accuracy by bombarding an area close to an observation post from where Commander 3 (UK) Division, Maj Gen Mike Jackson, and his Commander Royal Artillery, Brig Mike Raworth, were watching.

Exercise Iron Tempest was Brig Raworth's live firing exercise for the year and the culmination of both regiments' own live firing exercises before the divisional concentration.

It started with a one-day command post exercise, followed by a bombard observation post exercise and the main tactical phase.

Both AS90 regiments

deployed their four batteries but only four of their six guns. In war they would each have eight guns.

This was the first time the regiments had fired together: 1 RHA received its new guns in autumn 1993 and 3 RHA in July 1994. It was an awesome sight.

The AS90 is the Rolls Royce of gunnery and will see the Royal Artillery well into the next century, said Lt Edmund McMahon Turner, command post officer of C Battery, 3

RHA. The speed of the guns across ground and into action particularly impresses him.

"With the 105mm and FH70 you had people running round the back and pushing things about, but with AS90 you can stop on a peg and two minutes later you can be firing," he said.

Because AS90 "knows" electronically where it is to within a metre, gunners can drive to their locations without being surveyed in.

The new guns can, therefore, be widely dispersed and controlled from a command

AS90 in spectacular action on the Plain



Pictures: Mike Perring

Most AS90 ammunition used in training is the American-made M107

post located miles away, greatly reducing the threat of counter battery fire.

As well as the neat gun lines, another peacetime feature was the presence of safety officers. WO2 Karl Britton used a safety protractor to check the elevation of the barrels to confirm that rounds would land in a safe area.

"We check right and left of the arc by taking a compass shot of the barrel which we relate to a safety fan box on a map which shows the known boundaries," he said.

Use of digital information and a laser to indicate targets eliminated the human error possible when someone equipped with a pair of binocu-

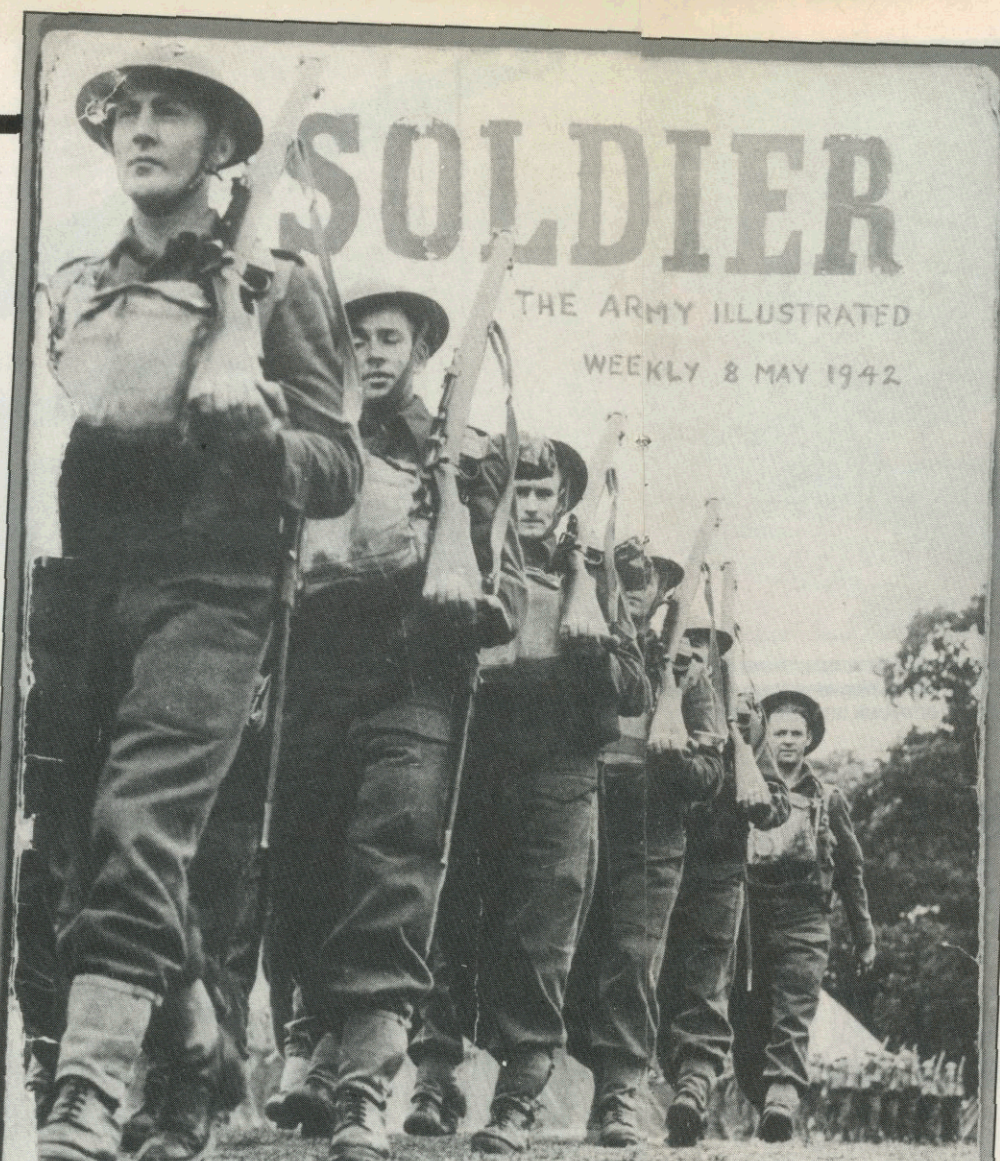
lars and a map relays information to guns directed onto their positions by hand.

A choice of ammunition is available to AS90: the new British-made L15, which is long and slender, and the shorter American M107. Both weigh 96lb but the more expensive British system is more effective because it breaks into smaller fragments. The cheaper M107 is used for the majority of training.

The exercise was gratifying for Maj Ken Saward, training officer for 3 RHA. Ammunition was always at a premium and the great advantage of the deployment was a considerable level of realistic firing at high rates.



Two 1942 artist's mock-ups, almost three years before the real thing



LIMITED EDITION

COPIES of the first distributed issue of *Soldier*, dated March 19, 1945, are now collector's items — especially those in good condition.

But there is one other edition of the magazine which, 50 years on, is even more of a rarity.

In February 1945 the embryo *Soldier* team in Brussels produced a dummy — a mock-up of the kind produced by all newspaper and magazine publishers when they are launching or re-launching a title.

Scissors-and-paste mock-ups of a twopenny weekly magazine bearing the title *Soldier — The Army Illustrated* — had been produced before. Copies exist bearing the dates May 8 and May 15, 1942.

But the February 1945 version of the proposed fortnightly was actually printed, bearing a white-on-red reversed title block in the top left-hand corner not unlike those of popular pictorial magazines such as *Picture Post*.

The white-on-red rectangular title block was not retained when the first edition proper ran off the presses the following month.

In a December 1945 letter to the original staff, who were by then preparing for

demob, *Soldier's* founder editor-in-chief, Col Sean Fielding, described how the magazine was brought into being on behalf of 21 Army Group under the sponsorship of Army Welfare Services. The troops of the British Liberation Army in Europe (BLA) formed its initial target readership.

"*Soldier* magazine was originally conceived by me (with FACT as its title) in 1941-42 while I was serving in the Western Desert," he wrote.

"That conception was put into 'dummy' form by (Lt Col) Youngman Carter and me (Peter Ender doing a good deal of the donkey-work) in Baghdad and Cairo in 1943.

"The 'dummy' was brought home to England in January 1944 and I hawked it around the War Office but found no takers until December 1944 when Col Archie Chisholm (the head of AWS 3) was told to produce a plan for an Army magazine for BLA.

"He was urged on by the Adjutant Gen-

eral, Sir Ronald Adam, who had consistently pushed Army newspapers and magazines on a high level. The project was finally agreed by Fd Marshal Montgomery, extra staff was grafted on to AWS 3 and we set up a small BLA establishment centred in Brussels.

"The title *Soldier* was taken from a similar project which had also been planned years before in the War Office by A E Williams of ABCA and Maj

Gen Harry Willans, then Director of Army Welfare, and which was shelved for various reasons."

In that last paragraph lies the clue to the 1942 mock-ups held in *Soldier's* archives.

Much of the content of the printed dummy was retained for the first edition proper, including the front-cover photo of an airborne soldier, news from home, general and military features, and an extract from the autobiography of Arsenal and England football hero Eddie Hapgood.

There was also a selection of titbits from

the British Army newspapers *Union Jack* (Italy), *SEAC*, *Tripoli Times*, *Parade* (Middle East), *Trunk Call* (Persia and Iraq Command), *Gen* (Middle East), *Contact* (India) and *Eighth Army News*.

"Camera Round Up" included pictures of Montgomery pinning the VC ribbon on Sgt G H Earley MM and of the Arsenal and England full-back Cpl Leslie Compton drying his socks outside his Army dug-out.

Page 15 of the dummy was graced by a leggy picture of Joan Kent, the first of a long line of *Soldier* pin-ups (a role taken up by an even leggier Ida Lupino for the first edition).

A few introductory paragraphs on the dummy's front cover, destined to be replaced by a message from Monty himself for issue number one, explain why the magazine came into being:

"There is little need for us to say, in so many words, who and what we are; better that you should be the judge of those mat-



Dog-eared surviving copy of the "first" (dummy) issue of *Soldier* dated February 1945. Its fashionable white-on-red title block was changed for the first edition proper

ters when you have read *Soldier* magazine.

"It might not be a bad thing, however, if we said WHY we have gone into production. It is simple enough.

"We believe that the soldier wants and requires his own platform and that this cannot be made available in any other way.

"We believe he needs that platform so that facts as he knows them and facts as they are likely to affect him, may be stated thereon.

"So *Soldier* magazine comes to life — not, it may be added, entirely without background or pedigree.

"It comes of a family now numbering 23

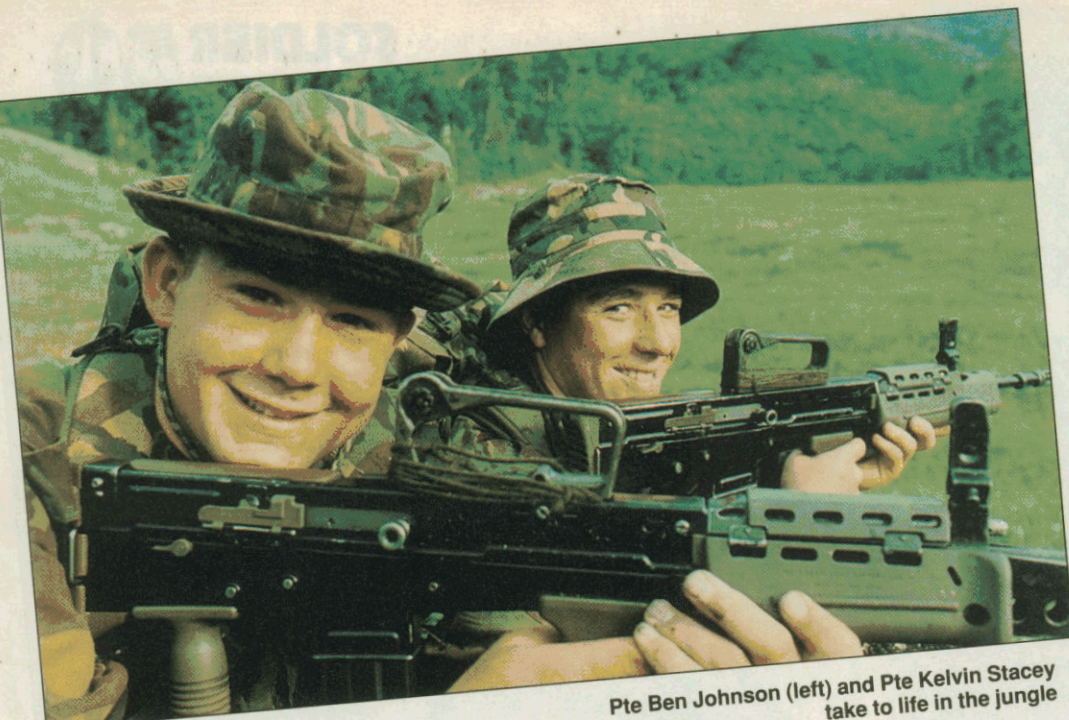
major Army periodicals and newspapers of one sort or another published in almost every country where the British soldier serves; and it is largely produced by soldiers who have founded, edited, written for, printed or otherwise helped to produce that family.

"We give you *Soldier* magazine. Read it, write to it. It is yours."

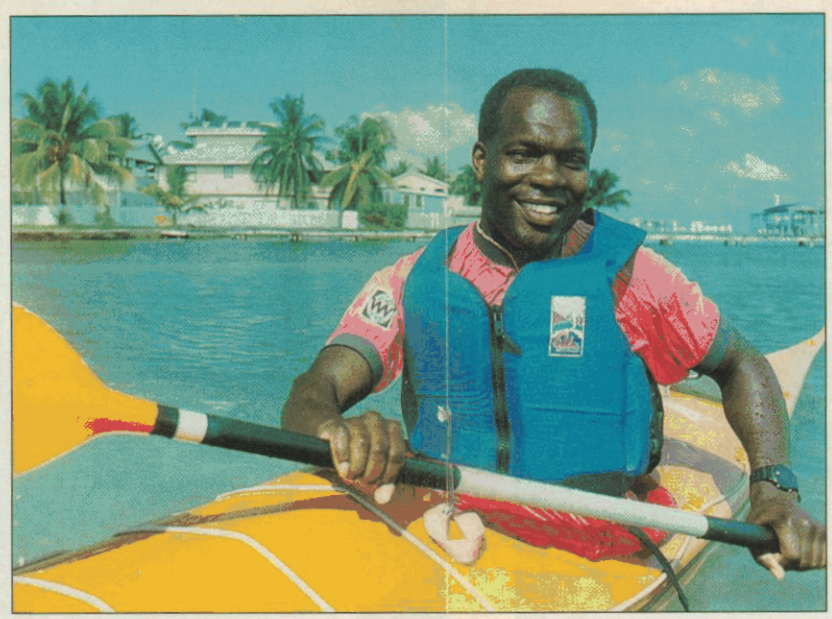
Of that family of 23, *Soldier*, magazine of the British Army worldwide, is the lone survivor — 50 years on.

● Staff from the early years who have lost touch are asked to contact the *Soldier* office.

Arsenal players helped sell the Army a dummy

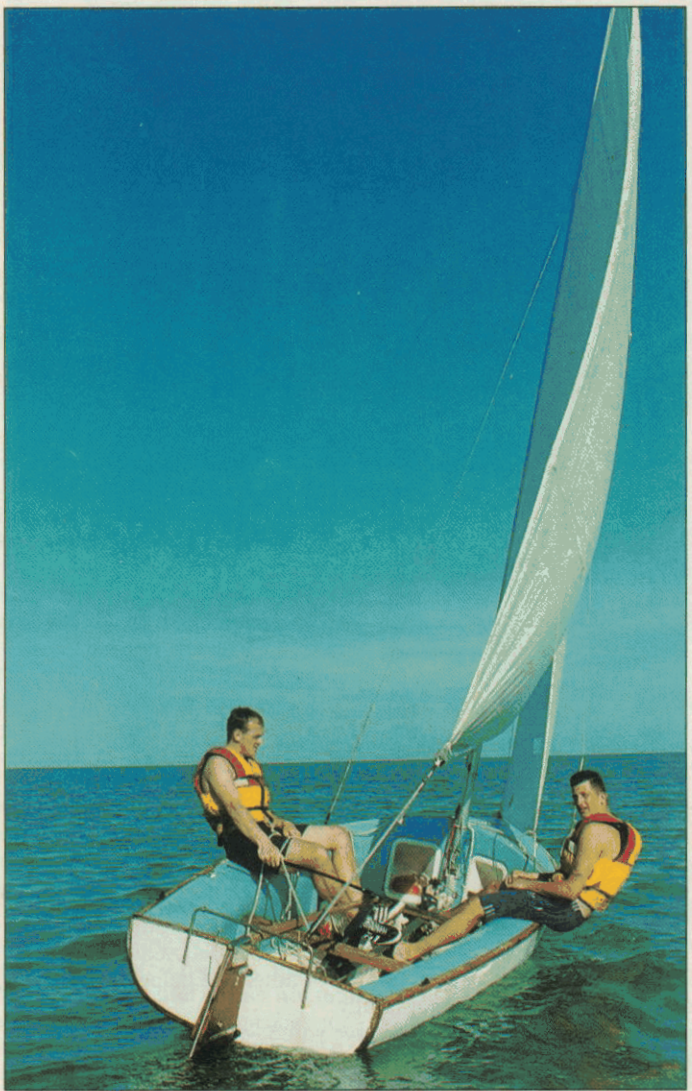


Pte Ben Johnson (left) and Pte Kelvin Stacey take to life in the jungle



Man of sport: Cpl Sylvester Swanston is a qualified instructor in rock climbing, mountaineering, skiing and canoeing, and represents the battalion at football, tennis, golf, volleyball and cross country

Lancashire lads tackle the jungle



Above - Plain sailing: soldiers enjoy the adventurous training phase of Exercise Native Trail

Right - Ptes Chris Davies (left) and Guy Colville enjoy a break in training at the basic jungle school

GIANT tarantulas, a liberal supply of mosquitoes and falling coconuts formed part of the daily lives of men from the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, as they launched a new training programme in the jungles of Belize.

Following the closure of Belize Garrison and the handover to the Belizean Defence Force, the British Army was keen not to lose valuable jungle training facilities in the country.

So 150 men from the Tidworth-based Queen's Lancashire Regiment were deployed for a tough new six-week training exercise code-named Native Trail.

The exercise consists of four phases - jungle warfare training at basic and advanced levels; a live-firing exercise in which soldiers practise fire-and-movement skills in deep jungle; and a variety of adventurous training activities such as windsurfing, caving, sea canoeing and scuba diving.

Lessons learned in the earlier stages are put to the test during manoeuvres involving the whole company.

Company commander Maj Adam Shorrock commented: "Jungle training is necessary to keep valuable skills within the Army.

"The jungle can be an unfor-

giving place and an alien environment to many of our young soldiers. You tend to learn a great deal about yourself when confronted by some of the scenarios that this training provides."



Above - Maj Adam Shorrock wades through a river on his way to the advanced jungle school, a five-mile walk into the Maya Mountains

Left - Totally tropical: Pte Martyn Buckley samples local produce



Pte Alister Holyock (left) and Pte Bobby Eaton prepare to make their first dives after being awarded British Sub-Aqua Club novice diver certificates. They were diving on the Caribbean barrier reef, the second biggest in the world

Sennelager flyers drop in on Spain and Bavaria

TWO teams from Sennelager-based 3 Armoured Field Ambulance RAMC have been testing their paragliding skills.

After a 26-hour journey through Germany and France, participants in Exercise Vulture Diamond, led by paragliding instructor Capt Ian McLachlan, arrived in the foothills of the Pyrenees in northern Spain.

The area had been selected for its unique south-facing ridge known as Sierra del Montsec.

Approximately 18km long and, at its highest point, 3,550ft above the valley floor, the ridge is a solid vertical wall of granite which, when heated by the sun, provides strong thermic airflow – ideal conditions for paragliding and other free-flight disciplines.

A landing site brief left the medics with two hours' day-

light to launch themselves, in perfect conditions, into clear airspace to glide the 3km to the landing field.

The following day, pilots achieved three flights – some lasting 30 minutes – soaring on the thermal air currents 300ft above take-off.

Altogether, 82 flights were recorded during the week, with everyone achieving personal best, and maximum height gain (500ft above take-off) going to commanding officer Lt Col Roger North.

Simultaneously, at the British Forces paragliding school in Bavaria, seven other members of 3 Armoured Field Ambulance took part in a ten-day course. Near perfect flying conditions allowed the course to progress to student pilot very quickly and immediately continue towards the club pilot qualification.



LCpl Smith, 3 Armd Fd Amb, comes in to land in Bavaria

Youth team's Rosie outlook

AFTER a hectic summer working with youth groups from East Anglia in the hills of England and Wales, Capt Rosie Fannin, OC 160 Army Youth Team, decided to give team members a well-earned break.

Exercise Lucky Ebor gave the instructors a chance to polish their personal adventure training skills in a challenging environment – the west coast of Canada.

The expedition was split into three phases, a trek into Garibaldi National Park, north of Vancouver, to climb Black Tusk, the highest peak in the region; sea kayaking among the rocky Broken Islands in the Pacific; and the ascent of Mount Temple, the second-highest peak in the southern Rockies.

Good weather held as the

team made a bid for the summit of Black Tusk, but by the time they reached Clarke Island, a three-hour ferry ride from Vancouver, heavy cloud had built up ominously over the whole region.

Although the next two days were the wettest of the summer, the group got in a few hours of paddling and were rewarded with a close view of a colony of sea lions.

When they reached Mount Temple in the Valley of the Ten Peaks near Lake Louis the summit was hidden by thick cloud, and there was fresh snow on the peak so it was decided to climb Eiffel Peak – slightly lower at 10,500ft, but free of snow and cloud.

Eiffel Peak was not the softer option the team had expected, and almost every member felt the effects of altitude.

TA makes it a mountainous double

A PARTY of ten men and two women Territorial Army soldiers from Lancaster-based 4th Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment successfully completed two of Canada's toughest climbs and explored parts of its most challenging river.

They scaled the heights of Mount Edith Cavell (over 10,000ft) and Mount Colin in snowstorms and sub-zero weather conditions, and navigated rivers and lakes by canoe in Jasper and Robinson National Parks, frequently travelling more than 20 miles a

day loaded with survival equipment.

Expedition leader Maj Ru Watkins said: "Achieving all that we have done in an environment that is 100 per cent hostile and totally alien to Europeans can only be classified as an outstanding achievement. The team pulled together magnificently."

SARDINIAN SAGA

D SQUADRON, The Queen's Royal Lancers, sent an officer, a lance corporal and six troopers for two weeks trekking and rock-climbing in Sardinia.

After a two-day overland haul to the island from Osnabrück, they were met by the staff of the British Expedition Base just outside Cagliari and given climbing equipment, maps, a guide and a safari Land Rover.

Once mobile, the group went to three main climbing areas – Arbatax, with its red

rocks which disappear out to sea, Villasimius, with a large area of many bolted climbs on granite, and the white chalky cliffs known as the Devil's Saddle to the south west of Cagliari.

Each of the areas had its own character and varied type of rock, requiring different techniques.

The men also trekked around the island of San Antonio, returning to the base for two days of rest and recuperation before flying back to Germany by Hercules.

Howards set the seal on vital mission

SOLDIERS from the 1st Battalion, The Green Howards are training a team of 20 young men and women from schools and the local community in the north east of England for a unique expedition in Siberia.

Using All Terrain Vehicles

(ATVs), the exploration team will travel to Siberia between mid-March and early May, at the request of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in an attempt to complete the first scientific survey of the Nerpa seal of Lake Baikal.

Inspired by the memory of the late King Olav of Norway (the regiment's principal patron), the participants will race against time, moving from the south of the frozen lake to its northern extremities using 12 Honda ATVs. The young

explorers will be constantly racing the thaw north, searching in the lake's ice compressions for the birth lairs of Nerpa seals, which have been threatened with extinction by culling and disease.

Some funding will come from the regiment, and the Armed Forces will assist with grants, but a substantial amount will be needed from sponsorship or donations.

Medics prove they are tough diamonds

A SIX-man team from Osnabrück-based 2 Armoured Field Ambulance RAMC trekked through Norway's North Jotunheim region on Exercise Aesculapian Diamond.

While this provided them with a great deal of flexibility, it did require them to carry loads of around 60lb, mainly taken up with dried rations.

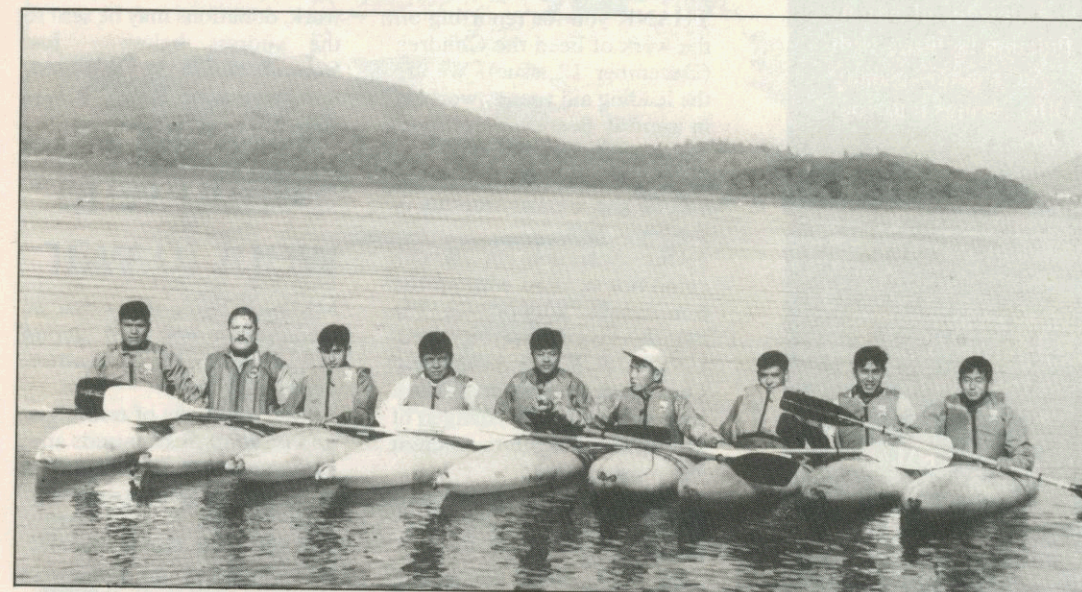
The group, led by WO1 (RSM) Bell, left Oslo by bus for a seven-hour journey north to the mountains of central Norway's Jotenheim (Land of the Giants) region.

Their ascent of the 8,100ft Gladhoppiggen, the highest mountain in Norway was thwarted at 7,800ft when cloud engulfed the mountain and visibility dropped to 20ft.

For the next couple of days, the group trekked in a southeasterly direction, each day consisting of about five to six hours walking.

The final few days were spent walking and climbing along the side of Lake Gjenda before they reached Gjen-desheim to board the bus for the return trip to Oslo.

It had been hard and challenging, but rewarding for Ptes Andy Emms, "DJ" John and Jamie Rosie (all RAMC) and Ptes Arran Crabtree, AGC (SPS) and Sam Hutchins, RLC.



Cumbrian canoeists: Pictured in the Lake District are men from the Gurkha Demonstration Company of the NCOs' tactical wing, Brecon, who were taking part in an adventure training exercise. Although not quite the size of Annapurna or

Machhapuchre, Scafell Peak's 3,206ft provided a worthwhile goal for the hill-walking phase. Rfn Dilbahadur Pun (1 RGR) won the orienteering competition with his section commander Cpl Kesharsingh Rana (also 1 RGR).

SAPPERS REACH REAL HEIGHTS

SEVEN members of 3 RSME Regiment RE spent six weeks on a high altitude mountaineering training expedition to the Cordillera Real mountain range in Bolivia.

A week-long stay in La Paz, the Bolivian capital (3,680m) helped the group to acclima-

tise. As part of their progressive conditioning and acclimatisation, the sappers made treks on the Taquesi and Chorro trails.

As the third week began, so did the real work.

The first summit attempt, Huyana Potosi, was an experience in itself. Ascent from high camp at 5,400m to the 6,088m summit took five exhausting hours, with the team knowing all too well that their next ascent, Mt Illimani, would be even harder.

Everything to be seen in Bolivia was immense, from the rise of the high mountain ranges to the flat plain of the Altiplano. The combination of high mountains and old-fashioned towns helped to make a hard and satisfying expedition a thoroughly enjoyable trip.

The sappers were accompanied by SSgt (SI) Matt Chaple APTC.

Greenjackets take a dive

UNDER the watchful eye of Cyprus Joint Services Adventure Training Centre diving supervisors Cpl Pedley, Cpl Sayell and Kaz Ingham, nine novice divers from 4th Battalion The Royal Green Jackets ended a two-week course in Dhekalia as qualified BS-AC sports divers.

Battalion instructors Lt Ash Towler, WO2 Ian

Weatherley and LCpl Mike Crossman ensured that their pupils experienced almost every type of dive, from shore to hard boat and from a wreck dive to a night dive.

Highlight of the expedition was an opportunity to dive on the 1,200-ton ferry the *Zenobia* – which still has its ill-fated cargo of vehicles on board – just outside Larnaca harbour.

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Army's help in Bosnia vital to charity body

THANK you for reporting on the work of Feed the Children (December 12 issue). We are the leading aid agency working in central Bosnia concentrating on the needs of children.

We are caring for more than 85,000 and are also working in the Bihac area.

Our operation in Bosnia could not succeed without the tremendous support of the British Forces serving with UNPROFOR. On many occasions our team has had to share with the Army the danger of getting aid through to where it was most needed.

There is no doubt that many children today owe their lives to these joint endeavours.

At Vitez, Gornj Vakuf and Bugojno our aid workers have received the utmost assistance from the bases, often including protection from hostile fire. We are very grateful.

If any of your readers would like to help us continue the

work, donations may be sent to the address below. — **Jon Scourse, Feed the Children, 82 Caversham Road, Reading, Berks RG1 8AE.**

Young who went to war

MR ALF Blake states that no men were sent into action before the age of 19 (Letters, September 5).

I did 17 weeks of training at 3 ITC, Bury St Edmunds and, at the age of 18½, was drafted to 1st Bn, Worcestershire Regt in the British Liberation Army.

If Mr Blake visited cemeteries in Holland, the Reichwald Forest, and on into Germany, he would find that most of the headstones bear the names of infantry soldiers of 18 years of age, as one was lucky to survive very long in those conditions. — **W J Palmer, Flitwick, Beds.**

'Purity' of military tattoos is a myth

I WAS surprised to read Mr Macleod's comments (*Soldier*, November 14) about the lack of "purity" in the 1994 Edinburgh Tattoo based on the appearance of Royal Air Force bands, whose standards are not questioned. I think he is on shaky ground trying to link "tattoo" with the Army.

When the great Aldershot Tattoo started in 1919, Aldershot Command had 20 battalions of infantry, each with its own band and corps of drums. The cast of 5,000 performers did not need to call on the Royal Navy, the RAF (then in its infancy), or civilian bodies.

But Southern Command at Tidworth only had nine or ten battalions (3rd Infantry Division), though still managing to turn out massed bands 1,000-strong at the rival Tidworth Tattoos. However, they did use

the RAF in 1938 (the last pre-war Tidworth Tattoo) for a PT display by No 2 RAF Depot, Cardington.

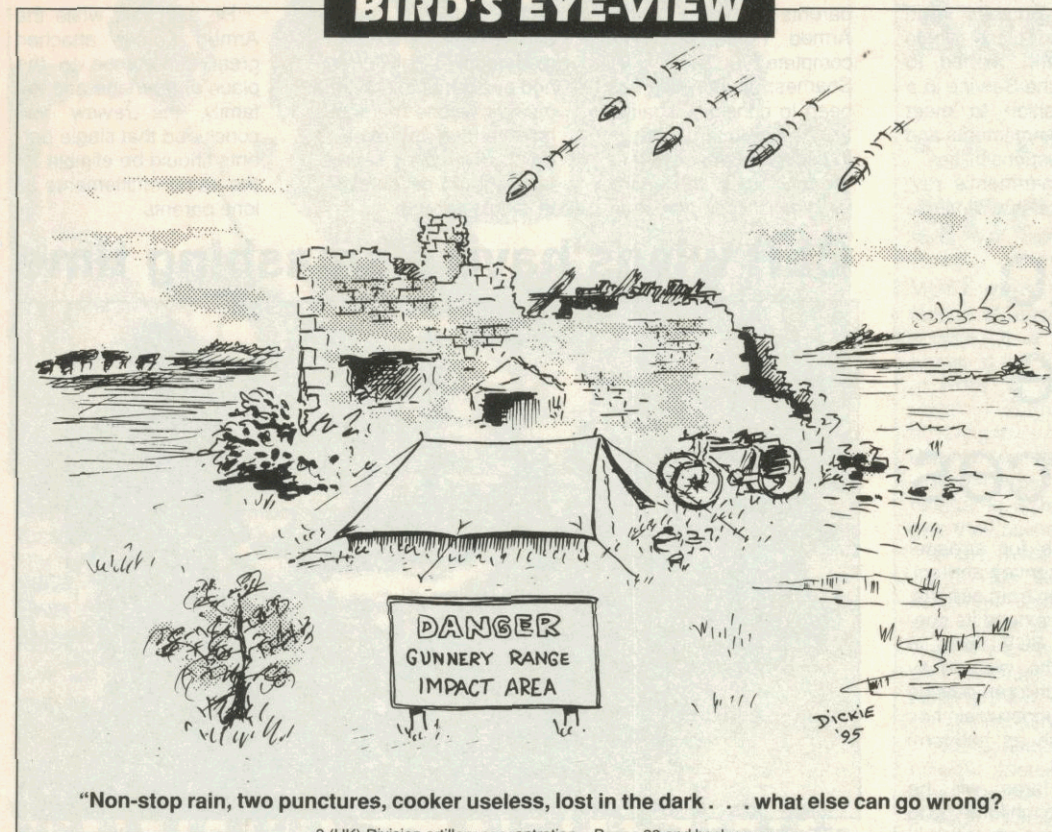
The Royal Navy (with mast-manning) and the Royal Marines, as well as the RAF, kept a firm foothold in post-war tattoos.

Whether civilian bodies such as the Edinburgh Fire Brigade and US university bands should appear is another matter.

The Army can be rightly concerned that the time-honoured military tattoo, which is and should be an impressive shop-window for the Army, does not degenerate into a circus-cum-carnival parade.

But I would say welcome to the Royal Marines and the RA bands. — **W A Ewbank, Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, USA.**

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



"Non-stop rain, two punctures, cooker useless, lost in the dark . . . what else can go wrong?"

3 (UK) Division artillery concentration — Pages 23 and back cover

Grapple soldier's message of peace

THE following letter was forwarded to *Soldier* by Maj Ged Argyle, OC British Supply Squadron RLC based at Split in Croatia.

He had, he says, been looking for inspiration for a Christmas message for his soldiers based throughout the theatre, when he was "somewhat upstaged" by the following words, written by Pte Phil Packer, one of his least experienced men.

Maj Argyle feels its sentiments "are mirrored by many of us here regardless of race, religion or creed", and the letter itself is indicative of the quality, professionalism and humanity of the British soldier.

AFTER some time spent in theatre, one seems to become accustomed to the devastation, destruction and overall unhappiness that fills Bosnia, from Mostar to Gorazde. The strain on the innocent people here is considerable. The reception from the inhabitants of the many towns and villages differs considerably, some more hostile to us than others.

I personally have found disturbing the grief-stricken faces

of the children who line the routes "up country". Nobody deserves to live as these people do, and on the return of this tour, when we are settling down with our families and loved ones, I wonder if any of us will remember that there are still thousands of homeless and scared people continuing to live unhappy lives without the comforts and necessities we all take for granted.

It's hard to imagine the three factions once lived together in harmony, and in such a short space of time learned to despise each other with a hatred that some of us could not even begin to contemplate in our own country.

In Kiseljak the atmosphere is very warm and friendly. Here the British, Canadian, French and Malaysians live under one roof. This being my first tour, not only have my opinions changed, but also my respect for other nationalities.

I wish I could converse more easily, but with only four months left, and five languages

to learn, it will not be easy!

I work in a six-man, one-woman team, which is more like a family, all ranks helping you along, supporting you and making sure you are coping.

Sometimes, being new in the Army, I've felt scared and perhaps a little embarrassed to ask if I'm unsure or simply don't know something, but here I have no problem asking anything I need to know.

When I return home, it will be with a more mature attitude, a new respect for the Army, and my values towards others and material objects, I think, will have changed for the better.

One thing I know I won't be able to answer is why this conflict ever came to the state it is in now, and why the helpless should have to suffer.

I have also learned how strong the beliefs of religion are to the Croatian, Serbian and Muslim people . . . and that the only solution is peace. — **Pte Phil Packer, IRG Section, Kiseljak.**

Missing head

RE Mr Stevens's letter (Nov 28) about making the RBL medal official, do not all official medals have the Queen's head on the obverse? It could not qualify.

I don't agree with all the commemorative medals on sale. Anyone can buy them. At least with the RBL one some money goes to help ex-Service people. — **M Hill, Woolwich.**

Bulge medal?

I FEEL a medal should have been given for the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), 1944-45.

This was a very important battle because if the Germans had not been stopped they would probably have reached Antwerp and prolonged the war — with the resultant loss of men and materials. — **J B Shaw (ex-29 Armd Bde), Lincoln.**

Pension poser

I RECEIVE three pensions, including my military pension. A married couple who serve 22 years in the Armed Forces could eventually retire with six pensions, between them — two each from the Services, their second careers, and the State old age pension. There must be a simpler way. — **R J Shears (ex-RASC), Leicester.**

O-va and out

I HAVE been interested in the phonetic alphabet and wireless telegraphy procedure correspondence featured in *Soldier*.

I quote from our Operator Wireless/Line course at 5 Operator Training Battalion, Royal Corps of Signals, at Slough in 1942, the following signals in the Morse code:

AR — End of transmission;
VA — Off, end of transmission.
Nothing further for you; K — Go on; Q — Wait; R — Received your last transmission or message. — **Alec Morgan, Bucks.**

Headley maxim

AS a former inmate of Headley Court, I was delighted to read the excellent article in your January 9 issue. It reminded me how much I owed to Headley Court.

In my room there was another typed maxim: "You can be sorry for anyone else but NOT for yourself". True words indeed. — **Brig (Retd) Birdie Smith, Devon.**

Review gives single parents new status

SINGLE parents in the Armed Forces are being offered the same entitlements as other lone parents with effect from January 1.

Announcing the new measures in Parliament, Armed Forces Minister

Nicholas Soames said they would place single parents who wished to remain in the Service in a better position to meet Service commitments and parental responsibilities.

"My department's review of the status of single

parents serving in the Armed Forces is now complete," said Mr Soames. "Its purpose has been to consider, against the background of changing social trends, whether the entitlement to Service families' accommodation

and other related allowances, which currently applies only to married personnel and to lone parents whose marriages have ended in bereavement, divorce or separation, should be extended to single parents."

He said that while the Armed Forces attached great importance to the place of marriage and the family, the review had concluded that single parents should be eligible for the same entitlements as lone parents.

Children to have more flight choices

GERMANY-based children at boarding schools in the United Kingdom will have a more convenient air service from the Easter holiday - thanks to parent power.

MoD D Log Ops (RAF), responding to parental demand for greater choice between the UK and Germany, are to introduce an option of travel between domestic airports using scheduled flights to complement the MoD charter trooping flights out of Stansted Airport.

The contract has been awarded to British Airways, whose new service will allow parents to choose the airport closest to their child's school, improving accessibility and reducing long, expensive trips to Stansted.

MoD charter flights from the Essex airport will remain available for children whose schools are nearby, or for whom the journey is convenient.

BA flights will be available from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Heathrow, Gatwick and Bristol in the UK, and Bremen, Hamburg, Hanover, Dusseldorf, Koln-Bonn and Frankfurt in Germany.

Army and RAF centres at JHQ Rheindahlen will continue to process bookings, while BA will extend its Skyflyer service from check-in to arrival and hand-over to parents or escorts. Parents will be

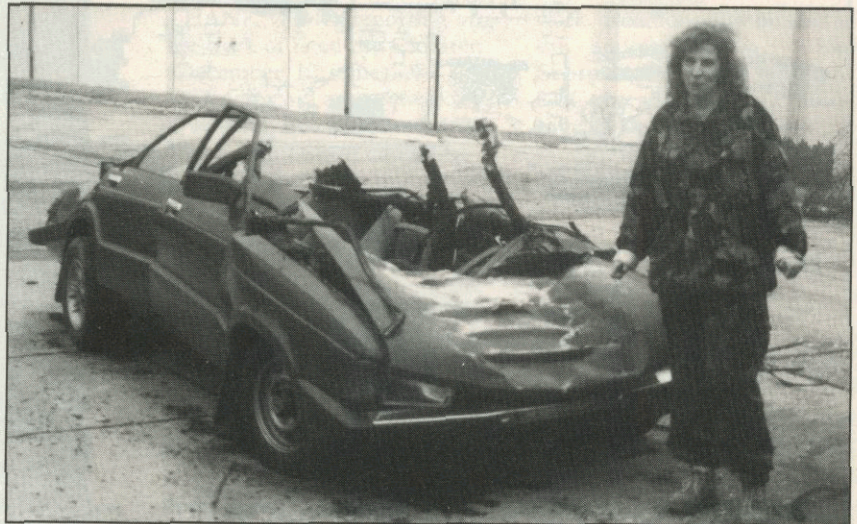
responsible for arrangements to convey and collect children from airports.

BA is to extend its special MoD SCV fares to parents who wish to fly with their children outside the MoD-funded main holidays, such as half-term and eateats.

These fares will be available for children up to 18 in full-time education in the UK. From 19 to 25 years, a reduced youth fare will also be available.

Parents can book flights through the MoD Leisure Flights hotline on 041-226 4321.

QLR wives have a smashing time



BEFORE D (5th Lancers) Squadron of The Queen's Royal Lancers deployed from Osnabrück to Cyprus on a six-month UN tour, their wives cajoled squadron leader Maj David Eadie into organising a weekend for them. The full assets of the squadron were utilised, with Lt Nick Lewis, attached from 1

Coldm Gds, instructing on drill and the fitters putting on a crane competition. Other activities included paintballing, shooting with rifle and pistol, first aid, fieldcraft and a night exercise. Sandra Compas (above) won the chance to drive a Challenger tank over an old car, the highlight of a superb weekend.

This scheme's a good deal

THE Services Home Saving Scheme was launched two years ago amid great publicity.

With an SHS account, you can save directly from your pay. When you have made at least 60 monthly payments and use your savings and the interest to buy a house, MoD will provide an additional amount, known as the Home Savings Allowance, towards the purchase.

If you have more than five years to serve and are not a home-owner, it really is a good deal.

If an SHS holder has saved £4,000 and wants to buy a home after five years, he or she will be given an additional £1,000 bonus.

Changes to the conditions have been made, with the minimum monthly payment reduced from £50 to £30 and the qualifying age revised to 18.

A number of High

Street options are available to people who have less than five years to serve. Among them are two operated specially for Service personnel.

Birmingham Midshires has two savings schemes on offer and a fee-free mortgage, with the solicitors' fees and valuation charges paid for by the society.

The N & P discounted mortgage scheme, taken up by a number of Service families, has been extended to include ex-Service personnel who apply within a year of discharge.

The Joint Service Housing Advice Office says about 60 surplus quarters a month are advertised through the discounted price scheme.

Their December bulletin had some interesting offers. If you can't find

a copy locally, contact JSHAO in Salisbury.

Other news from JSHAO includes the MoD Nomination Scheme, under which the MoD reserves for Service leavers units in surplus accommodation sold or leased to housing associations. The scheme, run by JSHAO, operates all over the country.

Applications are being taken from redundees, those discharged on medical grounds, those not extending, those leaving at the end of normal engagements, irregular occupants and single parent families.

If you want to know more, contact JSHAO at HQ, Old Sarum, Wilts SP4 6BN.

Recently I wrote about the new Queen Elizabeth Group to be based at SSAFA Central Office in

London and mentioned that Jan Illingworth, SSAFA's Special Needs Adviser, was building up a mailing list of people with an interest in special needs provision.

When the group is off the ground it should be a meeting point for people with a common aim. Ultimately it would be run by its members, although in the early stages it will be organised from Jan's desk.

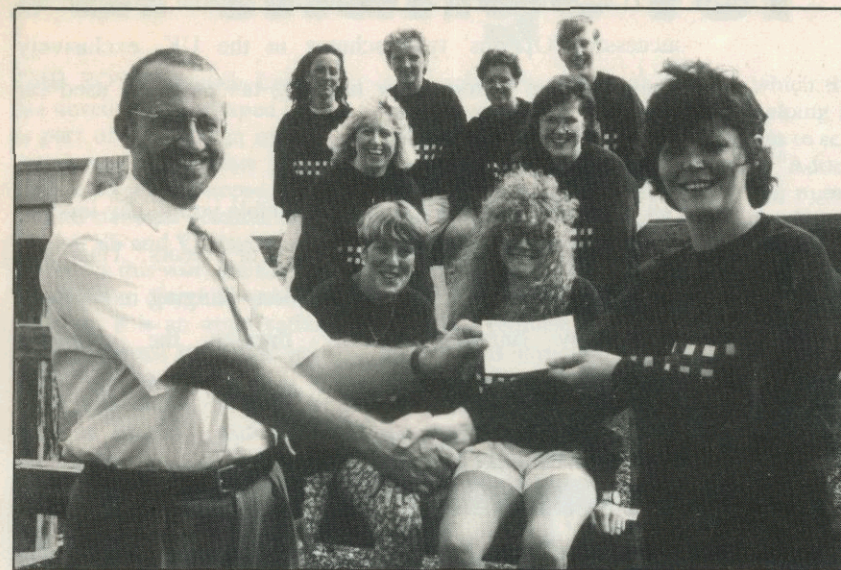
Speaking on *Counterpoint*, Jan stressed the mailing list would not be passed to other agencies or departments.

If you need a comprehensive list of SSAFA's services ask for *Special Needs - A Guide for Parents*, which is due to be re-issued.

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



Cari's column



Mrs Carol Irvine (front) and wives of the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers based at Weeton Barracks, Preston, present a cheque for £177 to a Barnardo's appeal organiser. They did a sponsored assault course run to raise the money

Early support for motion on war widows' pension

AN EARLY DAY Motion to pay Britain's war widows a pension for life and the widows of Servicemen a pension of at least half that of their late husband has received encouraging support in the House of Commons.

The motion, tabled by MP Alfred Morris on December 5, is the start of a battle by ex-Service organisations, led by the Officers' Pensions Society and the War Widows' Association of Great Britain, to correct a situation widely held to be unfair.

War widows who remarry or live with a man lose their pensions, a penal constraint that condemns many to a life of loneliness. In 1993, one in 100 war widows under the age of 50 took the financial risk of re-marrying.

The other proposals in the motion are for eligible Service widows (not just war widows) to be paid an occupational pension at the one half rate rather than one third; and for the

widow of a Serviceman whom she married after he had left the Armed Forces to be paid a pension related to his years of service.

The Officers' Pensions Society found that of 14 comparable schemes among Britain's Allies, eight pay their war widows pensions for life, while four of the remaining six restore the pension automatically on a second bereavement or divorce.

Tellingly, 84 per cent of all UK commercial pension schemes pay widows pensions for life, regardless of change of status.

The widow of a man who left the Armed Forces before 1973 receives only a third of her late husband's military pension (as opposed to half after 1973), and most widows who married Servicemen after they left the Forces receive no Forces Family Pension (FFP) at all.

According to the society, not one of the 14 comparable Allies pays a pension of less than 50

per cent of a husband's pension, and none denies post-retirement marriage widows some form of pension.

For it to have a chance of success, Mr Morris's Early Day Motion requires about 300 signatures. Eleven days after it had been tabled, 83 MPs had put their names to it.

● A 1989 campaign by the Officers' Pensions Society achieved near equality of pensions for those widowed before 1973.

Until then, post-1973 widows received substantially more from the MoD FFP introduced in that year but not backdated. Pressure on the Government raised the weekly income of pre-1973 widows from £62 to the £140 which post-'73 war widows were already receiving.

For further information on the campaign, contact the Officers' Pension Society, 68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8 1RL (tel: 0171-820 9988).

How to appeal against DSS rulings

IF you think you have had a raw deal from the Department of Social Security, read the new Benefits Agency booklet, *How to Appeal* (NI 246).

Another new booklet gives details of National Insurance contributions, Social

Security benefits and health care available in Northern Ireland and Europe. NI 38 (current from November 1994) details benefits ranging from attendance, disability living and invalid care allowances to income support and statutory maternity pay.

More from the 12th annual conference of the Federation of Army Wives

Accompany . . . or not to accompany

MOST wives remain in favour of accompanied service, if a show of hands at the Federation of Army Wives conference in Camberley is anything to go on, writes **George Mackenzie.**

And a large number of delegates were keen to give their opinions.

Brig David Webb-Carter, the Director of Personnel, said one possible option of the Bett Review was to give couples the choice to opt for accompanied or unaccompanied service.

He suggested that, broadly speaking, couples tended to go through three stages: aged 20 to 30 they preferred unaccompanied service in order to retain a double income; aged 30-42 many had young children and accompanied service became the

preferred option; aged 42-55 many wanted a double income prior to retirement, which meant unaccompanied service was occasionally the only choice.

A number of wives wanted the option before every posting, but Brig Webb-Carter explained that this would be difficult to implement because of a need to balance take-up of Boarding School Allowance (BSA) with availability of quarters.

He pointed out that BSA accounted for about £113m of the Ministry of Defence's budget and was taken up by 5,000 out of 120,000 personnel. He asked if its retention could be justified on that basis.

Should those who took it up be seen as a long-term investment by the MoD, he asked.

Your feelings about the Army

MOST Army wives adopt their husband's rank, feel they are unable to pursue a career and that the Service could make more use of their skills.

Those were some of the conclusions arrived at by the Wives Continuous Attitude Survey, the conference heard.

Sarah Smith and Andrea Hampson from the WCAS told delegates that questionnaires are sent to 6,000 women a year. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, and responses could not affect the career of a husband.

For the period November 1993 to March 1994 the Centre for Human Sciences had a response rate of 54 per cent (1,467 questionnaires returned).

A sample of the results revealed that:

● 75 per cent of wives felt they weren't treated

as a person in their own right;

● 95 per cent felt that wives adopted their husband's rank;

● 66 per cent felt they were unable to pursue a career;

● 80 per cent felt the Army could employ more wives;

● 86 per cent felt the Army could make more use of their skills;

● 57 per cent felt that information supplied to wives whose husbands were away was poor;

● 59 per cent felt support for wives whose husbands were away was poor.

Two strongly supported themes emerged from the floor - that it should be made very clear who would see the completed questionnaires and what would be done with the results, and that the results should be as widely published as possible.

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All change for the Legion

THE ROYAL British Legion has unveiled a re-vamped logo as part of a campaign to present a more up-to-date image as the next century approaches.

With national commemorations of VE and VJ Days due to take place this year, the Legion is anxious to dispel the perception that it is an organisation solely designed to benefit veterans of the two world wars.

"As the anniversary of 50 years of freedom and peace

approaches, the danger is that people will think we are no longer needed," said Lord Kingsdown, President of The Royal British Legion Industries, speaking at the re-launch in London on January 4.

In 15 years' time, however, as people lived longer, the number requiring practical assistance is likely to have doubled, he said.

One reason was the increasing number of pension claims,

which the Legion found itself helping more and more veterans to secure as a right.

"Added to this is the growing number of people leaving the Forces today. The average Serviceman and woman serves only for a period of four-and-a-half years, but for those completing a pensionable career the retirement age is around 40. Many of those find themselves through no fault of their own jobless and homeless and

not in a position to support their families."

There are also men, women and families who currently suffer the consequences of physical and mental injuries as a result of, for example, the Falklands campaign or Northern Ireland. "We need everyone in this country, young and old, to recognise the Legion for what it is: a contemporary, caring charity, building for the future," he said.

Three-car draw's a winner for SSAFA



SSAFA came up trumps with its annual Three Car Draw, raising a record £104,660 towards its work in the Service community. It was the first time the draw had tipped over the £100,000 mark.

Sponsors Mike Perrin of Natocars and Stuart Dickens of Land Rover get among the tickets with LWren Writer Jackie Sissons RN, Sgt Bridget Smedley and Flt Lt Catherine Coton RAF.

Car winners were K Tebbs of Falmouth (Land Rover Discovery), K Maynard (Metro 1.1), and Mr N Nicholls (Mini Sprite).

Soldiers join Argentines on mountain

A GROUP of 20 British soldiers climbed the highest mountain in the Americas last month with a contingent from the Argentine Army.

The soldiers, mainly from the Household Division, were on phase five of the Roof of the Americas expedition.

Objective was the 22,850ft Mount Aconcagua.

Two Britons reached the summit - Capt Richard Gaffney, Welsh Guards, 2iC of the expedition, and Cpl Dougie Wilson, REME, based at the Combined Arms Training Centre Battle Group LAD, Warminster.

Germans at 24 Bde

A NEW commander, a visit from a sister brigade and a winter sports competition have kept Colchester-based 24 Airmobile Brigade busy recently.

Words of Wisdom

COMEDIAN and one-time Army boy bugler Norman Wisdom celebrates his 80th birthday on February 4. And to mark the occasion, a series of special events is taking place all over Britain in support of his Children's Hospice Appeal.

Servicemen and women are being asked to participate. Details from Bill Gale on 0624 852129.

Brig Robin Brims took over command from Brig Peter Grant Peterkin on December 13. One of his last duties was to host a three-day "Paten-schaft" visit by 15 German officers - led by brigade commander Col Bernt Müller - from "Oldenburgische" Luftlandebrigade 31, one of 24 Airmobile's sister brigades within the MND (C).

The Gryphons Trophy winter sports competition, comprising 11 different sports run on a league basis for both major and minor units, was closely contested by 1 R Anglian and 3 Regiment AAC, with the former winning by one point in the final competition, the tug-of-war.

IN BRIEF

CAMBERLEY will be the location for the proposed Joint Service Command and Staff College. In announcing the decision, Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said staff training at Bracknell and Greenwich would cease.

Orphans in Bosnia woke up to toys at Christmas thanks to a joint effort by Skelmersdale primary school children and soldiers from 2 R Anglian and the RLC. The Poachers, recently returned to Hohn from a Bosnian tour, took 29 boxes of toys collected by the school to the RLC's depot at Thatcham, Berkshire for despatch.

Six hundred soldiers and 200 vehicles took part in the Multi-national Division's Exercise Active Improvement in Germany to train HQ MND (C) in its role as a divisional headquarters.

Parachuting courses at JSPC Lippspringe begin on February 4 and continue until October. Details on Sennelager 2740.

A concert at Perth City Hall organised by HQ 51 Highland Brigade raised more than £3,000 for charities including the Army Benevolent Fund.

Drug tests reflect society's wider problem

THE ARMY's decision to introduce compulsory drugs testing reflects a concern to protect soldiers from the ill effects of a growing phenomenon in society generally.

The number of Service personnel dismissed for drug offences

has increased by 237 per cent in three years, with 229 dismissed from the Armed Forces in 1992 compared with 68 in 1989.

Army incidents increased four-fold in five years, with 1,046 individuals reported in 1993 compared with 260 in 1988.

Under the new regime, all ranks will be subject to tests in a programme designed to target cannabis, crack and amphetamines. The programme, which is being run under the auspices of the Adjutant General, will cost £15m over ten years.

SOLDIER to Soldier

Tony's 'dig' goes on show

ARTEFACTS from a Roman battlefield uncovered by Maj Tony Clunn RAMC are on show in a major exhibition at the city museum in Osnabrück and look set to re-write German history.

His finds, unearthed in conjunction with the museum, came from a site now thought to be the true location of the battle of the Lost Legions of Varus 2,000 years ago.

Maj Clunn's survey work from March 1987 to December 1989 led archaeologists to carry out digs in the Kalkreise area north of Osnabrück after his discovery of artefacts bearing the mark of the Roman general Quintilius Varus.

Site of the AD 9 battle of Teutoburger Wald, at which the Roman advance into Germany was arrested, was generally accepted as being on the outskirts of Detmold.

Three legions and ancillary forces, about 25,000 men in all, were slaughtered by the Germans in the greatest military defeat ever suffered by the Roman Empire.

Tony, intimately involved with the project for the past eight years and now serving in JHQ UKSC(G) at Rheindahlen, has been commended by the town authorities for his contribution.

Only one per cent of the site has so far been excavated.

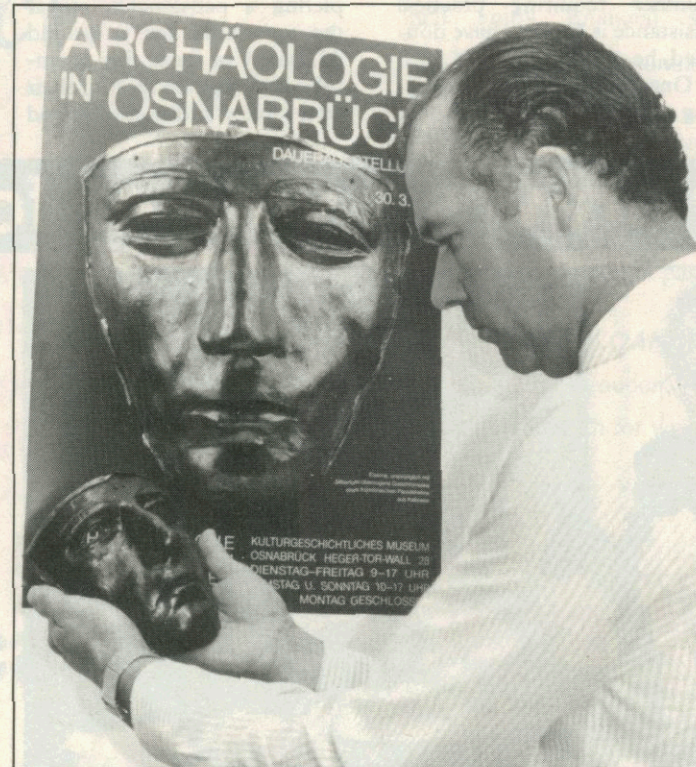
● If anyone would like to help with the work itself, they can contact Tony c/o Cmd Med. HQ UKSC(G), BFPO 140.

SASC falls in — in numbers

THEY may have been small in number, but members of the Small Arms School Corps are large in team spirit.

With help from the Searchline column on these pages, the SASC grand reunion at St Martin's Plain Camp, Shorncliffe attracted more than 140 ex-members — a remarkable turn-out for the smallest corps in the British Army.

The corps is just 132-strong. The



Maj Tony Clunn: major archeological discovery

reunion was timed to mark the 25th anniversary of the closure of the Small Arms School at Hythe, subsequently re-formed at Warminster.

Fifty serving officers, warrant officers and sergeant instructors, led by Lt Col Roger Chater, senior officer in the corps and one of only three from the Hythe days still serving, joined the veterans for a remembrance parade in Hythe.

Dutch paras were there

DUTCH airborne links were maintained during the Arnhem 50th anniversary ceremonies when local soldiers joined 10 Para (V).

Five soldiers from 16 (NL) Inf Coy (V), PMC Gelderland and C Coy, 11 Airmobile Brigade, led by Capt Kees Jan Weber, took part in the jump over Ginkelse Heide near Arnhem on September 17 to continue the tradition of the "Parachutistencompagnie Noothoven van Goor", trained by British Airborne Forces at Ringway, Manchester from 1941.

Dutch liaison officers went on to jump with the British 1st Airborne Division in September 1944.

Two of the anniversary jumpers, Capt Weber and Sgt Maj Wiet van

Banning, subsequently led a team from 16 Inf Coy in the Cambrian Patrol. Hosted by D Coy, 2 Wessex in Newbury, they won a bronze award.

9th Tanks at Roosendaal

THE tattered battle flag of the 9th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment flew proudly over Roosendaal and

APPOINTMENTS

Lt Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie to be Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe in the rank of general from Dec 8, 1994 in succession to Gen Sir John Waters.

Maj Gen M J D Walker to be Commander ACE Rapid Reaction Corps in the rank of lieutenant general from Dec 8, 1994 in succession to Lt Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie.

Brig K J Drewienkiewicz to be Engineer-in-Chief (Army) in the rank of major general from Dec 15, 1994.

Brig R A Oliver to be Deputy Chief of Staff HQ UHLF in the rank of major general from Dec 15, 1994.

Brigadiers — A G Denaro — To HQ UNPROFOR, Dec 5; D L Judd — To HQ ARRC, Dec 7; A I Ramsay — To be Comd BMATT Zimbabwe, Dec 11; R Pridham — To be Comd HQ RSME, Dec 5; R A Bradbury — To Kuwait Proj Off, Dec 19; R E Ratazzi — To be Comd HQ Combat Svcs Sp Gp (G), Dec 20; M D Conroy — To MoD, Dec 19.

Colonels — D K W Farrant — To be DA Guatemala, Dec 9; I J Hellberg — To be DA Jakarta, Dec 10; M C Sims — To ASMT, Dec 5; J C A Smith — To HQ DGAGC, Dec 5; H V C Stephens — To be DA Budapest, Dec 5; J N R Houghton — To HQ UKLF, Dec 5; A C Mantell — To be Comd Engr 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, Dec 9; T V Merritt — To be DA Kuwait, Dec 9; M J G Thomas — To RAM Coll, Dec 7.

50th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Imperial War Museum

Until February 5: The Italian Campaign photo display. **Until August 31:** D-Day to Victory exhibition. **From March:** London at War exhibition; Home Front Memorial Gallery roll of honour; special film season. **From April:** Channel Islands occupation and liberation exhibition. **May 4-6:** 1940s fashion shows. **From August:** Victory in the Far East display.

VE Day

MAY

- 6 — Reception and banquet, Guildhall, City of London.
- 6-8 — Public event activities, Hyde Park.
- 7 — Service at St Paul's Cathedral.
- 7 or 8 — Services in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh.
- 8 — VE night concert, Hyde Park.

- Admission to Government-sponsored events free to veterans
- Other events to be announced.

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

Nispen in the southern Netherlands when veterans, led by the Colonel of the regiment, Lt Col Peter Veale, returned to mark the 50th anniversary of their part in the liberation of the towns.

The flag was carried from the Tank Museum at Bovington for the occasion.

Hotel and food expenses for the veterans were paid for by local authorities, and the emotional receptions they received in both towns moved many of the old soldiers to tears.

Lt Cols — H T Dickens, 9/12 L — To MoD, Dec 5; A R Gale, R Signals — To be DA Ghana, Dec 7; A J Hayhurst AAC — To MoD, Dec 9; E J Hunter RLC — To be CO 5 AB Bde Log Bn, Dec 5; N G W Lang RA — To be DA Riga, Dec 8; J M May RLC — To HQ EDist, Dec 5; A J Pickford REME — To MoD, Dec 5; C W Walch AAC — To be CO 9 Regt AAC, Dec 5; M T French RAMC — To CMH, Dec 5; M D Conway AGC(ALS) — To HQ

SDist, Dec 19; M A C Hughes RE — To be CO 39 Engr Regt, Dec 19; A P Paine REME — To MoD, Dec 19; P M Prentis AAC — To MoD, Dec 19.

Retirements

Brigadiers — J M Lucken, late RE, Dec 24; W H Backhouse, late R Signals, Jan 1; A H Parker Bowles, late RHG/D, Dec 27; J F Rickett, late WG, Dec 31.

Colonel — P E B Daniel, late RCT, Dec 31.

DIARY

Now open: The Right to Serve exhibition, history of women in the Army, National Army Museum, Chelsea.

FEBRUARY

15,16,17: Mountbatten Festival of Music featuring Massed Bands, Corps of Drums and Fanfare Trumpets of Royal Marines, Royal Albert Hall, in aid of Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children and Service charities. Ticket enquiries on 0705 547205.

APRIL

28-30: The Aldershot Show, Rushmoor Arena.

JULY

18-29: 105th Royal Tournament, Earl's Court.

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

SEARCHLINE

No 1 GHQ Printing Press RAOC (Fayid 1952-53) reunion planned. Contact F Thompson, 21 Salmons Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2JE (tel 081-397 5931).

R W Forrest wishes to hear from anyone who knew his father, **Pte Jimmy Forrest**, enlisted GSC March 1944, served with 11 Green Howards (India, 1944), West Yorkshire Regiment (Singapore, 1945). Replies to 15 Ryde Road, Roseworth, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 9DX.

J M Blockley wishes to learn details of a distant relative, **T Blockley**, No 5211, 1st Border Regt, died of wounds, January 20, 1900 in Spearman's Camp, South Africa. Replies to 35 Ardrossan Gardens, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7AU.

Caroline Barton seeks **Helen Willerton**, daughter of SSgt George Willerton RAOC last known address HQ 2 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, Lubbecke. Contact 0792 641362.

Adrian N W Smith seeks anyone who served with his grandfather, **Lt William Pye** RE, 1927/168, or his unit, 153 Rly Op Coy, 1939-45, in the Middle East, Egypt and Palestine. Replies to 1 Hillymead, Seaton, Devon EX12 2LF.

Daniel (Danny) Diamond, who was wounded in Italy during the

Second World War and served with 22nd Fd Regt RA in Korea, seeks two colleagues from Korea days, **Spr Daniel Kelly** (6 Fd Pk Sqn RE) and **Horace Stokes** (22 Fd Regt RE). Replies c/o 41 Dunkeld Road, Elson, Gosport, Hants PO12 4NJ.

Ex-**Spr Ray Crotch** seeks old mates from 3 Troop, 55 Fd Sqn RE, Korea 1952-53, especially **LCpl Brown, McGowan** and **White**, taken prisoner on the Hook. Replies to 99 Borrowdale Drive, Norwich NR1 4LZ.

AEC/RAEC history: The curator of the RAEC Museum is trying to compile a dossier of personal accounts of serving and former members of the AEC/RAEC, with particular emphasis on operations. Memories of training, educational methods, Army lifestyle also gratefully received. Write to S J Anglim, Curator, The RAEC Museum, Wilton Park, Beaconsfield, Buckingham HP9 2RP.

New WFR association, Staffs: Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regimental Association newly formed in Rugeley, Staffs, meets second Thursday of every month. Contact secretary R Bailey, (RPWMC), Mansfield House, 10 Market Street, Rugeley (tel 01889 582808) for details.

Plant Troop, 73 Sqn RE (Christmas Island, March 1961-March

REUNIONS

Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's) Association: Scottish branches' annual dinner-dance will be held at Stakis Normandy Hotel, February 24. Former members and friends invited to contact J Gaughan, 49 Cartha Crescent, Paisley (tel 041-889 9120) or Lt Col J M Lauder (tel 041-884 8483) for details.

REME Association (Scotland): Dinner-dance in Scotland area, Feb 25. Details from WO1 (ASM) Sandy Wilson, ES Branch, Army HQ Scotland, Craigiehall, South Queensferry EH30 9TN (tel Edinburgh Mil 2689).

The Queen's Regimental Association: Annual reunion and AGM, March 4 at Victory Services Club, Marble Arch. Tickets (£8.50) from the Secretary, RHQ, PWRR, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY (tel 0227 818054).

RHA Association, Trowbridge: Reunion dinner, Civic Hall, Trowbridge, March 25 open to all past and present members of any Royal Horse Artillery unit. Membership not essential, ladies welcome. Details from Dinner

1962: George Snell (ex-Cpl, RAOC laundry) seeks copy of a squadron or group photograph taken at the time. Will meet expenses. Replies to 38 Randolph Street, Anfield, Liverpool 4, Merseyside L4 0SA.

Ramree Island 1945: Royal Canadian Legion historian seeks details of events and units involved at Ramree Island, off coast of Burma, February 1945, when 1,000 Japanese soldiers trapped by British forces were decimated during the night by crocodiles. Replies to Wayne Padgett, 64 Weston Drive, Daly City, CA 94015, USA.

Pte John Ivan Hyde: Relatives of Pte Hyde, of D Coy, 4th Lincolns, who was killed in Holland on March 6, 1945, aged 18, are sought by Mrs Florence Britten, formerly McNee, whose husband, J J McNee, died in the same incident. A plaque has been erected where they died and Mrs Britten, of 238 Gibson Lane, Kippax, Leeds LS25 7JL, would also like to hear from Pte W Evans, who was wounded at the time.

Carinthia/Styria: Reunion of liberating forces, army of occupation and those who "passed through", to be held in Carinthia, Austria, between May 3 and 12 1995. All families welcome. Details from John Lewindon, Market Square Chambers, Rochford, Essex SS4 1AL (tel 0702 547580).

Secretary, 44 King Street, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6HF (tel 01225 708223).

5 PWRR: WO's and Sgts' Mess, Past and Present reunion dinner, April 1. Open to all SNCOs (Regular, NRPS, TA) who have served with 4 Buffs, 5 Buffs, 5 Queens or 5 PWRR. Details from WO1 (RSM) S Scully or Mr Skeet on 01227 462769/761397.

1st Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment, Suez 1951-54: Reunion planned at Tranmere Rovers FC Social Club, April 8. Details from N Wakefield, RHQ, The Castle, Chester CH1 2DA (sae appreciated).

RAOC/REME Middle Easterners Association and COPO (Middle East): Annual reunion lunch at The Oval banqueting suite, Kennington, London SE11, April 8. Details from Hon Sec Charles Baxter, 129 Benhill Road, London SE5 7LZ.

138th (City of London) Fd Regt RA Association: Reunion on April 24 at Victory Services Club, London. Details from Frank Flack, 22 Camborne Way, Hounslow TW5 0PW (tel 0181-570 5267). News from members welcome.

50th Missile Club RA: Annual reunion at Park Hotel, Tynemouth, nr Newcastle on Tyne for past members of 50 HAA, 50 Med and 50 Missile Regt, Regular and National Service, and support units. Details from A J Todd, 9 The Grove, Heathhall, Dumfries, Scotland DG1 1TN (tel 01387 262378, evenings only).

Polar Bears: 143 Fd Regt RA reunion luncheon, May 27. Contact T Weller, 8 Seapoint Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 1TH (tel 0843 861660).

3 Base Ammunition Depot Bracht: Reunion weekend June 9-11 for all who served at Bracht which is due to close in 1996. Details from Capt Dave Flinn, 3 BAD, BFPO 40.

Combined Ex-Services Association of Bridlington: 14th annual conference and reunion weekend, Bridlington, June 16-18. Tickets (£6.50) from Mags Whittlesea, 6 Springfield Avenue, Bridlington YO15 3AA.

669 Squadron AAC: Past members sought for reunion weekend at Wattisham Airfield, July 8-9. To include predecessor units **669 Sqn RAF, 1912 Light Liaison Flt, 12 Independent Flt, 131 Flt RASC and 131 Aviation Flt RCT.** Details from CoH Knowles, 669 Sqn, 4 Regt AAC, BFPO 41 (or c/o Wattisham Airfield, Suffolk IP7 7RA after January 20).

REVIEWS

PUBLISH . . . AND BE PRAISED

RETIRED officer Roger Wilmot Bennett has spent much of his adult life collecting and researching regimental insignia.

Though he was commissioned into the REME – from which he retired as a major – his life's work has revolved around his own county regiment.

Hence *Badges of the Worcestershire Regiment*, which this acknowledged expert in the field admits cannot be the last word on the subject.

The study of uniforms and badges is, he says, "an inexact science, made the more so by the long standing tradition that one never sees two British officers dressed alike".

Publication was long delayed because "whenever the event seemed near, something new would turn up to add to the sum of knowledge".

Eventually after all his painstaking research he could wait no longer – and took Wellington's advice to "publish and be damned".

Enthusiasts and historians

will be pleased he did – and that we have this valuable, well illustrated (mostly in black and white) addition to the reference shelves. – CH

Badges of the Worcestershire Regiment. Available at £25 plus £2.50 p and p from the author, R W Bennett, 16 Grayshott Laurels, Lindford, Bordon, Hants GU35 0QB.

Spotlight turns on the 'neglected' Wyverns

LIFE is full of coincidences. At the end of last year, *Soldier* published a letter from H W G Drake complaining that the 43rd (Wessex) Division is all too often neglected in accounts of the north-west Europe campaign.

On the day the letter was published, a new book, *The Fighting Wessex Wyverns*, landed on my desk for review. There, on Page 124, was a recollection by Sgt George Drake of C Squadron, 43rd Reconnaissance Regiment (5th Gloucestershire Regiment).

Patrick Delaforce, the author, is steadily assembling a series of histories of the British divisions that fought in Europe from the Normandy beach-heads through to the end of the war. This is his third title on the theme, having previously published books about the 7th and 11th Armoured Divisions.

Delaforce knows his subject, having served during the war as troop leader with the 11th Armoured in Normandy and as a forward observation officer in Holland and Germany.

The 43rd Division's commander, Maj Gen Gwilym Ivo Thomas, was a controversial figure, accused and sometimes credited as being "brave, thrusting, skilled in the arts of war, humourless and brutal".

His father was harpist to Queen Victoria and Edward VII, but soldiering was apparently in his blood and, as a young artillery battery commander in the First World War, he won the MC and bar, and a DSO. His nickname was "Von Thoma", and he certainly

dressed the part of a German officer in "high oiled boots, light-coloured riding breeches, a battle dress blouse covered in medal ribbons and his field service cap carried a faded major-general's cap band".

Despite, or perhaps because of, his image, he was a competent commander of the Wyverns from March 2, 1942, and was described by his Corps commander, Lt Gen Brian Horrocks, as "an immensely able divisional commander though a very difficult man".

Most of the division landed in Normandy by sunset on June 24, 1944 having been delayed by four days of severe storms. More serious was the foundering of the ship carrying the Recce Regiment, which resulted in the loss of 189 valuable lives. During the night of June 26, the Wyverns marched through deep mud into their first battle at Cheux.

From here the author, drawing largely on the words of

those who fought with the division, takes us through the battles for the River Odon, Hill 121, Maltot and Mont Pincon, the breakout to the River Seine – the first major river assault – and the second Operation Neptune of the campaign.

In Holland, it was the only infantry division to make a single-handed attempt to relieve the airborne forces at Arnhem, thence to the clearance of the Roer triangle and the battle for the Reichswald.

Finally came the Rhine crossing and the drive over the Westphalian Plain to Bremen and the port of Cuxhaven.

How easy it is to forget details of battle, and it is remarkable how memories flood back on reading a paragraph years later. "... worst of all was the wire. It was everywhere – telegraph wire, railway wire, signal cable, all tossed up on the track like tangled knitting wool. And in the darkness men stumbled, sweated, tripped and cursed their way

forward, now more concerned with the obstacles in their path than the sudden flash and burst of falling mortar bombs or the tracer flying in thin pencil lines above."

There is much to jog the memory of veterans.

Unit histories, be they regimental or divisional, can be so full of action that they become difficult to follow. The author in this case has overcome the problem by presenting us with short chapters, some consisting only of a single page.

It is a format that makes for easy reading and one, it is hoped, that will be followed by other writers. But it is nevertheless a harrowing story of the campaign that cost the 43rd 12,500 casualties, including 3,000 killed. – BJ

The Fighting Wessex Wyverns: From Normandy to Bremerhaven with the 43rd Wessex Division by Patrick Delaforce. Published by Alan Sutton Publishing, hardback, £16.99.

ORDE WINGATE: INSUFFERABLE HERO?

LIKE him, loathe him or love him, Maj Gen Orde Wingate was an odd man.

He was brought up in strict religious surroundings; he was unpopular at school and as a young officer; he had lots to say about everyone and everything. In short, it appears from the description of his early years by David Rooney in *Wingate and the Chindits – Redressing the Balance* that, as a

young man, he was an insufferable, boorish prig.

Perhaps he was, but many great military leaders had, or possibly have, traits which don't automatically earn popularity.

It seems the whole of his life, all 41 years of it, was one long battle against authority. He was contemptuous of many of those above and below him. And he gave vent to his opin-

ions in no uncertain terms.

Fortunately for him he had a good many high-level connections in military and political circles including Wavell and Churchill. These links stood him in good stead, even after an attempted suicide during an attack of cerebral malaria.

It was following this that he was posted to Rangoon in 1942 to organise the Chindits.

His ideas on the use of long

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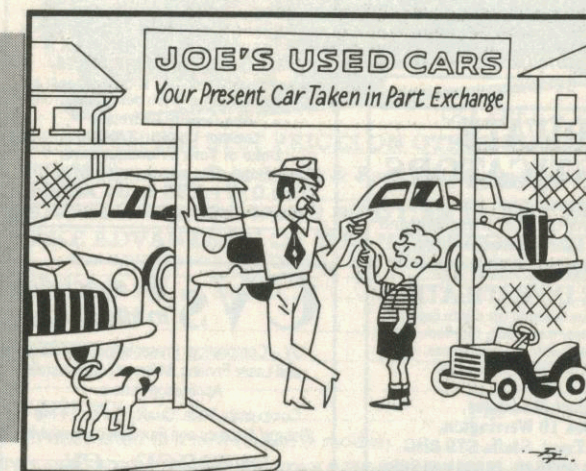
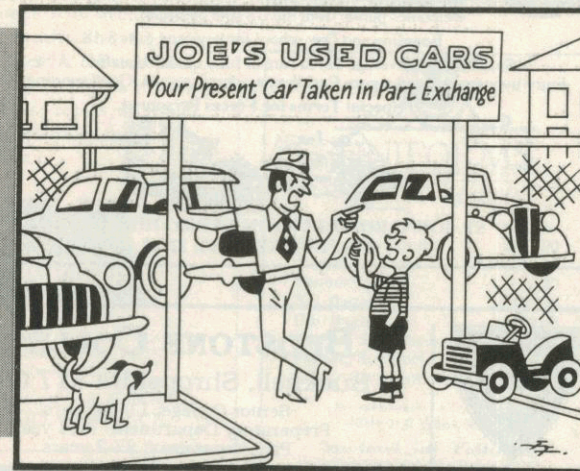
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Competition No 600 (November 28 issue): Congratulations to Mr T H Truswell, of South Hetton, Durham, who wins £50. Book prizes go to runners-up Mr G P Coles, of Morpeth, Northumberland, and Mr D C Ducker, of South Molton, N Devon.



Orde Wingate (right) with brigade major Maj G M Anderson on the first Chindit expedition

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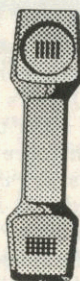
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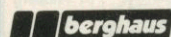
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Hi, I'm a 26-year-old female with
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you. **P170**

Natalie, 18, 5'9", slim with brown hair
and brown eyes. I live in Essex and
enjoy everything about life. I would like
to exchange fun letters with anyone,
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Sharon, 24, 5'6", slim with dark hair.
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I'd like to hear from anyone aged 24 to
30. **ALA. P172**

Julie, 19, 5'3" with red hair and green
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P173

29-year-old nurse, 5'9", slim build,
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Would like to hear from sincere pen
pals aged 28-40. **ALA. P174**

Debbie, 30, 5'4", blonde hair, slim,
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swimming, skiing, aerobics, pubs,
dining out and holidays abroad. I
would love to hear from soldiers at
home or abroad. **ALA. P175**

Christine, 39, divorced, 5'7", very slim
with auburn hair and hazel eyes. Inter-
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hear from anyone 30-45. **P176**

Dawn, 29, single with one son aged
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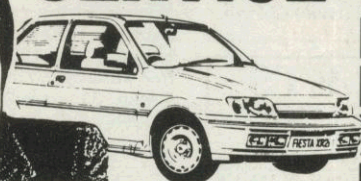
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ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY RESULTS

DECEMBER 10, 1994

Ten-way tie for first prize (18 goals, £450 each) Pte S G Cartmell, QDG, BFPO 16; Maj M S Corthine, 151 Sp Regt RLC(V), Croydon; Maj J E M Crowe, HQ London District; Capt I J Flackett, 1 Staffords, BFPO 802; Sgt W F Graham, Rheindahlen Sp Unit, BFPO 40; Capt M T Haynes, 3 PW(O)(V), York; Cpl A Mottram, 16 Signal Regt, BFPO 40; Maj M A O'Halloran, 3 Bn REME, BFPO 36; WO2 C E Russett, Hong Kong PATC, BFPO 1; Lt M C Wadsley, 237 Signal Sqn, Chippingham.

DECEMBER 17, 1994

Four-way tie for first prize (18 goals, £975 each) Maj J R Gout, Log Emp Trg School, Deepcut; Capt J A Inglis, HQ Mil Wks Force, Chilwell; Sgt R J Payton, 4 Regt RA Wksp REME, BFPO 36; LCpl D N Shelton, 3 Bn REME, BFPO 41.

18-way tie for fifth prize (17 goals, £33.33 each) Cpl E Bloomfield, 1 RS, Fort George; Pte N J Doogan, 4 R Irish, BFPO 804; SSgt J J Finnegan, 8 R Irish, BFPO 803; Cpl A P Harris, 1 D and D, BFPO 16; Capt G B Hills, HQ UKSC (G), BFPO 140; SSgt N J Horan, 96 Sy Sect, Aldershot; SSgt I B Ingram, RDG, BFPO 16; WO2 M Lark, Spec Ops Unit RMP, Wilton; Maj W V Miles, 21 Signal Regt, Coleraine; WO1 P K Murray, Defence NBC Centre, Winterbourne Gunner; WO1 K D O'Riordan, 253 Fd Amb RAMC, BFPO 801; WO1 J C M Pickford, 89 PC Regt RLC, BFPO 26; Pte S Raine, 8 Arty Spt Regt RLC, Catterick; Lt J Tate, 62 Cyprus Sp Sqn RE, BFPO 58; Pte D Thomas, 26 Regt RA Wksp REME, BFPO 113; LCpl M K Waughman, 10

AB Wksp REME, Aldershot; Lt R F Whelan, 2 Signal Regt, York; LCpl S J Whitehead, HQ Dhekelia Garrison, BFPO 58.

DECEMBER 24, 1994

Two-way tie for first prize (22 goals, £1,500 each) SSgt J Jasper, 9 Regt AAC, Dishforth; Cpl G P Little, MoD, London.

Third prize (21 goals, £500) SSgt R Wilson, 3 RSME Regt, Blackwater.

13-way tie for fourth prize (20 goals, £76.92 each) Sgt K W Barker, 1 R Irish, BFPO 53; Cpl S S Clarke, HCR, Windsor; Pte S S Collins, 1 PWO, Warminster; SSgt N O C Cromwell, 103 Bn REME(V), Redhill; Cpl J W Darnbrook, 3 RSME Regt, Blackwater; Sgt N R Devine, BATUS, BFPO 14; Lt Col G K Geddie, BVO, Ashchurch; Sgt L A Haydock, BFPO 825; Lt R Reid, AMS Trg Grp, Aldershot; Sgt R S Simpson, 4 Regt AAC, BFPO 41; Lt Col S J Westlake, HQ DGAGC, Worthy Down; WO2 R H Wilson, 4 GS Regt RLC, Abingdon; Cpl C D Wright, 1 PWO, Warminster.

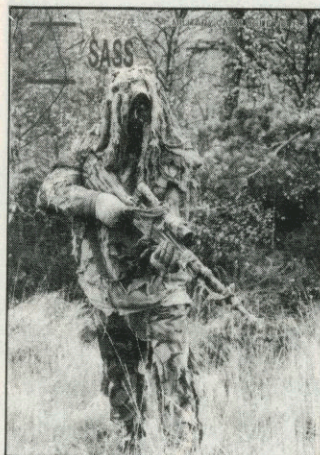
DECEMBER 31, 1994

Two-way tie for first prize (22 goals, £1,500 each) SSgt M Newell, 26 Regt RA, BFPO 113; LCpl D T Wright, 9 R Irish, BFPO 808.

Eight-way tie for third prize (21 goals, £187.50 each) WO2 R Carroll, 22 Regt RA, Kirtan in Lindsey; Major I S J Cassidy, Army HQ Scotland; Pte C C Cheetham, BOD Bicester; Cpl M J DeCourtney, HQ RSME, Chatham; Pte V Doyle, UK Force Arty AMF(L), Larkhill; Capt W J A Naismith, 39 Signal Regt (V), London; Cpl A G Skinner, Dhekelia Det RMP Cyprus, BFPO 58; Cfn M S Sweetman, 1 IG, London.

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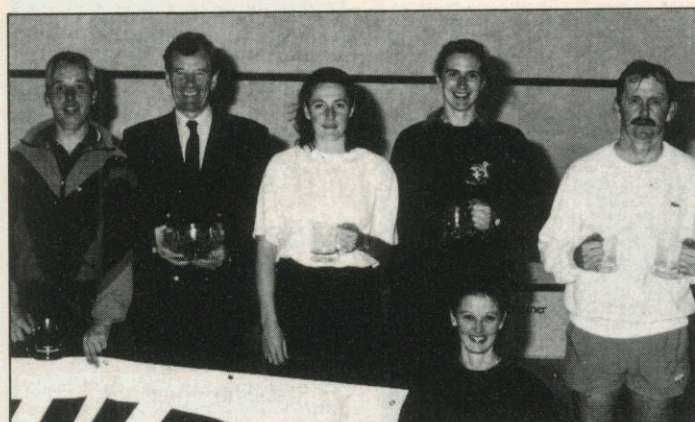
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03



Brig David Harris (second left), chairman of UKSC(G) squash, with members of the Herford men's and Osnabrück women's teams

Herford lift garrison honours

HERFORD picked up the UKSC(G) inter-garrison squash team championships staged at the Match Sports Club in Sennelager with a 4-1 victory over Osnabrück in the final.

WO2 John McFadden (28 Engr Regt), Sgt Dinger Bell (REME, 16 Regt RA Wksp), SSgt Chic Warrington (16 Regt RA) and Capt Phil Croager (REME, 16 Regt RA Wksp) won their matches for Herford, while Maj David Bradley (RLC, HQ 1 (UK) Armd Div) was forced to withdraw during his game against Sgt Phil Ashman (AGC(APS), 14 Sig Regt) of Osnabrück.

Herford won through from their preliminary league only on countback after finishing level with Hühne and Gütersloh.

Osnabrück eliminated Paderborn in the other pool.

Osnabrück clinched the women's title by beating Gütersloh 2-1, the crucial match between 2nd Lt Jayne Appleby (14 Sig Regt) and Lt Red Savage (7 Tpt Regt RLC) going to Appleby, who also went on to win a round robin competition organised after Rheindahlen had withdrawn their team because of exercise commitments.

The tournament was sponsored by Hi-Tech and prizes were presented by Brig David Harris, ADC Commander Log Sp HQ UKSC(G), who himself received a presentation to mark his efforts on behalf of Army squash in Germany. He has since returned on posting to the UK.

Titch wins at Badminton



Picture: Mike Perring

ALDERSHOT Garrison Saddle Club stables manager Bdr Titch Magee (pictured left) of 7 Para RHA won the prestigious Royal Wessex Yeomanry Cross Country at Badminton last month.

Riding Eurostock Kilmore in the club's first entry in this 200-year-old annual regimental event, he beat 40 other competitors over a testing natural course of 16 fences and was presented with a silver plate by the Duchess of Beaufort.

Also riding one of the stable's working horses was club chairman Lt Col Andrew Westcott, CO 7 Regt AAC, who was seventh on Eurostock Digby.

Both riders took part in the King's Troop show jumping championships at St John's Wood in London and qualified for the Grand Masters Class.

A shadow hangs over the Aldershot Garrison Saddle Club. Reformed 2½ years ago, it went from strength to strength and now has six working club horses which cater for riders of all abilities.

It recently obtained sponsorship from Eurostock, tax-free car specialists, but its future has been clouded by the decision to disband the Royal Military Police's Mounted Troop later in the year.



Touring: 2 RTR contest a lineout during their trip to the South

Tankies on tour in the South

FALLINGBOSTEL's "Cockney Farmers" completed a two-week rugby tour of the South of England, taking on Plymouth Albion, Dorchester, Barnstaple and Redruth before beating 1 RTR in a close game at Tidworth.

The team's nickname derives from the amalgamation of 2 and 3 RTR, which recruited from the London area and the South West respectively.

Following the match at Tidworth, an all-RTR XV – the Ironsides – played matches against RMA Sandhurst and RMCS Shrivenham.

In the final week the tourists played against ATR Winchester, where all Armoured Corps recruits receive basic training, before winding up with victory over the very hospitable Basilidon club who had visited Fallingbostel the previous season.

Hampshire fall for the old one-two

Hampshire 1, Army 2

IN AN epic struggle at Eastleigh, Southampton, the Army scored a hard-earned 2-1 victory over Hampshire after falling behind in the second minute of this South West Counties Championship tie, writes Derrick Bly.

The Army defence had barely got their bearings when Kevin Chambers (Petersfield Town) smashed the ball into the corner of their net.

Strouts, Parkin, Maynard and Russell returned to duty but took time to settle and Wiscombe was forced to make

a fingertip save before the Army struck decisively in the 35th and 36th minutes.

Bradbury picked up a long pass from Fagin, chipped the 'keeper and slid the ball into an empty net.

From the restart Russell's inch-perfect pass made Hampshire's back four irrelevant as Bambrook timed his run to slide the ball home.

Russell and Bradbury both went close before the interval, the latter just failing to add to his 12 senior goals this season after chipping down a high ball and volleying inches over the

bar. Russell scooped a cross from Higgins on to the top of the woodwork.

Hampshire shaded a close second half in which there were chances at both ends. The Army had Wiscombe to thank for preserving their lead with an outstanding one-handed stop at point blank range, and he made several other timely interventions.

Although Maynard's flick gave Bradbury another chance at the Hampshire end, most of the questions were being asked in front of the Army goal and the defence did well to soak up

a lot of pressure from the county forwards.

After victories over Middlesex and Hampshire, the Army could find Sussex to be their toughest opponents.

R Signals 1, Infantry 1

LCpl Kevin James (RWF) scored for the Infantry from the penalty spot midway through the first half. Soon after the interval LCpl Jimmy Strouts equalised with a header following a corner.

A windswept pitch made ball control difficult and both sides missed chances, making the draw a fair result.



Pte Jason Baxter (left) and LCpl Barry Cockburn of 1 PWO were among the medal-winners at the Cyprus parachute championships. Cockburn was third in the intermediate accuracy event while Baxter

Yorkies in the medals

was a member of the winning team in the senior accuracy event, third in the intermediate style competition, first in the intermediate accuracy and overall intermediate champion. Both men are members of the battalion parachute display team which appears at major summer events throughout Yorkshire, the regiment's recruiting area.

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Army doc sets sail to secure Olympic berth

ARMY doctor Maj Stuart Hudson is putting an early marker down for Olympic selection by taking on the best keelboat sailors in America.

Currently serving with 23 Parachute Field Ambulance RAMC at Aldershot, Hudson left for Miami early this month to spend two months honing his sailing skills with the help of Mark Reynolds, a former Olympic gold medal winner and now one of the USA's top sail makers.

Hudson switched last season from Laser dinghies to the two-man Star. He and Cpl Phil Levers (R Sigs) made rapid progress before winning the Trofeo Aquafresca regatta on Lake Garda in Italy.

But in top competition Levers proved too light for the 24ft Star, which has a large sail area for its size and requires ballast in the form of a heavy

crewman. Hudson teamed up with civilian Tim Carver, and the new partnership is among the favourites for the one Star place in the British team which will compete in Savannah's warm waters in 1996.

Before leaving for America, Hudson and Carver trained at Hayling Island. They have been coached by Bryn Vaile, a Star gold medal winner in Korea, and advised by Col Mike Brooke, late RE, who sailed with the legendary Rodney Patterson, and Col Nick Ross, late REME, Rear Commodore Army Sailing Association, and an Olympic contender in the Seventies.

Hudson's boat was bought with the help of one of the Army's Olympic aspirant grants.

Towing the Star to competitions abroad has been made easier by the loan of a Land



Maj Stuart Hudson (inset) and sailing with Cpl Phil Levers in Italy

Rover Discovery. Land Rover has also made available a vehicle for Hudson's use in Miami.

Before competing in the British Olympic trials at Weymouth in September – they

must win to ensure selection – Hudson and Carver will race in Palma, take part in the European spring championships in Athens and the Spa regatta in Holland, and sail in Kiel Week.

Best of British for Glen

VETERAN international athlete Lt Col Glen Grant (Commandant MCTC) turned back the clock at the New Year's Day indoor meeting in the National Indoor Arena at Birmingham to smash the M40 1,500m record.

Grant ran brilliantly against athletes half his age to record a time of 3min 57.16sec, slashing more than a second off the old mark.

Sgt Bill Bailey (2 Sig Regt), also a veteran international, was selected for the Hampshire senior team due to run in the Inter-Counties cross country championships at Luton on January 14, and Cpl Colin Palmer was in a Kent vest after finishing an excellent 5th in their championships.

One of the Army's top female athletes, SSgt Mel Bradley (ATR Pirbright), who is back after injury, was also due to run at Luton while SSgt Betty Gash (RMAS) was a late call-up for the Surrey team.

Army cross country is in



Back from injury: SSgt Mel Bradley gets back into shape during a Long Look tour in New Zealand

exceptional form at the moment and the senior team managers are hoping to end the RAF's 22-year domination

of the Inter-Service championships at RAF Halton on February 17.

Meanwhile, an Army squad of 11 competed by invitation for the first time in the South of England men's Under 23 championship over a testing 11km course at Leighton Buzzard last month. All 11 finished in the top 40 in a field of high quality, securing third place in the team event behind Sussex and Devon.

There were noteworthy runs from Sig Jim Richards (7th), Cpl Lee Boston (11th), Pte Barry Dack (17th) and Sig Kev Hawker (21st). Dack is a Royal Anglian, while the other three are members of the prolific 2 Signal Regt production line.

Cpl Colin Palmer (1 RSME) has been nominated captain of the Army senior cross country team for 1995. International athlete Sgt Kelly Holmes will lead the women, Pte Nigel Bamford (23 PFA) the juniors and Sgt Bill Bailey (2 Sig Regt) the veterans.

● Twenty places in the London Marathon are to be reserved annually for Army runners following a decision to run the Inter-Services race in conjunction with the London, starting with this year's event on April 2.

As a result, the 1995 Army marathon has been changed from Gosport in April to the Polytechnic race (Windsor to Chiswick) in September.

In future, Army teams will be chosen after the September championships.

● 28 Engr Regt, who swept the board at the Army relay championships at Tweseldown, did so despite the fact that half the team were serving in Bosnia at the time.

● The 4th Inter-Corps cross country championships take place at Battlesbury Barracks, Warminster on February 24.

● The 124 Petroleum Sqn RLC(V) women's team won their race at the RLC cross country championships at Grantham.

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AS90s of 3 RHA joined those of 1 RHA for the first joint firing of the Royal Artillery's new gun on Salisbury Plain during the 3 (UK) Divisional artillery concentration. See Page 23.

Picture: Mike Perring



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