

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



MISSILE MIGHT

AT THE SHARP END IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS



D-DAY REMEMBERED

‘He got killed right beside me. I lie in bed every night thinking of it’



+ OPERATION
HERRICK
LATEST



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ARMY

Paying attention 70 years on

WHEN those deploying to Afghanistan this month (page 7) return home at the end of the year, it will trigger a new era in Army life.

How most soldiers will set about replacing the daily thrills and spills of the operational cycle remains to be seen. But if this month's issue is anything to go by, sport (pages 79-92), expeditions (page 19), fresh training opportunities (page 11) and commitments in places like the Falklands (pages 32-34) will all feature heavily.

How will Herrick's deeds be remembered in the years to come? Who yet knows. But a hint as to how battlefield tales could be treated by up-and-coming generations will no doubt come this month as the UK salutes D-Day veterans in their sadly dwindling numbers (page 12).

As one ex-Serviceman tells us in this issue (pages 48-49), many old comrades will not be treating this anniversary any differently to the others.

But for the younger generations, perhaps we should. Maybe now is the time to learn about the sort of experiences we too will hope to pass on.

I am certainly as guilty as anyone of not taking full advantage of the lessons our elders have to offer. My 93-year-old grandmother is as sharp as they come and I am ashamed to say I have asked her about our family's experiences around D-Day just once – and only as this magazine went to press.

I hope the varied recollections of the veterans we have spoken to (pages 40-43) inspire all our readers – but particularly those attending D-Day ceremonies – to chat to this amazing generation while we still can.

Enjoy the magazine. ■

S. Goldthorpe



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

‘On most occasions there would be sporadic contacts’

– Inside Afghanistan,
pages 25-31



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I wanted to
pay homage
to those
people and
say thank you
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**“It remains a kinetic conflict
and we operate in the most
dangerous places”**

Recce Force troops embrace Herrick role p25

**“I just saw the German
troops give up, I didn’t see
anything else”**

French commando remembers D-Day p48

**“The ANA are now in a good
position to carry on”**

Soldiers discuss their legacy in Helmand p94



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HERRICK
UPDATE

Picture: Sgt Barry Pope, RLC

Ultimate march out

Soldiers embark on final Herrick tour

THE last troops to deploy on Operation Herrick have arrived in Afghanistan, bringing the UK another step closer to the end of its 13-year campaign in the country.

Members of 20th Armoured Brigade have assumed control of the mission after taking over from 7th Armoured Brigade on June 1.

Speaking ahead of the tasking, which has seen around 4,000 troops deploy, Brig James Swift said there would be no complacency from the final combat boots on the ground.

"The security and well-being of our Forces remains a priority," the incoming commander commented.

"We can't all be on the last plane out so we have to carefully sequence our movements over the coming months. That will require some flexibility from our soldiers."

Unlike previous tours, personnel who have deployed on Op Herrick 20 do not know what month they will come home.

Towards the end of the mission in December troops will see a return to what the senior officer called a "more expeditionary" way of living as the comforts of Camp Bastion are removed.

Sleeping under ponchos will become more commonplace and ration packs will be introduced in the last few days of the mission.

Maj Rob Phillips of 26 Regiment, Royal Artillery served on the UK's first ever deployment

to Afghanistan.

"It was nice to open the door to Herrick in 2006 and now to be closing it in 2014," the battery commander told *Soldier*.

"All the way through our mission-specific training we have been telling troops to become comfortable with the unknown. But that's not a problem – in the Second World War Servicemen went away and didn't come back again for six years.

"One of the challenges of this tour will be managing periods of boredom. Inevitably, there is a lot of downtime on tour and we'll have to manage this with things like physical training."

Lt Col Charlie Collins, commander of the Manoeuvre Battlegroup led by 5th Battalion, The Rifles, said: "This is going to be a very different tour to previous ones. For most of the Army Herrick is in the rear-view mirror but we are ready for whatever comes our way.

"There is a sense of responsibility to close the deal and to finish things off right."

Adding his support to the final mission, Defence Minister Mark Francois commented: "This is perhaps the ultimate march out.

"I have no doubt whatsoever that these Servicemen and women will go out and make us proud."

● Moving nearer promotion
– page 11

“We are ready for what comes our way”

THE FINAL FRONTIER:

HERRICK TROOPS REFLECT ON THE TOUR AHEAD



"THIS IS MY FIRST TOUR AND I'M EXCITED. BEING THE LAST SOLDIERS ON THE GROUND IS QUITE A BIG THING"

Rfn Anthony Montgomery,
5 Rifles



"DEPLOYING LAST WILL BE SOMETHING TO TELL MY KIDS"

Tpr Josh Burnett, QDG



"IT'S JUST ANOTHER TOUR FOR ME. I'M HOPING IT'LL BE QUIETER BUT YOU NEVER KNOW"
LCpl Michael Lucking, RAMC

1 CANADA

ARMoured APtITUDE

MEMBERS of 26 Engineer Regiment deploying to Batus this month have been getting to grips with the tough task ahead.

Around 130 members of 30 Armoured Engineer Squadron took part in Exercise Zulu Run on Salisbury Plain in preparation for their role as engineering specialists within the Army's lead armoured battlegroup.

The training covered a range of capabilities such as working with the new Terrier combat digger (pictured), producing drinking water from the River Avon and constructing non-equipment bridges, which can be used to evacuate civilians.



1
British Army Training Unit Suffield

British Army Training and Support Unit Belize

Falkland Islands

UK

Germany

Gibraltar

Cyprus

Sierra Leone

British Army Training Unit Kenya



3 SIERRA LEONE

WATER MEN RETURN

BRITISH soldiers have once again been helping to bring fresh water supplies to one of the world's poorest countries.

The 21-strong outfit from 521 Specialist Team, Royal Engineers (Water Development) spent three months in Sierra Leone creating new pumps and repairing others at prisons and police stations.

It is the second time the unit has deployed to the country on such a mission.

Senior driller Sgt Chris Mullock (RE) said the locals had given the group a "really great" reception.

"They couldn't thank us enough," he added.



2 UK

RESERVES DELIVER IN DARTMOOR

NEARLY 1,000 Army Reservists worked with civilian agencies and tri-Service colleagues to deliver one of the biggest youth expeditions in Britain.

The 2014 Ten Tors Challenge saw 2,250 teenagers battle 50mph winds and driving rain to trek up to 55 miles across Dartmoor.


Despite the conditions, 80 per cent of those taking part managed to complete the event, which was supported by members of 155 (Wessex) Transport Regiment; 6th Battalion, The Rifles; The Royal Wessex Yeomanry and the University of Exeter Officer Training Corps.




Picture: Cpl Si Longworth, RLC

“It’s been a traffic of info both ways”

**Intelligence for the atlas?
Brief the team now:**

 news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

 @soldiermagazine

Picture: Sgt Paul Morrison, RLC



7 AUSTRALIA

A FIRST IN OZ

IN one of the first military exercises of its kind, British Army Reservists have been training with their Australian counterparts in the wild bush of New South Wales.

Exercise Polygon Wood saw a platoon from 4th Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment spend a week in the harsh landscape around Lone Pine Barracks, north of Sydney.

Alongside part-time troops from the Australian Army, personnel were tested on working with foreign equipment, navigating in unfamiliar territory, clearing safe routes and joint offensive operations.

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and as soon as I heard about the trip I put my hand up," said Kgn Jonathan Wynn (4 Lancs).

"People might think this is a holiday but we're training to fight alongside our allies in potential future conflicts."

Afghanistan

Brunei

30
NUMBER OF 4 LANCs
TROOPS WHO DEPLOYED
DOWN UNDER

4 ESTONIA

BALTIC BRILLIANCE

TROOPS from 1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment deployed to Estonia to extend the unit's close working relationship with allies in the Baltic region.

Exercise Spring Storm saw the UK soldiers act as enemy forces during the largest training package in the Estonian army's calendar.

The event was the final challenge for conscripts at the end of a year's training and built on the ties formed between 1 Lancs personnel and their counterparts when they served together on Op Herrick.

5 KENYA

WILDLIFE DEFENDERS

SOLDIERS from 3rd Battalion, The Rifles are preparing to spend a week with East African anti-poaching teams this month in a bid to help crack down on illegal hunting.

The troops, who will also undertake Exercise Askari Storm, will be the second UK group to assist the Kenya Wildlife Service with field training.



“As soon as I heard about the trip I put my hand up”

6 CYPRUS

PAIRED IN THE MED

AN intensive training package has given 90 Reservists from 6th Battalion, The Rifles the chance to enhance their soldiering skills in the sun.

Exercise Lion Star saw the troops work alongside 40 Regular personnel from their paired unit, 1st Battalion, The Rifles, on section attacks and company-level operations.

Maj Simon Freer, officer commanding D Company, said the mission had allowed troops to work more closely in line with the future Army structure.

"The machine gun platoon in particular is fully integrated," the officer explained during the training in Cyprus.

"We had a 50/50 mix of both Regulars and Reserves, and because of some of the depth of experience we have it has been a traffic of information both ways."



Picture: Cpl Si Longworth, RLC



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"IT WAS NOT LIKE IT IS SHOWN IN THE MOVIES" - D-DAY TRUTHS, PAGES 48-49



MoD investigates fatal Lynx crash

INVESTIGATORS have begun looking into the deaths of five UK Servicemen travelling in a Lynx in southern Afghanistan last month.

An MoD spokesman said the crash, which is the first fatal accident involving a British helicopter on Op Herrick, occurred during a routine flight.

The Military Air Accidents team arrived at the site of the tragedy, near Kandahar, on April 26 and began searching for clues.

"This is a very sad reminder of the vital but dangerous job that our Armed Forces are doing every day to bring security to the people of Afghanistan," Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg said.

The final report will take at least six months to complete.

● In memoriam – page 17

Eyes on the prize:
Lt Anna White and
her colleagues in
the Joint Theatre
Education Centre



Picture: Graeme Main

Moving nearer promotion

BRITISH troops have been striving to improve their promotion prospects while engaged in the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan.

With the Army introducing new academic requirements for those wishing to achieve the ranks of corporal and sergeant, the Joint Theatre Education Centre in Camp Bastion has seen a steady flow of students passing through its doors.

Maths and English are among the core subjects needed for promotion and success on the GCSE-equivalent courses being offered will be key to their future success.

"Soldiers cannot go to the promotion board unless they have the right grades," maths instructor Lt Nick Bates (AGC (ETS)) explained.

"It's the biggest reason why we are so busy. The Army is really pushing education as we move towards contingency.

"They also want people to speak

other languages and we have had a high uptake in our French lessons. German is doing very well too."

The varying programmes, which include a command leadership management course for those hoping to promote to junior NCO level and above, have achieved a high success rate and Lt Bates said an Afghan deployment offered a surprisingly conducive learning environment.

"Troops cannot go home to their families at the end of the day and they have time on their hands so it is a worthwhile pursuit," he added.

As well as raising educational standards, the four-man team has been offering its expertise to Afghans.

Lt Anna White (AGC (ETS)) went to Camp Shorobak to deliver a two-day package on defence instructional techniques to local personnel and said it was very well received.

● The last hurrah – pages 25-28

AL MURRAY DROPS IN ON BASTION

■ THE comedian famed for his "pub landlord" act has performed two live shows for hundreds of troops in Afghanistan. Al Murray visited Camp Bastion for the aptly-named Operation Lock-In gigs.

Murray, who was interviewed by *Soldier* last December about his memoir *Watching War Films With My Dad*, said the visit had been a memorable experience.

"The reception has been fantastic and I can't wait for everyone to get home," the star added.

The show was organised by CSE Forces Entertainment. It was the last large performance at the base ahead of the UK's exit from Afghanistan.



IN NUMBERS:

13 command leadership management courses delivered to 211 NCOs

5 officer career development courses completed by 56 officers

TWENTY functional skills courses in maths and English

... leading to **306** exams being sat

with a pass rate of about **99%**





“THE ELDERS KEEP THEIR DISTANCE BUT THE YOUNGSTERS ARE KEEN TO INTEGRATE” - TROOPS TALK AFGHAN ADVANCES, PAGE 94

Forward base closes

THE British Army has closed its final forward base in Afghanistan.

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond visited troops in Helmand to mark the winding up of Observation Post Sterga.

Since opening last summer the site has allowed UK troops to monitor activities in a strategically important part of the country.

The majority of troops ending the Army's time in the area hailed from 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

“As the last Scottish Infantry battalion in Afghanistan it has been a challenging and rewarding job being part of the drawdown,” said commanding officer Lt Col James Roddis.

“The soldiers of the cross-coalition Manoeuvre Battlegroup, led by 4 Scots, showed their ability and competence in making sure the personnel and equipment from Sterga could return safely back to Camp Bastion.”

At its peak the base housed some 180 military personnel.



100

ISO containers' worth of kit taken out of Sterga by air and road

Picture: Cpl Daniel Wrepen, RLC

ALLOWANCE EXTENDED

■ THE welfare package for the families of Servicemen and women serving in Canada has been broadened.

Units of personnel deploying to the British Army Training Unit Suffield for two months or longer can now claim the families' welfare grant, enabling them to enhance their support to loved ones.

Those completing tours in excess of four months can also claim concessionary travel for their dependents to visit other close family and vice versa.

Previously the allowances were only available to those assigned to temporary staff posts in Canada.

For further details read **ABN 46/14**.

Out of there: The L118 Light Gun, the last weapon based forward of Camp Bastion, is removed from the base

HODGSON'S WARNING TO 'BORED' PLAYERS

■ ENGLAND football manager Roy Hodgson has told his World Cup squad to think about soldiers before complaining about being away from home this month.

The plain-speaking boss issued the reality check ahead of the team's trip to Brazil.

“Once you sign up, you shouldn't then be saying ‘oh I'm missing my family’, or ‘oh I'm bored’,” he said.

“That is like a soldier saying he will sign up for the Army but doesn't want to see any action.”



Remembering D-Day Service lends support to commemorations

PERSONNEL from all three Services will travel to France this month to support the commemorations marking the 70th anniversary of D-Day.

Some 1,000 troops will take part in a series of high-profile events across Normandy between June 5 and 7.

Members of 16 Air Assault Brigade will be among a 300-strong multinational formation to parachute into Ranville on June 5.

The following day, soldiers from 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery, 39 Regiment, Royal Engineers and 2 Signal Regiment will attend ceremonies at Sword Beach, Bayeux and Arromanches.

Musicians from the Band of the Royal Yeomanry, the Band of the Parachute Regiment and combined pipes and drums will also be involved in many of the key events.

Logistical support will be provided by 104 Logistic Brigade, while personnel from 3 Regiment, Royal Military Police will assist their counterparts in the French gendarmes.

Lt Col Newton Astbury (RY) of Force Troops Command, the formation coordinating the Army's

input, said the focus of the military effort was on the veterans attending.

“Our aim is to ensure they can turn up at a location, be provided with water and sustenance and that they are given the freedom of movement to get to the ceremonies they want to go to,” said the officer.

With thousands of visitors expected, access to the key areas will be limited to pass holders.

Commemorations in the UK will centre on Portsmouth on June 5.

● D-Day reflections – pages 37-52

THIS MONTH IN REVIEWS



“WE ARE STILL HEARING CONCERNS FROM THOSE POSTED OVERSEAS” – FEDERATION FEEDBACK, PAGE 18



Women in warzones

Debate finds teeth as review date nears

A REVIEW into whether women should be excluded from close combat roles on the ground has been brought forward from 2018 to later this year.

Gen Sir Peter Wall, who revealed in April's issue of *Soldier* that he believed these jobs should be opened up to females, is to lead the study and will report back to Defence Secretary Philip Hammond in the coming months.

Announcing the new review date, Mr Hammond said the Armed Forces still had a “macho image” and must reconsider the roles that female

soldiers can play to ensure women know the organisation is “fully open” to them.

There are currently 8,010 female Army personnel, which is around nine per cent of the Service.

Under EU law, women's employment in the Forces has to be assessed at least every eight years and the most recent review was held in 2010.

However, the vast majority of military positions are already open to women including medics, fire support team commanders, military intelligence operators and dog handlers.



Picture: Cpl Si Longworth, RLC

Military medics clean up

ARMY personnel have been saluted at the Royal College of Nursing's prestigious annual awards.

Among those honoured at a London ceremony was Maj Tristan Griffin (RAMC), officer commanding the Army's field mental health team, who was runner-up in the defence nursing category.

The Serviceman was acknowledged after introducing mindfulness – a form of meditation – for nurses and medical Reservists deploying to Afghanistan in order to manage their stress and increase mental resilience.

Sgt Letso Rapoo (QARANC, pictured below), a healthcare assistant at Headley Court, won the health practitioner award after establishing a unit led entirely by healthcare assistants for patients requiring lower levels of supervision.

Another military winner was Veterans

First, which topped the mental health category.

The unit, set up by the North Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, works with ex-Service personnel who are suffering with complex trauma, mental health and substance abuse issues.



PENSION CHANGES

■ RESERVISTS called up for operational duties in the next year are being warned about imminent changes to their pensions.

Personnel who will be mobilised on April 1, 2015 and are signed up to the Reserve Forces pension scheme 2005 will transfer automatically to Armed Forces pension scheme 2015 on that date.

The new rules apply to the majority of part-time troops.

However, soldiers and officers with transitional protection arrangements will not be affected.

For full details on exemptions and what the change means read [ABN 43/14](#).

ARMY METTLE

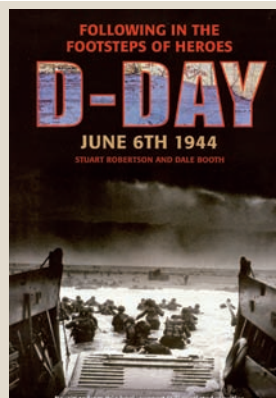
■ A BRITISH Army metalsmith has been awarded the Freedom of the City of London after winning the Military Blacksmith Cup four times.

Sgt Paul Hunter (REME, shown left), who is based in Bielefeld, received the honour from the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths.



MUSIC: “The quality of each track is absolutely spot on”
– pages 74-75 ★★★★★

“IF YOU'RE THINKING OF TOURING THE D-DAY BEACHES THIS IS GREAT”



MOVIES: The incredible true story of a lone survivor's covert mission in Afghanistan – pages 72-73 ★★★★★



**“FOR THE GIRLS TO COME OUT FIGHTING
IN EVERY MATCH WAS GREAT TO SEE”**
- GUNNERS TOAST SEVENS SUCCESS, PAGE 87



COMEDY SHOW BOOSTS MILITARY CHARITIES

■ COMEDIANS have helped to raise more than £4,500 for a military charity at a special fundraising show in Birmingham.

The Glee Club hosted some of the UK's best up-and-coming acts and musicians in order to boost the coffers of Help for Heroes.

Organiser, ex-Grenadier Guardsman Seb Miles, said he hoped to repeat the event.

Leadership lessons

Reserve officers given chance to go full-time

A NEW scheme has been launched to offer Reserve junior officers the chance to serve full-time for 12 months.

The Lead First programme will initially run for two years and will provide troops with a varied schedule of training, exercises and attachments.

Those selected for the scheme, which begins in September, will be able to take up their full-time jobs with Reserve or Regular units or a combination of both.

On completion of the training it is hoped the officers will continue to serve with their own formation for at least another three years.

Maj Steve Pajger (Para), SO2 training support Reserves, said: “By doing a year full-time, Reserve personnel will have the chance to get qualified and trained in various areas and return to their units as very well prepared officers.”

For more information on the scheme read **2014DIN01-097** or telephone Maj Pajger on military 94261 2031.



“
They will
return
to their
units as
very well
prepared
officers
”

Army scheme boosts jobseekers

AN Army-led project to help long-term jobseekers find work while encouraging Service recruitment is continuing to report success.

The second course in the scheme, which is known as Midlands Spear (Supporting People into Employment with the Army Reserve), saw 31 individuals from Stoke-on-Trent and Telford undergo intensive training aimed at building their self-esteem and skills.

The four-week package offers people an insight into the demands

of military life as well as a work placement and tuition in IT, CV writing and interview technique.

After the training, 18 of the participants applied to join the Army as Regulars or Reservists, while a further three were offered civilian jobs or apprenticeships.

The initiative, run by 143 (West Midlands) Brigade and the Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry, has caught the attention of government ministers and could be rolled out across the UK.

GURKHA POWER

■ A GROUP of ex-Gurkhas have set up their own independent energy company.

The community-owned firm, named Gnergy, currently has 300 customers on its books and plans to provide predominantly Nepalese communities with tariffs that are five per cent cheaper than the rest of the energy market.

Tikendra Dal Dewan, a retired major in the Royal Gurkha Rifles and chief executive of the Farnborough-based company, said: “We have got the green light to take it across the UK and open it to anyone.

“The idea is to be community based; it’s not exclusively for Nepalese people, that is just where we have our foundations.”

Visit www.gnergyuk.com for more information on the project.



CLASSIC CAR COMP

■ THE race is on to buy the last few raffle tickets to win a 1970 MG Roadster which has been fully restored by soldiers.

Proceeds from the sale of the convertible, repaired last year by Sgt Jason Sheehan and his colleagues from 2 Signal Regiment, will go to Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion.

Tickets cost £5.50 and can be bought online via the project’s website www.charitybuild.co.uk/tickets.php

Read last December’s magazine for more on the project.

“WE’VE NEVER BEEN TO THE FINAL SO THIS IS HISTORY” – TEAM TITLE GLORY, PAGE 83



Army assesses new missile

System could travel at speeds of up to 1,000 metres per second

THE Army is a step closer to introducing a replacement for its Rapier missile system following a multi-million pound investment by the MoD.

Arms manufacturer MBDA UK has been awarded a £36 million contract to assess how a ground-based version of the Future Local Area Air Defence System (FLAADS) could be used by the Service.

The company is already developing a similar asset, known as Sea Ceptor, that will be implemented by the Royal Navy.

With a range of 25 kilometres, FLAADS can travel at 1,000 metres per second and is able to simultaneously defend UK territories against threats such as jets or cruise missiles travelling at supersonic speeds.

Conal Walker of MBDA UK explained that the new weapon would give troops a more effective “missile umbrella”.

“FLAADS has an active radar seeker so it can guide itself onto the target and does not depend on the launch system, unlike Rapier

which operates on a command line-of-sight principal,” he continued.

“This means several missiles can be in the air attacking multiple targets at once.

“It also uses a soft vertical launch, which provides a 360-degree engagement capability with no need to rotate the system as the missile will align itself in the direction of intercept after leaving the canister.

“This also allows more missiles to be packed closer together, which increases firepower.

“With a smaller, lighter footprint it can be fitted to a wider range of vehicles, aiding operational flexibility within theatre.”

Over the next 12 months, MBDA UK will use state-of-the art computer technology to determine exactly what the system would offer the Army.

A decision on whether or not to buy the weapon as a replacement for Rapier is expected next year.

● All in a day’s work – pages 32-34

FREE CIVVY TRAINING

■ SERVICE leavers are being offered the chance to win thousands of pounds’-worth of free training.

Easy Resettlement Magazine, a quarterly publication assisting military personnel with the transition to a civilian career, has teamed up with partner companies to give away training opportunities to the value of £100,000.

Among the packages up for grabs are aviation courses, accident and forensic investigation training, ambulance technician courses and others.

For more on the competition visit www.easyresettlement.com/100000-partners

DOG DECORATION

■ A MILITARY working dog killed on patrol has been posthumously awarded the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross, the PDSA Dickin Medal.

Yellow Labrador Sasha made 15 confirmed operational finds during her tour of Afghanistan and has been credited with saving many soldiers and civilians from death and serious injury.

She died in an enemy ambush alongside her handler LCpl Kenneth Rowe (RAVC) while returning from a search operation in July 2008.



A TOUGH CROWD

■ THE Army’s first-ever professional brass band has performed its debut concert in front of schoolchildren.

Pupils of Weeton Primary School, near Blackpool, were treated to a performance by the Band of the King’s Division, which was one of the formations to change to a specialist musical role under the restructuring of the Corps of Army Music.

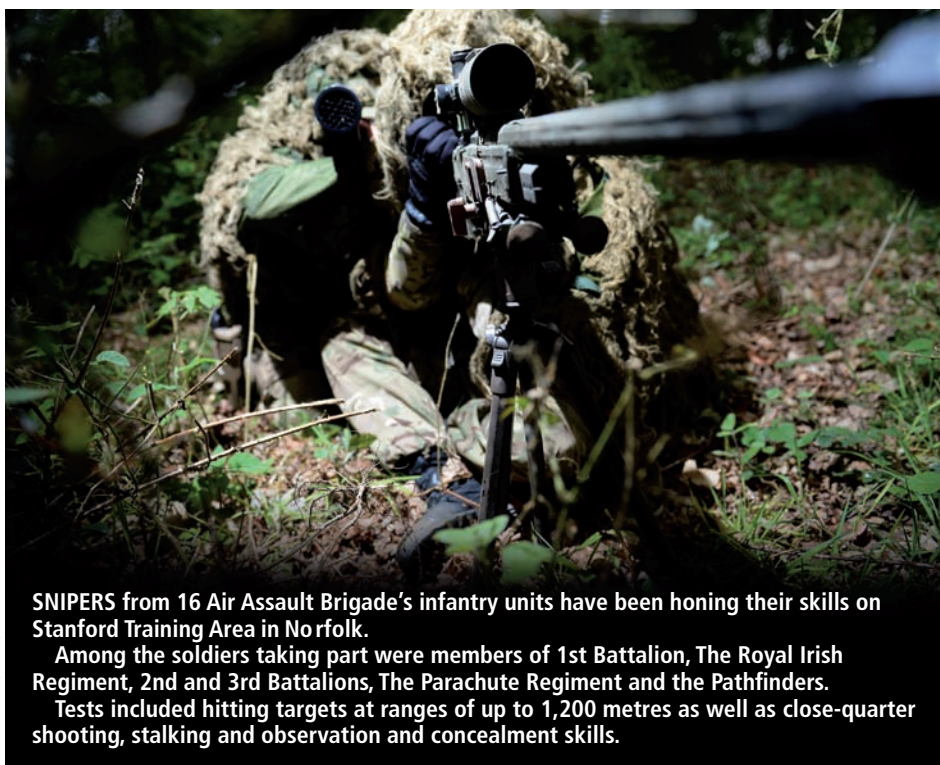
“This has been our first outing in our new guise in front of what is a very critical audience of young children,” director of music Capt Justin Matthews explained.

“It went very well indeed.”

PM MEETS RESERVES

■ DAVID Cameron has been given an insight into the life of Reservists on a visit to Walcheren Barracks in Glasgow.

The prime minister spoke to troops from Headquarter Company, 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland during a tour of the country.



SNIPERS from 16 Air Assault Brigade’s infantry units have been honing their skills on Stanford Training Area in Norfolk.

Among the soldiers taking part were members of 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, The Parachute Regiment and the Pathfinders.

Tests included hitting targets at ranges of up to 1,200 metres as well as close-quarter shooting, stalking and observation and concealment skills.



"WE HEARD A TREMENDOUS CRASHING NOISE"

- D-DAY MEMORIES, PAGES 45-47

Call to banish booze culture

MORE should be done to tackle the military's culture of "drinking to oblivion", a defence minister has told MPs.

Speaking to the House of Commons defence committee, Anna Soubry said she wasn't a "killjoy" and recognised troops should be able to let their hair down, but expressed concern that bingeing had become an accepted part of the process.

The politician is facing calls to end subsidised drinking in messes.

MP Madeleine Moon explained to the committee that she had got the "fright of her life" during a visit to the Falkland Islands when she realised how cheap alcohol was in the station's bars.

Writing in April's *Soldier*, a reader criticised the Army for its "hypocritical" Christmas binge drinking crackdown. "Many soldiers feel obliged to consume alcohol socially," the writer told *Talkback*.

However, the Director of Personal Services, Brig John Donnelly, said the Army encouraged sensible drinking and had robust rules in place to deal with offenders.

IN NUMBERS:

68p

Price of a shot of Smirnoff vodka in Lichfield officers' mess

£2.75

Price of the same tipple in the House of Commons bar



SANDHURST SUCCESS

■ OFFICER cadets from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst have taken top honours in an international military skills tournament.

A total of 57 teams from across the globe entered this year's Sandhurst Competition, which is named after the British institution but is held at the US military's equivalent, West Point.

As well as British and American cadets, personnel from Germany, Australia, Canada, China and Chile took part in the contest, which included tests such as planning, leadership, shooting, casualty extraction and loaded marches.

The final standings saw Sandhurst's Blue Team snatch a narrow victory from the US and China, while the academy's Red Team finished sixth.



'Mali troops should be proud'

Officer praises latest contingent on return from Africa

TROOPS from 1st Battalion, The Rifles have returned home from a six-month tasking to build the capability and capacity of the Malian armed forces.

Some 21 riflemen from across the formation had been working on Op Newcombe, a European Union training mission to help maintain security in the West African country and build long-term stability in the wider region.

During the operation the Servicemen successfully trained more than 300 local soldiers in combat and counter-insurgency skills as well as conventional military tactics such as patrolling, guarding bases and reassuring the civilian population.

Maj Sam Cates, officer commanding 1 Rifles in Mali, said: "All of my blokes can feel very proud



of what they've achieved.

"They have worked really hard in difficult conditions – the weather is very hot – and have done something that will hopefully endure and sustain the security situation there."

A fresh deployment of 27 riflemen from the same battalion have now assumed responsibility for the mission and will deliver an intensive ten-week training package to other Malian units.

TROOPS RECOVER LOST VILLAGE IN WELSH DIG

■ INJURED military personnel have unearthed medieval buildings during an archaeological dig at Caerwent Training Area in Wales.

Working alongside experts from the MoD and the University of Leicester, troops searched for structures that formed part of the village of Dinham, which is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

The two-week project was part of Operation Nightingale, an initiative aimed at boosting the recovery of wounded troops through archaeology.

WIN

...a £300 down jacket

DID last month's spine lines competition spin you around? Inspired by our review of Kylie's latest musical offering, (Nick) Cave, (Taio) Cruz, (Jason) Donovan and (Robbie) Williams have all collaborated with the popstar.

This month we have teamed up with outdoor clothing experts Jottnar (www.jottnar.com)

to offer one lucky reader a Fjorm down jacket – a seriously technical bit of kit designed for the most hostile environments. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us what links the words on the spine of this issue. Send your answers – plus your sex, size (S, M or L) and preferred colour (green or black) – on a postcard to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by June 30. Good luck!



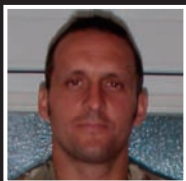
IN MEMORIAM



CAPT THOMAS CLARKE (30)
ARMY AIR CORPS
DIED APRIL 26
– AFGHANISTAN



FLT LT RAKESH CHAUHAN (29)
INTELLIGENCE BRANCH,
ROYAL AIR FORCE
DIED APRIL 26 – AFGHANISTAN



WO2 SPENCER FAULKNER (38)
ARMY AIR CORPS
DIED APRIL 26
– AFGHANISTAN



CPL JAMES WALTERS (36)
ARMY AIR CORPS
DIED APRIL 26
– AFGHANISTAN



LCPL OLIVER THOMAS (26)
3 MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION,
INTELLIGENCE CORPS
DIED APRIL 26 – AFGHANISTAN

TRIBUTES have been paid to five Servicemen who lost their lives when a Lynx helicopter crashed in southern Afghanistan.

Capt Thomas Clarke (AAC), Flt Lt Rakesh Chauhan (RAF), WO2 Spencer Faulkner (AAC), Cpl James Walters (AAC) and LCpl Oliver Thomas (Int Corps) were killed during a routine mission near Kandahar Airfield.

Capt Clarke, from Cowbridge in Wales, graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 2008 and undertook a brief tour of Afghanistan before beginning his helicopter pilot training, which he completed in 2010.

Following postings to 661 and 652 Squadrons, the soldier was assigned to RAF Odiham, where he deployed in support of numerous exercises.

The commander of the Afghanistan-based Lynx detachment described the Serviceman as a hard-working, loyal and gifted aviator, who was a rising star of the Army Air Corps.

"His brightness, character, humility and charm will be remembered by all," added the officer.

A family statement read: "We cannot express enough our devastation at the loss of a truly wonderful husband, son, brother and friend.

"Tom brought so much happiness and love to everyone he knew with his sparkling blue eyes and cheeky smile.

"He had an absolute passion for life and was the best part of us; we are all poorer today without him."

Flt Lt Chauhan began officer training at RAF Cranwell in 2008.

After commissioning into the Royal Air Force's Intelligence Branch he underwent further training at the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre at Chicksands before serving at RAF Waddington, RAF Marham and in Afghanistan.

The airman was on his third tour of duty in the country when he died.

"Flt Lt Chauhan was a hugely influential and well respected officer whose enthusiasm and professionalism permeated every aspect of his work," his CO said.

"An exceptional officer, he clearly had a bright future ahead of him.

"His loss has devastated the station and our thoughts and prayers are very much with his family and friends."

The commander of the deployed Lynx detachment said Flt Lt Chauhan had been one of his "go-to" individuals.

"Bright, articulate, charismatic and loyal, he was a pleasure to be around," the officer added.

"Certainly the best Intelligence Branch officer I have known, his presentations were considered essential viewing by aircrew and others alike.

"His positive attitude was infectious and he would always be seen with a smile on his face."

WO2 Faulkner joined the Army in 1992 as a geographic technician with the Royal Engineers but later transferred to the Army Air Corps, qualifying as a pilot in 2007.

An experienced aviator, the 38-year-old served

in Afghanistan on numerous occasions, often at short notice, in support of the Armed Forces.

His commanding officer praised his calibre and commitment, describing him as a stalwart of the squadron, whose loss would "leave a huge void".

The commander of the deployed Lynx detachment recalled flying with WO2 Faulkner at RAF Odiham.

"Sharing a cockpit with him you would get an insight into the true man; a loving husband and hugely dedicated father," said the officer. "I feel honoured to be able to call him a friend."

A family statement said: "Spen was a loving husband to Cally and devoted father to Natasha and Jack, and will be greatly missed.

"A huge gap has been left in our hearts."

Cpl James Walters joined the Army in March 1996 and after completing training at Middle Wallop's School of Army Aviation was assigned to 5 Regiment, Army Air Corps in Northern Ireland.

In April 2001 he moved to Wattisham and undertook training to become a member of ground crew on the Apache helicopter.

Subsequent postings saw the 36-year-old deploy on an operational tour of Kuwait in 2003, as well as serving on numerous occasions in support of UK operations in Afghanistan.

Named "Bungle" by his friends and colleagues, the junior NCO was described as a "loyal, dependable and extremely professional aviator" by his detachment commander.

"He was known and liked without exception," the officer added.

Cpl Walters was married and had a daughter.

"We cannot begin to comprehend the tragic loss of a beautiful and loving husband, daddy, son, and brother," read a family statement.

"James has left a huge hole in all our hearts".

LCpl Thomas joined the Army Reserve in 2011. He later became a member of 3 Military Intelligence Battalion after moving to London and deployed to Afghanistan last December.

"This tragic incident has taken a young, enthusiastic and highly capable soldier away from us and his loss is deeply felt by all members of the unit and the Intelligence Corps as a whole," said the commanding officer of 3 Military Intelligence Battalion.

The Serviceman's OC added: "LCpl Thomas was the embodiment of his generation: bright, gifted, with an enquiring mind. He was laser-focused on the task in hand.

"The future and uncertainty did not disturb him. He only saw opportunity ahead.

"It is with regret and to my loss that I did not know Oli for longer – but in only a short time he made an immediate and lasting impression.

"His absence has left an enormous gap in a close-knit team. We will remember him."

A family tribute read: "Oliver was a truly amazing person, living his life to the full, while fulfilling some of his many dreams and adventures. He was very much loved and will be greatly missed."



“ULTIMATELY, THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE MISSION IS DOWN TO ME”
– SOUTH ATLANTIC PRESSURE, PAGES 32-34

ARMY 2020 UPDATE

SIGNAL OF CHANGE

■ **SIGNALLERS** in Afghanistan have been getting a feel for how communications will work in the Army of the future.

A merger between units deployed on Operation Herrick 19 – 21 Signal Regiment (Air Support) and 7th Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (207) – tested out plans for five multi-role formations under the new Army 2020 structure.

The change will see brigade signal squadrons come under the command of regiments instead.

“Having formations able to deploy with a very broad skill set, providing a number of capabilities, has shown the diversity and flexibility of our corps,” said Capt Rich Miller of 207 Squadron.

21 Signal Regiment returns to the UK this month before reorganising into its new structure by October.



Pictures: Sgt Steven Hughes, RLC

2020 ARRIVES EARLY

■ **THE Honourable Artillery Company** has announced it is the first Reserve unit to be fully manned in readiness for Army 2020.

Under the new Service structure the regiment's role is changing from intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition to a broader function in ground-based information gathering.

The move will see the unit (pictured above performing a royal salute) continuing to work with Regular counterparts in 5 Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Lt Col Jim Doherty, commanding officer of the HAC, said: “The regiment is very proud to be ready for the future.”

“Recruitment continues apace but newcomers must be aware this is not a role for the faint-hearted and only the most determined need apply.”

HOME TRUTHS



A personal view from Catherine Spencer, chief executive of the Army Families Federation...



Managing life after death

RECENT weeks brought the devastating news of the death of five Service personnel in a helicopter crash. Our thoughts are with their families and those they leave behind.

As part of my role I am a trustee of the Army Dependents' Trust, an organisation which 98 per cent of serving soldiers and officers are members of and that the two per cent who are not need to seriously consider joining.

Most loved ones will not know that their soldier pays the tiny sum of £7 per year but at the very worst of times this amount can make a huge difference.

A cheque is sent automatically and discreetly to the bereaved family or nominated person within a few days of the soldier's death.

There is no application process to receive funds – the trust is informed of a death and ensures that the sum is dispatched straight away to the right person.

A grant of up to £10,000 is paid irrespective of the cause of death and some families who have received this money have written of their gratefulness that it has helped in a practical way by significantly alleviating immediate costs.

You can sign up, confirm that you are a member or check whom your nominated beneficiary is by visiting www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23214.aspx

Thinking about the future in other respects, the Army Families

Federation is watching with interest to see what effect the new, more stringent process for applying for a mortgage will have on Forces personnel who make use of the Help to Buy scheme.

We are still hearing concerns from those posted overseas in confirming their credit history.

If you have examples of problems please contact our housing team.

Speaking of contact, internet connectivity is becoming an increasing concern for younger families used to the UK's super-speed internet (unless they live on Blandford Camp, that is).

Undoubtedly, the ability to use Skype and similar applications can make life abroad more bearable and I was impressed during a recent trip to Permanent Joint Headquarters and Joint Forces Command with the work being undertaken to improve things for overseas families.

The need for a second income and the negative impact on a partner's career makes applying for an overseas posting a difficult decision.

However, it can allow you to experience a different culture.

I know of one family who have moved from Kenya to the Falklands in order to see the world.

My hope is that an improved financial package and support to encourage partner training will allow more to step outside the comfort of the UK in this way.

www.aff.org.uk

“Most loved ones will not know their soldier pays this”

"MORE THAN £150-WORTH OF MY MAIL HAS BEEN LOST" - DOOMED DELIVERY, PAGE 57



Cultural experts boost missions

FOREIGN language experts are helping an increasing number of soldiers on overseas missions.

The Defence Cultural Specialist Unit, set up in 2010 to support operations in Afghanistan, has reported growing demand for its skills as the Army moves towards contingency.

"We are now getting requests for support every day," said the head of the tri-Service unit, Lt Col Mairi Duke (AGC (ETS)).

Since last year her team has been extending its pool of knowledge to help troops understand and communicate with local populations in other countries across the Middle East and in Africa as well.

Over the coming months specialists will also be located to sit with each brigade of the Adaptable Force – the formation responsible for defence engagement activities.

"Anyone who is going to be deploying to these regions as a formed unit should think about contacting us," the officer added.

For details visit the Defence Cultural Specialist Unit page of the intranet.



Cultural knowledge:
The Army's expertise is growing

Picture: Mike Weston



Picture: Sgt Barry Pope, RLC

Hidden wounds:
Combat Stress says demand for its services from Afghanistan veterans has surged

Afghan aftermath

Rise in Herrick veterans seeking mental help

THERE has been a substantial increase in Afghanistan veterans seeking help from mental health charity Combat Stress.

In 2013 the organisation received 358 new referrals from those who have served on Op Herrick – a 57 per cent rise on the 228 in 2012.

"A small yet significant number of veterans continue to relive the horrors they experienced on the front line," said the charity's chief executive Andrew Cameron.

"Day in, day out they battle these hidden psychological wounds, often tearing families apart in the process."

He added: "With demand for our services already surging, we face a real challenge in continuing to

provide our unique life-changing clinical treatment and support services to those who need it."

Mr Cameron explained that the organisation was not expecting demand to tail off any time soon.

"We have had great support from the government and the public over recent years and we simply could not operate without the generosity we have experienced," he continued.

In addition to post-traumatic stress disorder, one of the afflictions that soldiers can develop as a result of combat is depression and last November Maj Rob Shenton (REME) urged *Soldier* readers to speak up if affected.

"Living a life of mental illness is not living at all," he said.

Search the
Army website
for more on the
'Don't bottle it
up' campaign

COMBAT
STRESS
HELPLINE >>
0800 138
1619

UP CLOSE: SOME POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA



misuse of alcohol
or drugs

panic attacks and
seeking out
high-risk pursuits



relationship
problems at
home

feeling numb, empty or depressed



feeling isolated, avoiding
people or frequently
withdrawing into yourself

ANGER

aggressive
behaviour or
self-harming

nightmares or
flashbacks



SAIL THE WORLD

■ **SOLDIERS** are being invited to join a major sailing expedition.

Exercise Transglobe will see two craft from Gosport's Joint Service Adventure Sail Training Centre embark upon a year-long circumnavigation of the world from July 2015 to August 2016.

Open to novice or experienced sailors from the Regulars and Reserves, the challenge will take place over 13 legs and will include the Sydney to Hobart Offshore Yacht Race in December 2015.

To apply for one of the Army's 182 places read **ABN 54/14**.





“GUYS CAN GO FROM NOVICE TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL VERY QUICKLY” – BASTION JUDO CLUB TAKES SHAPE, PAGE 85

Glad to help Glasgow

Troops to provide gold-standard security at Games

HUNDREDS of soldiers are preparing to assist with security at this year's Commonwealth Games.

The 900-strong Land Forces contingent will be joined by 600 Servicemen and women from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force at the Glasgow event, which starts on July 23.

Together, the deployed troops will provide specialist capabilities such as explosive ordnance disposal support and air security measures similar to those seen during the London 2012 Olympics.



As well as working on the defence of the sporting showcase, personnel will take on a number of ceremonial roles including a fly-past by the Red Arrows and provision of 72 flag bearers for the medal ceremonies.

A further 900 Army personnel will also be kept on standby should extra support be needed.

“We are extremely proud to be able to provide support to the Glasgow Commonwealth Games as part of a task that reflects the flexibility, capability and adaptability of our Armed Forces,” said Lt Gen Sir Nicholas Carter, Standing Joint Commander (UK).

Salisbury plans revealed

DETAILED plans for thousands more military homes around Salisbury Plain have been revealed following a six-week consultation.

Among the proposals for the areas of Bulford, Larkhill, Tidworth (pictured right), Perham Down, Ludgershall and Upavon are a minimum of 1,217 new houses for Service families, extra accommodation for single soldiers and a range of other buildings such as garages, armouries, offices and mess facilities.

The development follows the Army's decision to move thousands more troops to the region in a series of base changes announced last year.

Public feedback on some of the outline site suggestions included concerns that 540 new homes on a piece of land south of The Packway in Larkhill were too far from camp and could impact on the Stonehenge World Heritage site.

As a result, that area has been removed from the proposals ahead of



Wiltshire Council considering the full document next month.

“We will continue to engage with local people, businesses and organisations to ensure our plans foster strong military and civilian communities and encourage integration,” said David Underhill, head of basing programme delivery at the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

To read the master plan log on to www.army.mod.uk/basing



Got a view? Tell *Talkback*:
mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

BOOST YOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR FREE

■ **SOLDIERS** can get civilian qualifications at the expense of the military from this month in a new scheme known as the Army skills offer.

Designed to make troops more employable and to aid recruitment, the initiative will see the Service finance one course for each individual who has completed phase three training plus a command, leadership and management or Army instructor capability course.

Among the 500-odd qualifications available are GCSEs and PHDs, and troops can apply until May 2016. For details visit www.army.mod.uk/qualifications

“
POLITICAL
CORRECTNESS
SHOULDN'T
TAKE
PRECEDENCE
HERE

”
– *TALKBACK*
TRAUMAS,
PAGES 53-59



EVER-CLOSER TIES

■ THE UK and US militaries will cooperate even more closely in the years to come, the commander of the United States Army Forces Command has said.

“Interoperability is the name of the game,” Gen Dan Allyn (shown above) told British personnel at the Kermit Roosevelt exchange lecture at Tidworth garrison.

“Both forces are being rationalised over the next few years so we have to maintain a sharp edge together and we can only do that by exercising together,” the senior officer continued.

He added that commanders on both sides of the Atlantic should be aware of how changes could affect morale.

The US Army is to be reduced from 570,000 to 490,000 by the end of 2015.

ARMED FORCES DAY

■ **BRITISH** soldiers will once again turn out for Armed Forces Day celebrations on June 28.

The annual event, this year in Stirling, will see festivals, street processions and parties staged up and down the country.

Set up to raise public awareness of the work of the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, the spectacle will give

civilians the chance to show their support for serving troops, their families and veterans.

As part of the build-up to the main occasion, Uniform to Work Day will be held on June 25.

This will see Reservists encouraged to wear their military

dress in their civilian jobs.

Part-time troops who are willing to be featured on the MoD's Facebook and Twitter pages are asked to email their images from the day to armedforcesdayuk@gmail.com



IN NUMBERS

16 Detection range, in kilometres, of the *Rapier* missile – pages 32-34

WHATEVER YOU THINK OF YOUR ARMED FORCES PENSION, WE'LL HELP YOU GET THE MOST FROM IT.



FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES
AND THEIR FAMILIES



The latest Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey shows satisfaction with pensions has fallen sharply over the past 5 years, across all three Services. But you can protect your interests and find out how to get the most from your pension by joining the Forces Pension Society.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Armed Forces Pensions are complex and we can help ensure you get the most from your pension by advising **when to leave** (and when not to), commutation, how to deal with **pension troughs**, the impact of **AFPS2015**, the implications of **redundancy, divorce**, how you might be able to top up your pension, and much more. Help is available from our acknowledged **Pension Advisory Service experts**.

INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

We value our independence as it enables us to **serve the interests of our Members** as their pension watchdog. We campaign to **put right injustices** in the system such as the case we are arguing now for **all Service widows who**

remarry to be allowed to retain their pension. Our role also includes **holding the government to account** to ensure the Armed Forces Covenant recognises the vital importance of pensions.

There is no other not-for-profit organisation **dedicated to looking after the pension interests** of the whole military community.

FPS HEALTH



FPS TRAVEL



FPS MOTORING FPS LEGAL & FINANCIAL



FPS PERSONAL



PLUS VALUABLE MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

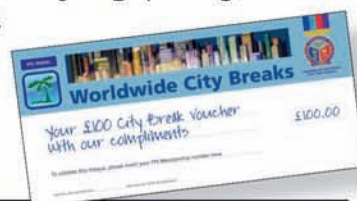
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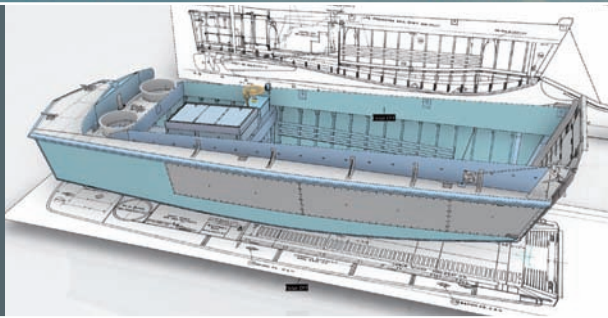
Forces Pension Society

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1RL

Tel: 020 7820 9988 - email: memsec@forpen.co.uk - www.forcespensionsociety.org



THE BIG PICTURE



> NORMANDY, FRANCE

3D FLASHBACK

TODAY's generation may never fully comprehend the situation that soldiers faced on June 6, 1944 but that hasn't stopped a European software company from producing a state-of-the-art 3D simulation to show the engineering brilliance behind the assault. After five months of research in collaboration with the Royal Engineers Museum in London, Dassault Systemes recreated the detail of the artificial Mulberry harbour at Arromanches, LCV landing craft and Waco gliders using advanced technology that is usually reserved for designing aeroplanes. To view the virtual mock-up online visit www.3ds.com/dday

Pictures: Dassault Systemes



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PERSIMMON

Together, we make a home

THE LAST HURRAH

Lancers prepare for amalgamation with farewell front-line tour

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

AS the main focus in Afghanistan switches towards the drawdown of a campaign that has lasted almost 13 years it is easy to forget that British troops are still engaged in combat operations.

While the Afghan National Security Forces take the lead in the fight against the insurgency, UK personnel have played a vital supporting role on Herrick 19, with the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) and Warthog Group both embarking on regular front-line missions.

The honour of performing these tasks was bestowed on the 9th/12th Royal Lancers and the regiment's soldiers have been relishing the chance of a final deployment before they amalgamate with the Queen's Royal Lancers next year.

Whether it has been supporting the closure of forward operating bases across Helmand or conducting helicopter raids at dawn, there has been no shortage of action for the formation as *Soldier* discovered when it spoke to troops during some well-deserved downtime at Camp Bastion.



READY TO ROLL

● **WORKING** with the all-terrain Warthog provided a unique challenge for the Lancers but it was one that was gladly accepted.

As a formation reconnaissance regiment they are used to testing themselves on the CVRT but a demanding training period coupled with extensive use in theatre soon saw them tame the mighty beast.

The tour started at a frenetic pace but when Task Force Helmand closed the

tempo slowed as the focus switched to protecting Camp Bastion from IEDs, rocket attacks and other threats.

"The first six months were pretty busy, we were out on operations all the time and it is still very kinetic," explained Capt Ryan Cloughton, troop leader of third troop, A Squadron.

"The vehicles are key to what we have been doing as no other platform can get to where we need to go. And in terms of protection it is one on the best. »

“

**We
have
not
stopped
and I
have
never
been
this
busy
in my
entire
life**

”

**Tpr Daniel
O'Keefe**

» “Our main role is in conjunction with the BRF, offering armoured support and protection. We can also give a reconnaissance element as well as ground domination and disruption.”

The squadron was heavily involved in the closure and redeployment of British bases across the province earlier in the tour and they played a key role in the successful completion of missions.

“It was about making the enemy focus on us instead of the combat logistic patrols and our people in the bases,” Capt Claughton added.

“On most occasions there would be sporadic contacts.

“I wanted to get out on tour and this job sounded very interesting. It has turned out to be a great role, especially when you consider the capability we provide.”

As with most units, the Lancers had a number of soldiers deploying for the first time, many of which were keen to sample life on Op Herrick before the campaign closes.

Driver Tpr Daniel O'Keefe joined the Army two years ago with the specific aim of serving in Afghanistan and having thrived under the spotlight he is now looking forward to a long career in the military.

“This is one of the last tours and I could have missed that, which meant I would have never got the medal,” he told *Soldier*.

“I always wanted to be involved and get that experience.

“We have not stopped and I have never been this busy in my entire life – the wagons have been hammered.

“But we have achieved quite a lot on the operations we have carried out. Some of the patrol bases are pretty big and to see them shut down in the space of one day was unreal.

“It was our job to push out to the flanks and divert the enemy's attention from the guys on the combat logistic patrols.

“Switching to Warthog was a big shift. An engine is an engine but the way they handle and operate is totally different.

“They offer a lot more protection and we have had some close calls on this tour so it has really proven itself.

“When we first found out about our role there was an attitude of ‘let's go for it’. I was raring to go and got stuck in.”

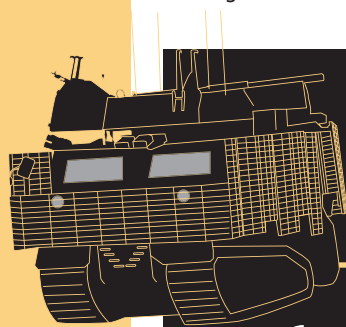
With their eight-month commitment almost complete the Lancers are rightly looking forward to returning home and their efforts in Helmand have added another chapter to what is an impressive history.

Amalgamation is now imminent but being tested on Herrick 19 has given the soldiers the perfect sign-off.

Capt Claughton said: “We did well in Canada and Kenya during the lead-up and doing this is something to be proud of. Nobody else really gets outside the gate any more.

“This is our last tour as a regiment. Getting a good job out here really helped to boost morale and we have received recognition for how hard we have worked.

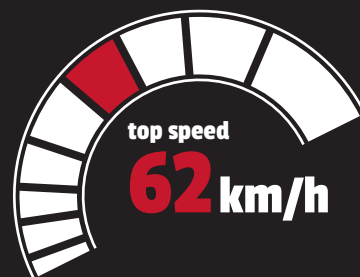
“It has been a great send off for us and we are in a really good place for the amalgamation.” ■



Warthog Group: tour stats

spare parts used
7,500

32 vehicles
in the
group



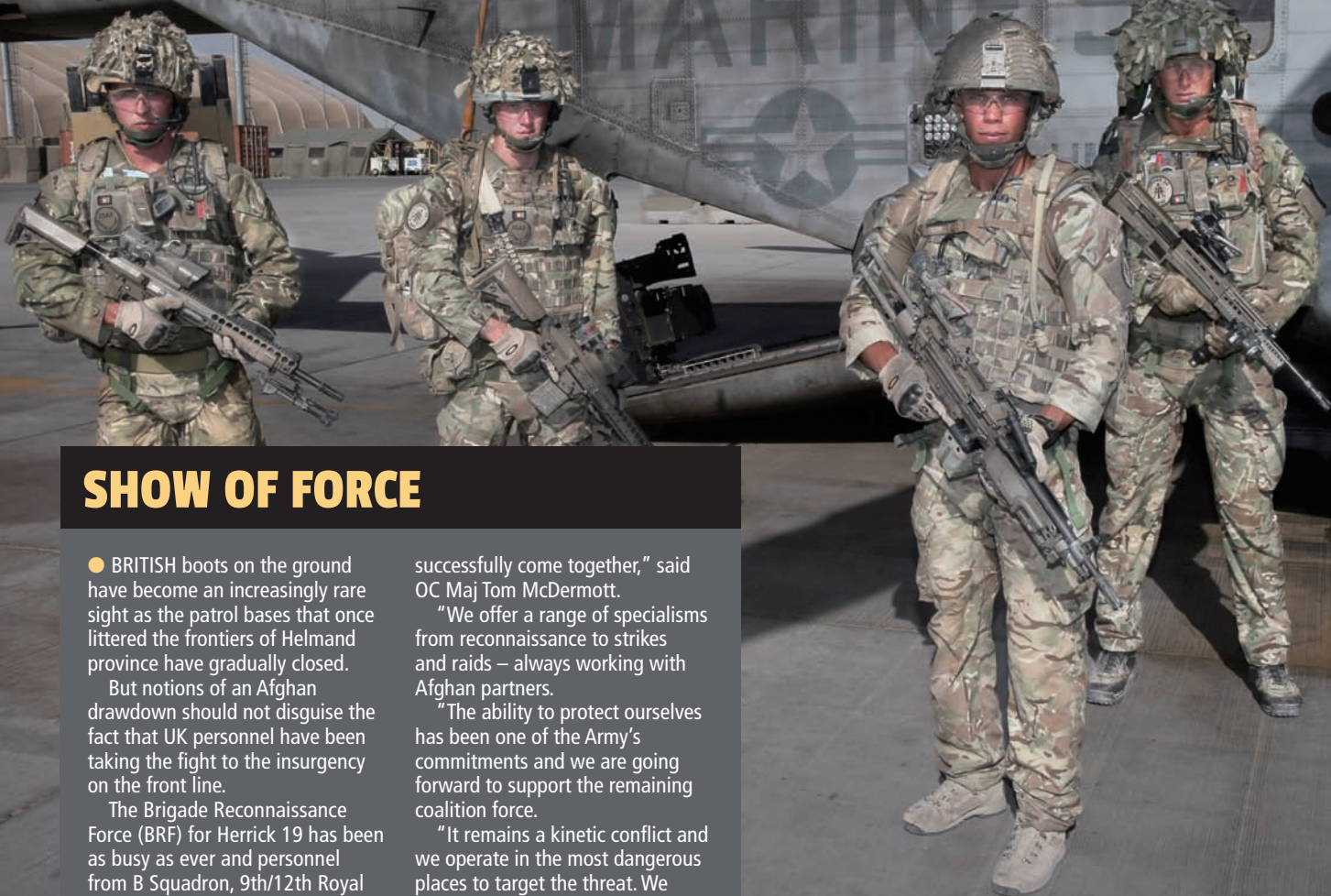
Average of
16,000 kilometres
covered every month

25-30
operations
in total



average hours spent
on each operation

38,000
ration packs
consumed



SHOW OF FORCE

● BRITISH boots on the ground have become an increasingly rare sight as the patrol bases that once littered the frontiers of Helmand province have gradually closed.

But notions of an Afghan drawdown should not disguise the fact that UK personnel have been taking the fight to the insurgency on the front line.

The Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) for Herrick 19 has been as busy as ever and personnel from B Squadron, 9th/12th Royal Lancers have revelled in what is considered by many to be the best job in theatre.

"It has been a busy and successful tour from the word go," commented team commander Cpl Michael Blakeley.

"On our first few operations we were taking lethal aid off the ground and detaining individuals.

"We have been clearing compounds, putting in screens and blocks and have offered a presence for other troops.

"There is definitely still an insurgent threat and I think that will only increase as the summer fighting season begins."

The BRF boasts 17 different cap badges that are formed around the Lancers, with military police, medics and unmanned aerial systems among the many different elements involved.

At the time of *Soldier's* visit the unit had completed 44 operations during the tour, the majority of which were staged with helicopter support from the United States Marine Corps.

"The real strength of the BRF is the way all the cap badges have

successfully come together," said OC Maj Tom McDermott.

"We offer a range of specialisms from reconnaissance to strikes and raids – always working with Afghan partners.

"The ability to protect ourselves has been one of the Army's commitments and we are going forward to support the remaining coalition force.

"It remains a kinetic conflict and we operate in the most dangerous places to target the threat. We have had more than 80 small arms contacts to date."

As part of their efforts the BRF has captured thousands of rounds of ammunition along with suicide vests, rockets, explosives and anti-tank mines, while detaining a number of insurgents.

The troops have been working closely with the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and Maj McDermott believes they are ideally placed to continue the good work once British personnel finally leave.

"The Afghans have the ability to control the enemy threat," the officer explained.

"I have given three birthdays to this country and the elections here proved to me that this campaign has been productive.

"If you ever wanted to see a high point for the ANSF it is now as they provided safe elections across the province.

"The number of voters was way up and the guys we have worked with are superb. They have high standards in their infantry and that is down to the commitment we have given them over the last seven or eight years." ■

“ We have had more than 80 small arms contacts to date ”

Maj Tom McDermott





Combined strength: The BRF, based at Camp Bastion, working hand-in-hand with members of the US Marine Corps and the Warthog Group

AMERICAN ALLIES

“
These
guys
are war
fighters
”
Maj Michael
Smith

● HERRICK 19 has seen the BRF forge a close working relationship with the United States Marine Corps, who have provided the helicopter support required for the bulk of missions.

Operations officer Maj Michael Smith is on his first tour of Afghanistan and was quick to praise the efforts of his British counterparts.

“We use different terminology but these

guys are war fighters,” the serviceman told *Soldier*.

“I have been very impressed with their professionalism and they work with great enthusiasm and tenacity.

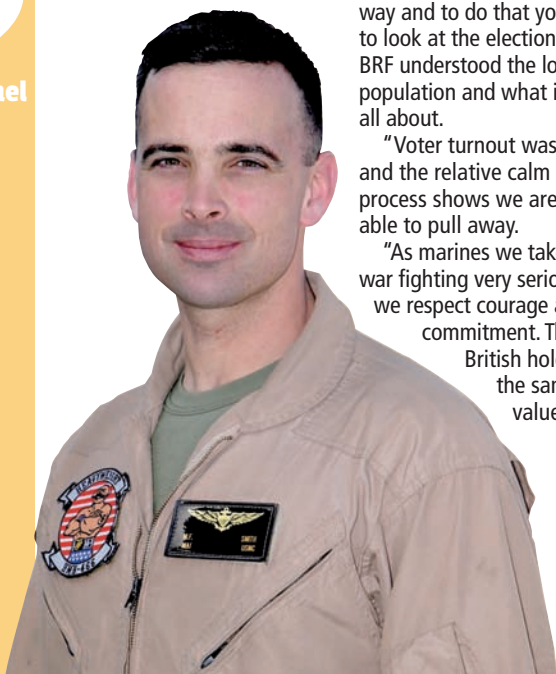
“We insert them into areas where there is no coalition presence and they have been working with the ANSF to deter the insurgent threat.

“We have to quantify what we are doing in some way and to do that you have to look at the elections. The BRF understood the local population and what it was all about.

“Voter turnout was up and the relative calm of the process shows we are now able to pull away.

“As marines we take our war fighting very seriously, we respect courage and commitment. The British hold

the same values.” ■



Picture: Sgt Dan Bardsley, RLC

LET IT SNOW

● HAVING been part of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force on Herrick 14 Sgt Ray Nyambira (9/12 L) knew exactly what to expect on his latest tour.

However, there was a major surprise in store for the experienced troop sergeant and his colleagues.

“My last deployment began in the summer, where as this one started in winter so it has been a massive change,” he said.

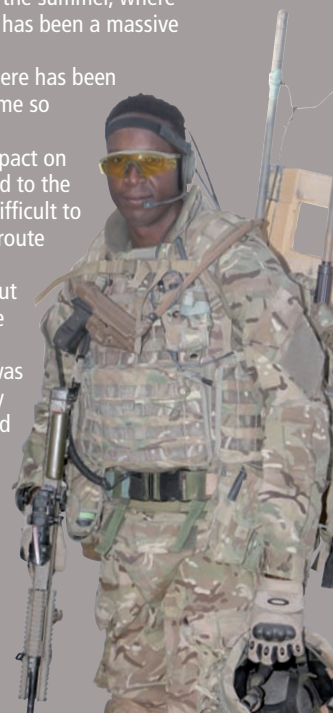
“This year was the first time there has been snow in Afghanistan for a long time so there was a real difference.

“The weather did not really impact on operations but we had to get used to the climate. The snow meant it was difficult to read ground sign and that made route selection and movement difficult.

“Most missions were carried out with Afghan forces and they were taking the lead.

“Compared to the last time I was here they are brilliant. As an army they are far more professional and they know what they are doing.

“The insurgent threat is still there but it is not like before. The ANSF have evolved from basic soldiers to the standard that is required.” ■



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Purchase Fee (included in final payment)	£10.00
Initial Payment	£462.96
34 Monthly Payments	£462.96
Final Payment	£26,725.00
Total Amount Payable	£51,929.60
Duration of Agreement (Months)	36
Representative APR%	6.1% APR
Interest Rate (Fixed)%	5.63%



JAGUAR

FOR the British Army to make a full withdrawal from the campaign in Afghanistan it must be fully convinced the country's forces can proudly stand on their own two feet.

This year's elections proved to be the ideal yardstick for measuring the progress made as Afghans took the lead role in security operations for what was a relatively peaceful democratic process.

Such success proves their front-line capability is no longer in doubt and work is now being done to develop the crucial support structures that will form the final pieces of the development jigsaw.

Soldier travelled to Kabul to speak to some of the Service's high-ranking officers about the rate of progress and what the future holds.

Interviews: Richard Long

As the most senior British soldier in theatre Lt Gen John Lorimer is ideally placed to comment on the rate of progress within the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

The deputy commander of Isaf has witnessed significant developments during his latest deployment and in his opinion there has been one defining moment.

"It is now ten months since the ANSF took lead responsibility for security," he said.

"In that time we have really seen them improve and the level they have reached was highlighted when they managed to safely secure the elections in April.

"They did a great job for the people of Afghanistan who were engaged in the democratic process.

"Isaf provided a bit of medical support and some intelligence but the Afghans were very much in the lead.

It looks as though there will now be a run-off in the election and they need to ensure that success continues.

"But it was remarkable how little violence there was."

The return to the polls is likely to coincide with the start of the summer fighting season but Lt Gen Lorimer believes the ANSF will rise to the challenge once again.

In the meantime, Isaf will continue the task of aiding their counterparts in other areas.

"The resolute support mission is due to take over from Op Herrick at the end of the year," the officer explained.

"It is about capacity building and will look at areas such as leadership, command control,

Real progress: Isaf Deputy Commander, Lt Gen John Lorimer



sustainable logistics, intelligence and building the air force.

"We need to help them out; we will be going from combat-level advising to more functional-based work.

"They have got the numbers and are now almost 350,000-strong. They have the quantity and we have to help them get the quality."

And having deployed to Afghanistan as a brigade commander in 2007 he has seen a remarkable rate of change.

"Back then the idea of them having an air force was pie in the sky," Lt Gen Lorimer said. "The notion of an Afghan special forces capability was not credible but it is now.

"They are not perfect and certain elements need work but I would never have imagined seeing this level of professionalism back in 2007." ■

'They did a great job for the people of Afghanistan who were engaged in the democratic process'

Democracy at work

Election success points to a bright future for Afghanistan

Picture: Sgt Dan Hamer, RLC

● THE elections also proved to be a turning point for Maj Gen Richard Nugee, who was delighted to see Afghan forces provide security for their fellow countrymen.

As the chief of staff at Isaf Joint Command he oversaw an intense build-up to the landmark event, an effort that reaped maximum reward as voters headed to the polls.

"For two months we pushed them to encourage their planning," he explained. "We wanted them to stage exercises and trial runs."

"In the lead-up it was a case of running around to make sure they had everything in place and to test their plans; we were like auditors in some respects."

"And as a result it was a great success; they didn't need our help on the day."

"Three years ago we were giving them the plan; now they are writing it themselves and putting it into effect."

And Maj Gen Nugee said the process is indicative of the Army's

approach in theatre.

"We are in a supporting role and are pushing them, rather than doing things ourselves," he added.

"Our troops are not going out on their own, it is always in support of the Afghans."

Having proven themselves on the battlefield the ANSF are now developing other capabilities that will lead to even greater independence.

A fledgling air force is taking shape and efforts are being made to enhance infrastructure and the supply chain.

"They overpower the Taliban every time and they are inflicting casualties on them," the senior officer said. "But they have missed the logistics side and we are now trying

Planning push: Isaf Joint Command Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Richard Nugee



to catch up.

"It is about sustainability and making sure depots work properly. We are trying to build a system where they have to ask for something, instead of it just being given to them."

"It is a change of culture and that will take time."

While such progress points to a bright future it also comes with a warning for the British Servicemen and women deployed between now and late December.

"It is very easy to imagine it will be plain sailing until the end of the year," Maj Gen Nugee said.

"But we will still have people in harm's way; the Lynx incident showed that. As we redeploy we are vulnerable so it would be wrong to say 'this is the end'."

"I really hope there will be no more deaths but we still have soldiers on the ground and the Taliban haven't been defeated yet." ■

Territorial defence: Gnr George Swatland, Gnr Nathan Mtekatoka and Gnr Chris Mander (all RA) load missiles onto the Rapier system



Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

THE sight of Rapier missiles pointing menacingly towards the sky could be something straight out of a science-fiction movie and it is not something seen very often – by most.

For that reason, the arrival of the high velocity ground-based warheads onto London's Blackheath Common to defend the 2012 Olympics was met with a high degree of public interest.

However, for members of 16 Regiment, Royal Artillery in the South Atlantic operating these high-tech guided weapon systems is part of their everyday job.

Personnel from 20 Battery recently completed

a stint as the resident Rapier unit in the Falkland Islands, tasked with using the all-weather strike capability to protect the UK territory from assault.

"We can detect and defend against air attack as part of a layered, measured defence, working alongside other assets such as the Typhoon jet fighter," explained battery commander, Maj Tim Osman (RA).

"The Falklands is the only place in the world where Rapier is deployed on an enduring basis – the airfield here is a prime asset and we're here to ensure it remains secure."

At five separate sites across the territory a cluster of soldiers is positioned to man each of the weapon systems around the clock.

Their scattered locations ensure maximum radar coverage of the region. »

“
**THE AIRFIELD
IS A PRIME
ASSET AND
WE'RE HERE
TO DEFEND IT**
”

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

ROYAL ARTILLERY MISSILE EXPERTS
KEEP EYES ON SOUTH ATLANTIC SKIES





In their sights:
Troops use high-tech surveillance to monitor the airspace for threats

» In any downtime, the troops work to improve their skills and drills on the asset but Maj Osman was clear that a posting to the South Atlantic is certainly not a training exercise.

"There are times when we are on high alert," he explained.

"And there are certainly things to look at and react to.

"The Falkland Islands are still very much part of UK PLC and they have a right to self-determination and that means having us here to reassure and defend them."

As part of this defence effort a command post, based at Falklands Headquarters, views the overall picture of the airspace and alerts Service personnel to any potential threats.

Awaiting action, the highly accurate

THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE MISSION IS DOWN TO ME

system is always loaded with either four or eight surface-to-air missiles and handled by a tactical controller and an operator.

"The former will have communication with the command post and he'll assess how quickly a potential target would take to get to an area we are protecting," explained LBdr John Beck (RA).

"There could be an immediate need to fire.

"If so, the operator will follow the aircraft on-screen in the cross hairs and push a big red button, if required, to take it out."

As well as having sophisticated systems at their disposal to detect

suspicious flights, troops operating Rapier are required to recognise more than 60 airframes by sight alone and also by the thermal signatures left on their screens.

In case of a technical glitch, troops must be able to identify fixed wing aircraft, helicopters and unmanned air systems themselves in order to make a decision on whether to destroy them.

"It does get quite busy out here and there is a lot of responsibility," admitted Gnr Nathan Mtekatoka (RA).

"With an order from the controller I'll engage the target and if I miss, we don't succeed.

"Ultimately, the success or failure of the mission is down to me."

If called on to engage, the Rapier missiles can be fired two at a time to a range of 8.2km, with the ability to be steered accurately onto a target.

Those operating them might be 8,000 miles from Britain but the work of 16 Regiment's batteries on rotation in this region is as fundamental to the British Army as any other mission.

"This is core stuff, not training. It's a key aspect of the British role and we're not going anywhere," added Maj Osman.

"The responsibility is not something we play at, it is a 24-hour job.

"Our guys are always on-site and ready to fire." ■

RAPIER RUNDOWN

Detection range	Missile type
16km	MK2 BRAVO
Rate of fire	Firing range
8 MISSILES in 15 MINUTES	8.2 km
Usage	Speed of missile
ALL WEATHER	851 METRES/SEC

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34 Monthly Payments	£304.43
Final Payment	£23,119.00
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Representative APR%	6.3% APR
Interest Rate (Fixed)	5.76%

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Front-line flashbacks: Veterans share their stark D-Day memories

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Dangerous men: French commando recalls Normandy assault

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Significant sites: Key places to visit to learn about D-Day

70 years on D-Day remembered

War hero: George Lines, a veteran of the Normandy landings, as featured in *D-Day – The Last of the Liberators* on page 44

Picture: Robin Savage



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D DARING

D-DAY
70
1944-2014

11,590

AIRCRAFT

6,939

VESSELS



132,715

BRITISH, CANADIAN, AMERICAN AND
FRENCH TROOPS HIT THE BEACHES

Pictures: Imperial War Museum, Casper Moller

The Allied invasion of Normandy will be remembered for its huge collective effort and colossal acts of individual courage

It may have taken place 70 years ago but the numbers involved are still nothing short of staggering.

On June 6, 1944, more than 130,000 mainly British, Canadian, American and French personnel, supported by 23,400 airborne troops, formed an invasion force that conducted a five-pronged attack over a 50-mile stretch of Normandy coastline.

Operation Neptune, the initial phase of Operation Overlord, the code name of the Allied invasion of north-west Europe, was one of the biggest amphibious assaults in history.

It was enabled by the largest naval task force ever assembled, consisting of nearly 7,000 vessels and around 11,000 aircraft.

Some 10,000 Allied troops were killed or went missing in action on that first day but they were reinforced with more than 350,000 soldiers, 150,000 vehicles and 1.3 million tonnes of stores that arrived in a steady stream over the next ten weeks.

The majority of these came through the two famous Mulberry harbours located on the Omaha and Gold Beaches.

They were completed by June 18 and were built from 131,000 tonnes of concrete, 77,000 tonnes of ballast and 95,300 tonnes of steel. They stood a mile long and nine metres above sea level at low tide. Each was the size of Dover harbour.

The Mulberry at Gold Beach, near Arromanches, lasted for ten months and landed an incredible two million men, 500,000 vehicles and 3.6 million tonnes of supplies to bolster the Allied forces.

But even this mind-blowing array of facts and figures cannot overshadow the many startling individual deeds of courage and sacrifice that took place on and around D-Day.

The fortitude and determination of the troops and civilians embroiled in the conflict proved to be every bit as vital in defeating the Nazi occupiers as the sheer weight of numbers

involved in the huge operation.

Soldier has spoken to a selection of veterans who were an integral part of the invasion that day and they've provided a fascinating glimpse of the dramatic events that took place.

They include Charlie Jeffries of the Highland Light Infantry (page 43), who came ashore at Sword Beach and was later injured.

He admits to still lying in bed every night thinking of the bodies in the water and the colleague killed beside him.

Then there's 91-year-old Leon Gautier (page 48), a member of the Kieffer Commando Battalion – the only French soldiers to take part in ground operations

on D-Day. Leon lives with his wife, Dorothy, just yards from where he jumped off the landing craft 70 years ago.

Another French patriot who will be celebrating with tears in her eyes is the remarkable Arlette Gondree (page 46).

The 74-year-old owns and runs Cafe Gondree near Benouville but back in 1944 the proprietors were her mother and father, Georges and Therese.

Before D-Day, the family had been supplying French resistance fighters and British intelligence officials with information picked up from their Wehrmacht customers and, as a result, lived in constant fear of being

discovered and having to flee – or worse.

Madame Gondree, whose cafe has since become a remarkable memorial to the Allied invasion, adorned with flags, pictures and souvenirs from 70 years ago, recalls in vivid detail how her family helped British troops as they secured the strategically vital Pegasus Bridge nearby.

To that end, a visit to that historic crossing is one of *Soldier's* top ten places to commemorate the Normandy landings this month (page 50).

It is hard to appreciate the scale of the operation and the conditions the Allied forces had to contend with back in 1944 but visiting the remnants of D-Day will certainly help. ■

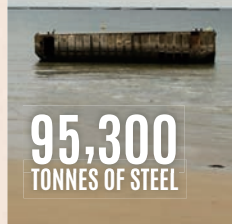
MULBERRY HARBOURS

131,000

TONNES OF CONCRETE

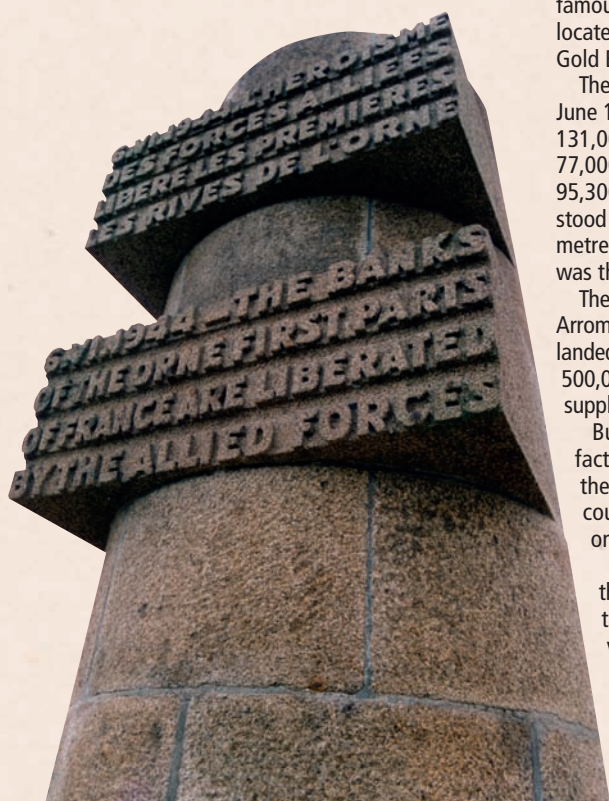
77,000


TONNES OF BALLAST



95,300

TONNES OF STEEL



A close-up portrait of an elderly man, Fred Glover, wearing a dark blue military-style jacket, a maroon beret with a silver winged pilot's emblem, and glasses. He has several medals pinned to his left chest, including a large gold one and several smaller ones with ribbons. The background is dark and out of focus.

“The minute we **crashed** down, suddenly we weren’t playing at soldiers anymore.

What surprised me was that whatever we’d all felt on the flight over – **apprehension** and so on – disappeared and the **training came to the fore** and we did what was required without any hesitation.

No **bewilderment**, no **shock** of the crash, **nothing.**”

Fred Glover

VETERAN VOICES

Ex-Servicemen who took part in Operation Overlord share their lasting memories of June 6, 1944

Interviews: Becky Clark
Pictures: Shane Wilkinson

Fred Glover and Geoff Pattinson 9th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment

WHEN paratroopers Fred Glover and Geoff Pattinson heard that commanders were asking unmarried men to volunteer for a special mission, they stepped forward without hesitation.

The plan would see troops inserted by glider during the assault on the Merville Gun Battery, a key position threatening the British landings on Sword Beach in Normandy.

Launched shortly after midnight on June 6, 1944, the daring operation soon ran into trouble.

Pte Glover's aircraft had crash-landed some 300 metres away from its objective at the battery.

Almost immediately the troops found themselves in a firefight with a large German patrol.

Pte Glover, wounded in both legs by an anti-aircraft gun, fell behind the rest of his battalion.

He was picked up by German soldiers and taken to hospital in Paris, where he made contact with the French Resistance and eventually managed to escape.

Meanwhile, the tow rope on Pte Pattinson's glider had snapped during the crossing, leaving it adrift and flying blind in the night sky.

After some time the pilot spotted the lights of an unknown runway and with no other option, decided to risk landing in potentially hostile territory.

Remarkably, the airstrip turned out to be RAF Odiham in Hampshire and the soldiers were able to make the journey to Normandy in another glider the following day.

Upon landing, Pte Pattinson and his comrades headed for Breville Ridge but days later the 20-year-old was shot in the legs while searching a chateau.

Evacuated and dropped close to an aid station on the beachhead, he was then almost gunned down by British personnel who didn't recognise his paratroopers' uniform.

Both Servicemen recovered from their injuries and rejoined their unit for the Rhine crossings and the Ardennes campaign.

“If the glider rope had broken ten minutes later we'd have been over the Channel and that would have been the **end of us**.

I didn't look much like a parachutist – I was a **wee boy** with a gun. I could never do what they do these days.”

Geoff Pattinson

“ The time came to jump and as the chute opened I remember I **wasn't frightened**, more curious – **tense and ready** for anything.

I could see tracer bullets and it was with intense disappointment that I landed in a foot of water.

The Germans had flooded the area and my lovely new G1098 suit was soaked.

I cursed the RAF for dropping us in the wrong place but I was fortunate because I survived. Fate spared me. ”

A portrait of Bill Martin, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, a dark tie, and a dark beret with a gold emblem. He is seated in a wooden chair and has several medals pinned to his left lapel.

Bill Martin, 7th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment

LIKE many of the paratroopers dropped into Normandy on D-Day, Bill Martin found himself miles away from his original objective.

While attempting to rejoin his battalion at Ranville the 20-year-old was wounded and later captured by German personnel.

Marching in columns, the prisoners were strafed by Allied aircraft, who mistook them for enemy troops, but eventually Pte Martin reached Stalag XIIA in Limburg, where he spent the rest of the war.

“ It's a day in your life you'll **never forget**.

I'd been on the landing craft for three nights. I woke up, **looked** over the top and saw the coastline.

You could see the shells exploding. **This was it**.

I don't remember being frightened – I don't think we realised what we were doing.

I was a 19-year-old boy and at one point I thought, 'I wonder if **my father** knows what I'm doing now'. ”

A portrait of George Seal, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, a dark tie, and a dark beret with a gold emblem. He is seated in a wooden chair and has several medals pinned to his left lapel, including a large one with a ribbon.

George Seal, Royal Army Service Corps

THIS ex-Serviceman drove transport vehicles up Sword Beach early on D-Day.

Tom Cromie
90th Field Regiment (City of
London), Royal Artillery

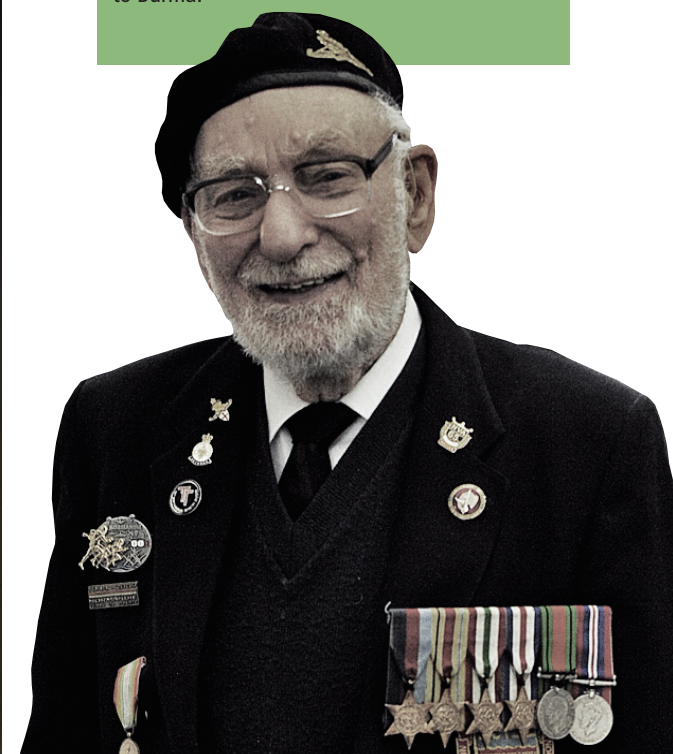
THIS veteran landed on Gold Beach, 60 minutes after zero hour.

Unable to reach the shore due to a sandbank, the commander of the landing craft was forced to drop the ramp early.

Despite not being able to swim, the 23-year-old gunner made it to dry land.

He was later evacuated back to England after his leg was crushed by a tracked vehicle.

After convalescing he volunteered to deploy to Burma.



“ The water was **cold**, it was **deep** and I **couldn't swim**.

But my job was a forward observation officer's orderly and he was already a mile inland so I had to get to him.

On the sandbank the sea was two feet **deep** but it quickly dropped away to seven feet.

I was **over my head** in water.

All my life I've never let anything bother me, so I let my feet touch the sand underneath, made a quick leap into the air, took a **gulp** of air and kept on going like that.

There was a running tide going eastwards but somehow I **made it** to land. ”



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“ We got to the beaches and there were **bodies** all over the place in the water.

You had to focus on yourself – you **couldn't stop** to help anyone.

I'd just got married and I was thinking of my **family** back home.

I remember one chap in the regiment was one of those unfortunate people who couldn't do anything right.

He got **killed right beside me**.

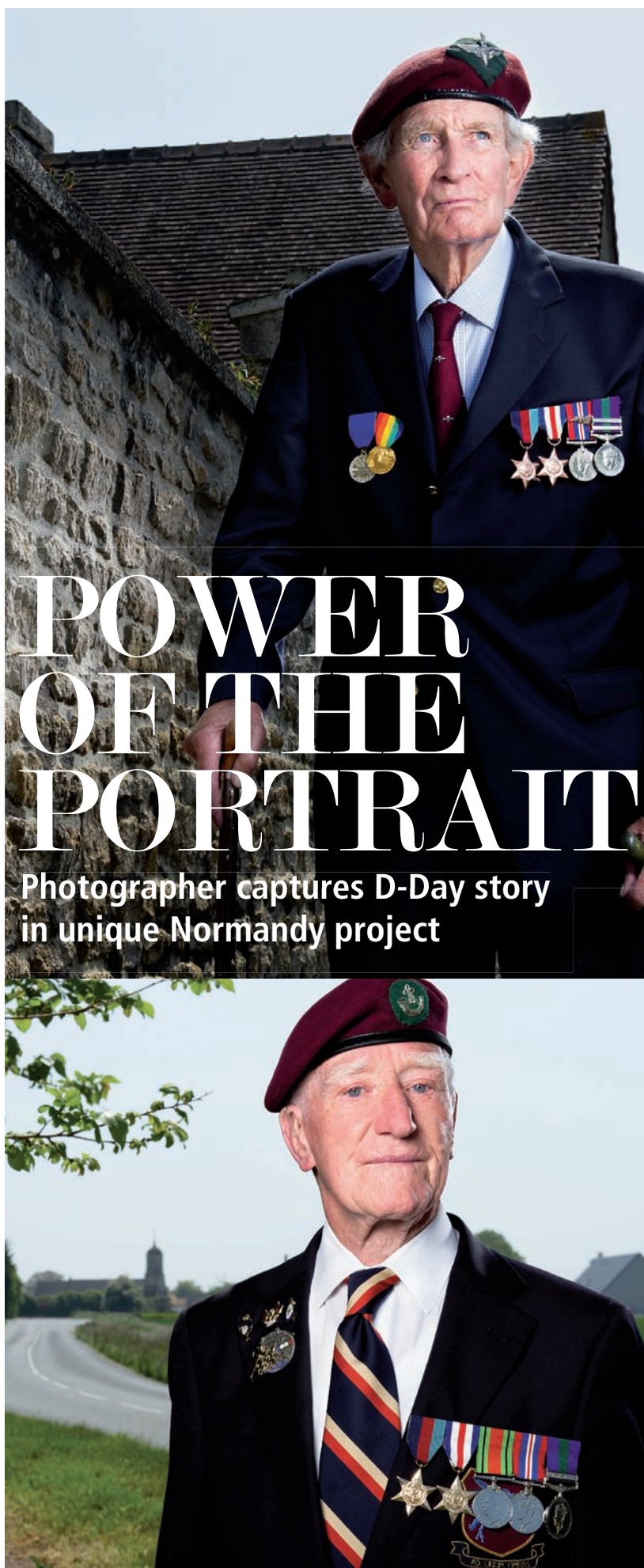
That sticks in my mind; the whole thing does. I lie in bed every night **thinking** of it. ”

Picture: Graeme Main

Charlie Jeffries, Highland Light Infantry

A **NEWLY** married 18-year-old on D-Day, Pte Charlie Jeffries came ashore at Sword Beach, from where his regiment began to move towards Caen.

He was later wounded in the leg at Hill 112 but recovered to fight on during the Rhine crossings and in the Ardennes, where he was again injured and evacuated back to the UK.



POWER OF THE PORTRAIT

Photographer captures D-Day story in unique Normandy project

Interview: Richard Long

AS D-Day commemorations come to the fore this month there will be no shortage of tributes to the brave and dignified veterans who were embroiled in the heart of the offensive.

For photographer Robin Savage the impending anniversary sparked a two-and-a-half year project aimed at offering a unique insight into the experiences of those charged with battling elite German units in occupied France.

He has captured poignant portraits of a host of veterans in the exact locations that hold profound personal memories of the campaign and his painstaking efforts can now be witnessed first-hand in his new book *D-Day – The Last of the Liberators*.

"I've always been fascinated with the Normandy landings, the guys who were there and what they went through," Mr Savage told *Soldier*.

"I wanted to pay homage to those people and say thank you.

"There were no favourites and I did not set out looking for bloodthirsty tales. It was about chatting to veterans, listening to what happened and then capturing their images at the spot that is so important to them.

"We can never repay the debt we owe to these individuals but we can retell their stories and then hopefully understand why we have the freedoms we enjoy today."

The majority of photographs were taken during the 68th and 69th anniversaries of the D-Day landings and the book highlights the experiences of airborne veterans as well as those that landed on Sword, Juno and Gold Beaches. ■

Above: Nick Archdale of 7th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment was one of many soldiers who landed wide of Drop Zone N on D-Day. He immediately made his way to Pegasus Bridge and this image was captured in Le Port, where he was involved in heavy fighting

Left: Cecil Jeffcoate of 2nd Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry is shown in the position he held as he looked down the sights of his Vickers machine gun on the town of Escoville. He had been ordered to remain in the road to protect the right flank of an Allied attack. The formation was forced to retreat but the soldier held his position well into the night

Soldier has teamed up with publisher Helion and Company to give away a copy of *D-Day – The Last of the Liberators*. To be in with a chance of winning, send your details to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by June 30. Our readers can purchase the book at a special discounted price of £18.75 (plus p&p) by calling 01865 241249 and quoting "*Soldier*" or by visiting www.casematepublishers.co.uk and entering the promotional code SOLDIER at the checkout.

WIN



Interview: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

FROM the outside, Cafe Gondree looks like any other quaint little coffee-and-croissant establishment.

Nestled adjacent to the Caen Canal in northern France, the only clue that this could be a snack-stop with a difference is the arrangement of multinational flags hanging over the doorway.

Other than that, there appears to be nothing out of the ordinary here.

However, the opposite is true: 70 years ago this month such a vision of tranquillity couldn't possibly have looked any more different.

Unlike most waterside eateries, the owner of this Normandy building has an unsettling story to tell – one likely to astonish even the most experienced of military personnel.

Through a mixture of chance, meticulous planning and extreme bravery, the family that inhabited this restaurant during the Second World War became the first people to be liberated by British troops on June 6, 1944.

And perhaps even more astonishing is the fact that the same family inhabit and run the cafe seven decades later.

Proprietor Arlette Gondree was just four years old when the events of D-Day unfolded, living there with her parents, Georges and Therese Gondree, and sister Georgette.

Soldiers from the 6th Airborne Division landed by parachute and Horsa gliders nearby on the east side of the canal before taking on German troops in a fierce firefight and capturing two strategically important bridges.

Speaking to *Soldier* in the very same room that served as a makeshift field hospital after the daring aerial landings, the 74-year-old explained that the arrival of British personnel had not been a complete surprise to her parents.

"The atmosphere of the time was one of fear," recalled the cafe owner.

"Daddy spoke very good English and had been meeting some British military intelligence guys in this room.

"He was also in contact with two members of the Resistance, one of whom knew what was being planned at the bridges."

Nowadays, Madame Gondree's shop on the edge of Benouville continues to serve customers refreshments and snacks as her family has done since 1934 but the sustenance is something of a side order to the awe-inspiring memorabilia on show and the stark memories it holds.

"Throughout the war the cafe was still running and it hasn't changed in size or look – it has always been a modest little place at the foot of the bridge," said the proud civilian. »

First to be freed

French cafe owner recalls how her house was the initial site to be liberated by British soldiers on D-Day



“It was open for the village inhabitants but my parents could not stop the Germans coming in either.”

The casual chatter of customers proved to be vital for the war effort, though, as the girls’ Alsace-born mother picked up on the comments of her unwanted visitors.

“In serving the Germans she could understand what they were saying,” said Mme Arlette.

“They would come in wearing their Nazi uniforms with dark grey coats and heavy boots.

“There were 54 Germans in the village and she got to know what they were doing and what they were likely to do, and that information was passed on.”

Despite having some knowledge and hope of what might happen if the British came, the family’s daily existence was one of dread. They knew they could be killed or forced out at any time.

On one occasion Hitler’s troops knocked on their door asking if there was room for Nazi personnel to move in but Georges stood defiant and said that his house was full.

But tensions were rising and Mme Gondree’s mother had overheard

Germans talking of plans to blow up the bridge just yards from her home.

“My father wanted us to move away to a friend’s farm but mummy refused to leave so we remained in place,” she explained.

“The British spies said something was being prepared and advised daddy not to move out of the house and to stay put with his family.

“We were little kiddies and my parents could not get any clothes, shoes or food for us.

“But mummy and daddy told me and Georgette there was a plan and it would mean we would have food, shoes and a better life.”

Nevertheless, the Gondrees prepared for the worst and moved a stash of straw and bedding to their cellar. This is where they would flee if the enemy was to storm the house.

On the night of June 5 the family went upstairs to bed as usual with no idea of what lay ahead over the next 24 hours.

“We were in the bedrooms when we heard a tremendous crashing noise and at that point the sound around the cafe was different,” Mme Gondree recalled.

“My father ordered us to be taken

“It’s not an ordinary cafe, it’s a home and a shrine”

down into the dark, damp cellar – I still remember it well.

“We were all very cold but it wasn’t long after that when we heard the sound of someone outside in great pain.

“My father opened the shutter slightly and there was a person, pointing a gun at him and asking in French if he was a civilian.

“At that point daddy thought the soldier might be German so he quickly closed the shutter.”

Gunfire erupted while the petrified family hid.

“We could hear them being forced open and windows being broken, then we heard footsteps above us,” whispered the cafe owner, as if she was still in hiding.

“We thought the Nazis were coming to get us so we just huddled together tightly.

“My father decided he wanted to find out what was going on in his house and as he opened the door he was faced with a British soldier who said, ‘it’s alright, we’ve come’.

“The troops came down to the cellar and I remember being very scared because I’d never seen anything like it before.





"But then I walked forward to one of them because he produced a piece of chocolate.

"It was frightening because it was all helmets and black clothes but then he grabbed hold of me and that was that."

Yards from the cafe, the crossing where the remarkable assault took place is now known as Pegasus Bridge (page 52) in honour of the emblem proudly worn by Britain's airborne personnel.

Along with the nearby Ranville Bridge, the site was captured after a ten-minute firefight to defeat the occupying force – just six hours before the famous beach landings began a few miles away.

This success proved vital in reducing the effectiveness of a German counter-attack following the larger-scale invasions.

From the moment of the airborne assault, the Gondree household effectively served as a military base, with wounded soldiers being carried inside to receive medical treatment.

As a four-year-old child, Mme Gondree could never have understood the strategic significance of what was happening around her.



“I regard what I do as a mission”



But what quickly became clear was that the events of a single day would go on to shape the rest of her life in a role that combines the duties of a restaurateur and a museum curator.

Her cafe is decked out with British flags, photographs, letters and other military paraphernalia and to this day she continues to run a slick, hands-on operation in tending to customers while chatting with the hundreds of veterans, schoolchildren and tourists who swarm through the door each day to soak up the site's history.

A customer stopping by to eat homemade tomato soup is treated as casually as those who have visited to peruse wartime photographs, sift through Army badges and discuss Operation Overlord in detail.

"When you're born you never know what you might become but I regard what I do as a mission," Mme Gondree told *Soldier*.

"I could've retired by now but why should I?

"Throughout my life, as soldiers past and present have visited, my calling has been to see that the memory of my parents and what they went through lives on.

"It's not an ordinary cafe, it's a



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home and a shrine."

As ever, this month's D-Day anniversary will see Service personnel young and old flock to Normandy to commemorate that extraordinary moment in time.

Unsurprisingly, Mme Gondree has attended every single one of those sombre ceremonies.

"For the 70th anniversary there won't be as many veterans coming because, sadly, a lot of them have passed away but it will be very important – the soldiers are tired and they'll be emotional," she explained.

"This year we will again be saying a big thank you for that great team effort from the UK.

"If it hadn't been for their preparation, under great secrecy, there wouldn't have been the liberation of this little house and the family within it."

However, what is also clear is that without the assistance of the multilingual residents inside this house, the whole outcome of that historic D-Day operation might have been very different.

Slice of history: Relics, photographs and military memorabilia decorate Cafe Gondree in France





Interview: Joe Clapson

JUST a stone's throw from the setting of one of the greatest triumphs of the Second World War lives 91-year-old Frenchman Leon Gautier and his wife of 70 years.

The Normandy resident occupies a modest bungalow in Ouistreham, where he fought on D-Day, but this is apparently nothing more than a coincidence.

"I live 200 metres from the blockhouse where I fought but I couldn't care less," the plain-speaking

pensioner tells *Soldier*.

During the conflict Mr Gautier was part of the elite Free French Commando, led by Commandant Philippe Kieffer, which joined British Forces as they stormed Sword Beach on June 6, 1944, taking on a vicious Nazi force. But that is consigned to the past now.

"You must live somewhere in life and I just came here in the 1990s to run the commando association, to help out on this side," adds the ex-serviceman.

There is no sentimentality to be had here. Talk to this man about any aspect of his contribution to the Allied landings and he will play it down.

For this reason, the general public could easily view Leon Gautier as nothing more than an old-timer and he would be happy with that.

But as military personnel and civilians mark the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings this month, his story serves as a stark reminder of the heart-stopping experiences that today's senior generation carry with them.

In 1940, aged 17, Mr Gautier joined the French Navy before setting sail for England to join the Free French.

"I heard that they were forming an army to fight the Germans and I wanted to be part of it," he recalls.

Two years later the youngster

volunteered to return to his homeland to defeat the occupying force.

"We took some tests at our Clapham Common base then 80 of us were sent to Achnacarry camp in Scotland for training," he says.

"That's when we all received our green berets, joining the British Army's No 4 Commando."

Sitting at his dining table, the veteran's eyes light up as he recollects the preparations.

"We were told that it didn't matter what our nationality, we were being taught to kill the Germans.

"Hitler didn't like commandos because they were elite units – we were specialists.

"We were very dangerous men and very useful in the war so he wanted to get rid of us."

In May 1944 the troops started training on landing crafts in UK waters, unaware of just how important the drills they were practising would prove to be.

"We went to a secret camp in the south of England, surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by American troops," continues Mr Gautier.

"We weren't allowed to leave and it was here that we learnt the secret plan about D-Day but we were told not to divulge this information to British soldiers – it would've been a catastrophe if word got out."

On the eve of the assault the French soldiers were addressed by Lord Lovat, commander of the newly formed 1st Special Service Brigade.

"His words were 'tomorrow we will have the Huns' and as Frenchmen we were very happy to hear this," he says.

Embarking on the mission, around 90 men packed into each landing craft with armour and ammunition.

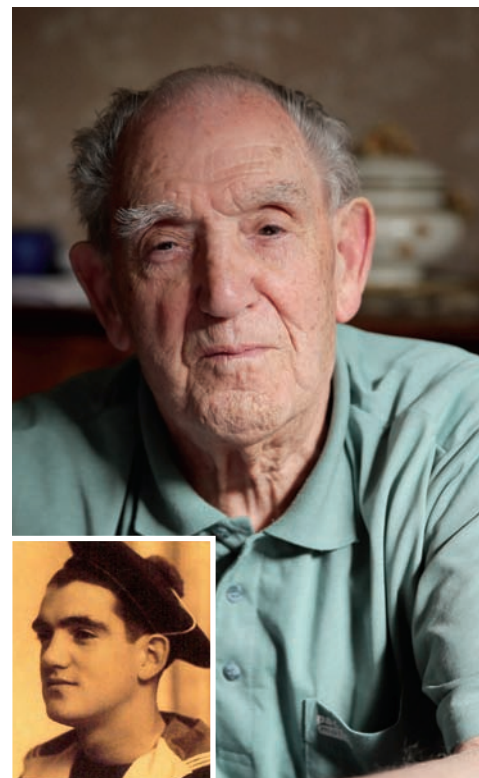
After waiting for five hours, they finally departed under the code name Piccadilly Circus.

"We got a message sent by flag from the King and Churchill wishing us good luck," Mr Gautier adds.

For most, setting off into the darkness knowing that Nazis were lying in wait in fortified positions would be a daunting,



‘If I’d stopped for casualties or to fire my weapon, I would not be alive’



IN NUMBERS:

78

Days that Leon Gautier continued to fight without rest after D-Day

WE WERE VERY DANGEROUS MEN

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Former French commando relives deadly dash onto Sword Beach

if not hellish, prospect.

But this man saw it differently.

"We were really glad because we were going home to our own country," he smiles.

"We slept a bit, leaning back on the side. We were not worried at all, we were very happy.

"We didn't think about fighting against the Germans, we simply had a job to do."

As the boats came into Nazi sights, the relentless shelling began but the men continued on regardless.

"It was about 0700 when the Germans started firing at us. The shells were coming in very near, sometimes two yards, but we were not worried," says the veteran.

Everyone on-board Mr Gautier's boat, Landing Craft 523, survived unscathed but one comrade from number 527 was killed and others injured.

According to the finely tuned plan, though, there was no time to tend to injured troops.

"We had to do the job, we had to carry on," he recalls.

"We were very disciplined because of our training – that's the way of the British Army.

"They had told us to land on the beaches and run as fast as we could without stopping to look for our friends; we had to carry on."

A hailstorm of gunfire rained down as British and French personnel sprinted across the sand carrying packs that

weighed up to 35 kilograms.

"We could see the blockhouse ahead and shots were being fired at us," he continues.

"Some people were hit but fortunately I got through."

Despite the drama, this D-Day operator is clear that his experience was nothing like the beach landing depicted in the iconic film *Saving Private Ryan*.

"There was no shouting, I did not hear German voices and I was not firing my gun – I was just running," he explains.

"It was not like it's shown in the movies because if we had landed like that I would not be here now.

"If I'd stopped for casualties or to fire my weapon, I would not be alive."

Along with his colleagues from 8 Troop, the ex-serviceman went on to liberate 1,800 metres of beach before working inland to conquer the town of Ouistreham as Hitler's men fled.

"I just saw the German troops give up, I didn't see anything else," beams Mr Gautier.

"We felt good because we were alright; it was just as I thought, there was no problem."

By the evening of June 6, the commando unit had succeeded in its mission but had lost a quarter of its troops in the fight.

And that was just the start.

Mr Gautier continued to serve in the entire Battle of Normandy, fighting for another 78 days without rest.

Although somewhat understated in

acknowledging his achievements, he is more aware of his contribution to the operation now than he was in 1944.

"We did the job then went back to work elsewhere – we didn't realise what we'd done, we just returned to normal life," he confesses.

"I was demobilised in August 1945 and went back to civilian life to work as a panel beater."

Shortly afterwards Mr Gautier married British-born Dorothy Banks, who he had met while she was working as a telephone engineer at the commando headquarters in Dover.

For most of their married life they lived in England but seven decades on, approaching Mr Gautier's 92nd birthday and the couple's 70th wedding anniversary, they reside in Normandy, where there is more excitement to be had in catching up with mates through the French Commando Association than there is in marking D-Day formally.

"We have a ceremony every year and we have a good drink to celebrate, but for me the best bit is meeting old comrades," he explains.

"I am pleased to have a ceremony for the Allied forces at Sword Beach

this year, though, because it's not been there before – it's usually at one of the American beaches, which has been a shame."

Mr Gautier, like many soldiers from wars past and present, seems blase about his actions in the face of danger that most cannot imagine.

But he is not dismissive – simply content with the facts as he sees them.

"Life goes on," the veteran concludes, leaning back with a smile.

Indeed, it is thanks to these often-unassuming old-timers that life did go on for so many. ■

‘We were told not to divulge the secret D-Day plan to British soldiers’



Left from top, D-Day recollections: Training at Achnacarry camp, Mr Gautier as a young serviceman and Mr Gautier now

Above and right, At war: Troops advance into Ouistreham, commandos aboard a landing craft and a briefing model covering Juno and Sword Beaches

Images: Graeme Main, Imperial War Museum



Former Army Air Corps major and military historian Mike Peters lists ten must-see sites for military personnel to visit to learn more about the sacrifices made 70 years ago

1



1. Woolacombe, Devon

➤ IF you want to gain an understanding of the training that troops went through before D-Day, why not visit the area used by the Americans to prepare their personnel for the invasion? The US Army Assault

Training Centre occupied 16 square miles of Devon. Soldiers used beaches, cliffs, headlands and dunes for realistic and often dangerous training prior to the mission and there is still a lot of evidence to see in the area today.

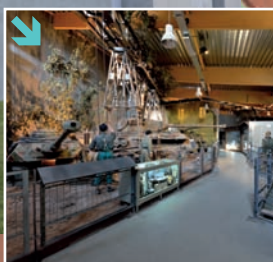


D-DAYS OUT

10 Unforgettable places to commemorate the Normandy landings

3. Operation Overlord Museum, Normandy

➤ SITUATED close to the US St Laurent Cemetery, and just 1,300 metres from Omaha Beach, this impressive new museum is very easy to find. Inside is an unrivalled collection of weapons, vehicles and D-Day equipment that is suited to all age groups. The weather in Normandy can be as unpredictable as in the UK so if conditions prove to be unsuitable, or the tide is in on Omaha Beach, keep this option up your sleeve.



4. Point du Hoc, Normandy

➤ LIKE the Pegasus Bridge operation, the assault by US Rangers on the German gun battery has acquired almost legendary status. Visit this site and you will understand why. Newly refurbished viewing platforms allow you to look down the near-vertical cliff face that the men of Rudder's Raiders scaled while dodging hand grenades, booby traps and small arms fire. A truly remarkable feat and a must-see location.



2. D-Day Museum and Southwick House, Portsmouth

➤ A GREAT way to get to Normandy from the UK is via the Portsmouth-Ouistreham ferry. It is more expensive than taking the Calais crossing but you are delivered right into area of the landings. If you can afford the time, visit the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth while you are there. It is a great scene-setter and highlights the enormous logistic effort made in the UK to launch the invasion. Portsmouth also offers Southwick House, the forward headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander, Gen Dwight Eisenhower. It is in this building that the order to launch the invasion was given; a momentous decision that rested on the shoulders of just one man. Eisenhower famously said "ok, we'll go" and the fate of Europe was changed for ever.

2



6. Objective Hillman, Normandy

➤ TO really get to grips with D-Day and the three-month campaign that followed it, you have to look a little further inland. Hillman was the code name given to a German strongpoint just a few kilometres from Sword Beach. The task of taking this fortified hilltop was given to the men of the Suffolk Regiment. What followed was a gruelling nine-hour battle between the Suffolks and a determined and well-motivated German garrison. The Suffolks eventually overwhelmed the position with support from Sherman tanks of the Staffordshire Yeomanry. The Hillman site offers excellent views of the invasion beaches, bunkers, cupolas and a small museum.

3

5

6



5. The Longues Battery, Normandy

➤ GERMAN propaganda films showed extensive fortifications stretching along the coastline of Europe barring any invasion from the UK. However, the much-vaunted Atlantic Wall was not the impenetrable line of defences that these images portrayed. Fd Marshal Erwin Rommel was shocked at the structure's inadequacy and set about extending the defences and galvanizing the troops garrisoning the coast. But there were some formidable positions in place on D-Day; the Longues Battery is a classic example of Second World War military engineering. It is impressive in its scale and worth including in your itinerary.

UTAH

OMAHA

GOLD

JUNO

SWORD

7

8

9

10



7. Omaha Beach and St Laurent Cemetery, Normandy

➤ THERE are few people who have not seen *Saving Private Ryan* and both of the above locations feature prominently in the film. A visit to the beach is critical to understanding the challenges faced by the two infantry divisions that spearheaded the US landing. Go when the tide is out, walk to the water line and then look back at the bluffs and headlands from the perspective of the assaulting troops. A subsequent visit to the cemetery above the beach allows you to measure the cost of the attack.



9. Pegasus Bridge, Normandy

➤ THE glider-borne assault on Pegasus and Horsa Bridges is for many the iconic image of D-Day. It is also an ideal place to start your Normandy battlefield tour. Within walking distance of the vital crossings over the Orne you will also find the Cafe Gondree, the first house liberated in France and the home of Madame Arlette Gondree (pages 45-47). If you have the time and want to immerse yourself in all things airborne the coastal battery at Merville is also well worth a visit. If you arrive late in the day it is worth considering viewing the bridge and the glider landing zone by night – as the pilots saw it during the first minutes of D-Day.

8. Arromanches, Normandy

➤ THE small seaside town of Arromanches is ideally placed on the road as you drive out of the British/ Canadian sector towards the US beaches. There is a lot to see here and it is an ideal spot to stop for lunch, ice cream or a drink. Parking is not always easy so leave your car outside the town at the 360-degree cinema. The circular screen shows an excellent film on the D-Day landings with surround sound. You can view the remnants of the Mulberry harbour outside and then walk down into the town. There are numerous shops and a very good museum which highlights the technological innovation that supported the invasion.



10. Sword Beach, Normandy

➤ MANY challenges are faced when making an amphibious landing on a defended beachhead, not least the weather conditions in 1944. The area around Sword Beach has numerous bunkers and a very good museum. The memorials will resonate with many soldiers as it was 3rd British Division that landed here and fought its way ashore. I recommend *Walking D-Day* by Paul Reed as a suitable guidebook for the area and you may want to use it to follow in the footsteps of 3rd Division.



Mike Peters is chairman of the Guild of Battlefield Guides. Learn more about the organisation at www.gbg-international.com

“TALKBACK”

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



Keep calm and carry on: Reservists' kit is being reviewed

Reserve kit reservations

I COMMAND a cadet training team (CTT) that includes Regular soldiers and full-time Reserve service (home commitment) personnel.

Our training at the Reinforcements Training and Mobilisation Centre in Chilwell incorporates overnight deployments in the field but, unlike the Regulars, Reserve troops are inadequately equipped.

They are issued with clothing but not the personal load carrying equipment or sleeping systems.

This matter has been raised with the chain of command but no formal decision has been made yet to rescale the CTT equipment table to include these items.

The Army evolved this system a number of years ago so that kit such as webbing and sleeping systems were put on a Regular soldier's personal holdings, allowing the individual to maintain and exchange them when necessary through the supply chain.

Isn't it time there was also a

realignment of personal holdings for Reserve personnel who have roles and responsibilities that include battle procedure? – **Capt Michael Robinson, Rifles.**

Lt Colonel Jimmy Beggs, HQ Support Command, SO2 Cadets, responds: As it happens we are reviewing how Reserves are equipped and the results of this will be communicated shortly.

However, we always try to make sure our personnel receive the kit they need.

Unit equipment tables can be adjusted to ensure that soldiers have the correct kit to deploy overnight and at the same time prevent items that aren't required sitting on shelves doing nothing.

That's why CTT members, who only spend limited periods deployed in the field, do not receive the full allocation of personal load carrying equipment.

SKY'S THE LIMIT

● I was hoping to take four soldiers from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers to be part of the audience at Sky's *Soccer AM* show.

It is very pro-Forces, it's fun and wearing uniforms in front of the cameras would have, in my view, been appropriate. Yet, the chain of command will not allow this – can you tell me why? – **Lt Col (Retd) John Edwards.**

Brig Matthew Lowe, Director Personnel Operations (Army)

responds: Only the chain of command can give you the exact reason for their decision but it will stem from our policy in this area which is explained in Army general administrative instruction 59.

It specifies that uniform may be worn for travel when on duty and during the normal working week, not during leave when it might cause the Army's reputation to be damaged, manipulated or exploited by a third party.

There are times when it is to the Army's advantage for uniform to be on show in public but cases for dispensation have to be submitted in advance to your brigade or regional point of contact.

“WEARING THE UNIFORM IN FRONT OF THE CAMERAS WOULD HAVE BEEN APPROPRIATE”

'Why can't I use my local gym?'

I AM in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers serving at Tidworth but I live in Bulford.

I recently visited the gym that's run by The Royal Anglian Regiment and The Rifles, which is located close to where I live, but was told I'm not allowed to use this facility because I'm not serving with those units.

Are there any Army regulations on this subject?

Tidworth is 12 miles from my home and it would be really useful if I could use the gym in Bulford in the evenings and weekends. – **LCpl I Jaiteh, REME.**

Maj Lucy Close, Chief of Staff, Tidworth, Netheravon and Bulford garrison, replies:

There are regulations in this area and if you've been told you can't use the gym full stop then that's incorrect.

Garrison gyms have lead units assigned to them and they are responsible for operating and

maintaining the facility.

Their members will have priority during peak hours but everyone should be aware that gyms are there to be used and enjoyed by all garrison troops.

Personnel must, however, be inducted and have a valid identification card.

You should, therefore, raise this issue with your chain of command to engage with the lead unit concerned and we will also contact the formations concerned to remind them of Service policy.



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Mali medal malady

I WAS recently on Op Newcombe, the European Union training mission in Mali, and after six months received the Common Security and Defence Policy Service Medal with a European Union Training Mission in Mali clasp.

I've had a look on the internet and noticed this award is in the order of wear. However, I have not had any response from my chain of command when I asked them if I can display it on my uniform.

Any information on this would be greatly appreciated. – **Cpl David Pepper, R Irish.**

Brig Matthew Lowe, Director Personnel Operations (Army), responds: You may not have heard anything back yet because an announcement on this subject is expected later this year from the MoD's operational review board.

They make judgements on medal recognition for missions such as Op Newcombe based on the risk and rigour involved – and they must also obtain the Queen's official approval.

I'm afraid until that recognition is granted the decoration cannot be worn on your uniform.

Outlook is bleak

WITH ever-increasing demand on Army personnel to spend more time behind computer screens, writing reports and answering emails, will the MoD's version of Microsoft programmes such as Outlook ever be updated?

The software has been modernised numerous times over the years in order to make it more user-friendly and intuitive to handle but when will we see the benefit of these upgrades? – **Name and address supplied.**

Sarah Sheppard, Information Systems and Services, Policy Secretariat, replies: There is a programme being implemented now to update Windows XP to Windows 7 (Office 2010) in the UK and overseas.

It should be finished by February 2016 and there's a lot of effort being made to finish it sooner, so hopefully you will quickly benefit from this upgrade.

You can find out more about this on DII by searching for "Tech Refresh Win7 Schedule".

Upgrading software is always a challenge as we

have to find solutions that are suitable, reliable and secure for more than 200,000 DII customers.

Not only that, but there are technical constraints due to scale and change-over issues caused by applications requiring a certain platform and dependence on existing Microsoft versions.

But we are always looking at ways of adopting new technologies and are committed to supporting Defence ICT Strategy 2013, which aims to supply a more efficient information platform in the future.

This should mean that we will not have to wait as long for Windows 8 or Office 2013 as we have for the current uplift.



A COMMANDER'S VIEW ON FRONT-LINE FEMALES

● I READ with some interest your *Final Word* column in May's issue.

It's worth noting that none of the personnel who were asked about women serving in front-line units were from the formations that would be affected.

As an infantry soldier and commander I believe it would have a hugely negative impact on the cohesiveness of the fighting platoon.

Mostly, this would be due to the male mentality – his inability to see a female suffer, his wish to impress her and his need to protect her.

"It's not the ladies' fault," I hear you bleeding hearts cry but in battle it's another dynamic and one a commander doesn't need.

There is also the genetic make-up of a woman to consider – her back

and hips are not designed to carry the magnitude of weights that burden the infanteer.

This is not the case for all but definitely the majority.

Haven't a few Servicewomen taken out lawsuits for injuries caused by having to march at a man's pace and then gone on to receive some substantial payouts?

Political correctness shouldn't take precedence here. It is my belief, as a commander who refused to take a female on patrol in Sangin due to the negative impact she had on our sister platoon's cohesiveness (through no fault of her own), that females will have a negative impact and will cause further complications on the battlefield. – **Name and address supplied.**



DIGITAL DOSSIER

This month's elite tweets

#OP HERRICK

@ShafiSharifi

Afghans support ANSF bc they dont want security ever to go back to warlords/TB. We all remember what it was like

@MajorPaulSmyth

Comedian Al Murray visited Camp Bastion – what a star

#D-DAY 70

@DDaystripes

Don't forget, you can show your recognition for #DDAY veterans by wearing stripes

@TGTandV

If it's in Normandy it's being painted...not always a great colour scheme but everything is gleaming for Normandy 70

#SOLDIERSPORT

@PamRelphMBE

Had a great day at the #armynavy rugby match! Well done to @armyrugbyunion! Great game and came home with a bit of a tan!

#INVICTUS GAMES

@InvictusLondon

Hope everyone will get behind #invictusgames. Great opportunity to support and thank the men and women who have given so much. Harry

@KevinSpacey

Best of luck to all for #invictusgames in support of wounded warriors

#DICKIN MEDAL

@Zoeimbimbo

RIP Lance Corporal Kenneth Rowe & Sasha – you have both had your bravery recognised now #PDSA

GOT A GRIPE?

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

@soldiermagazine



The way forward? Reserves who want to be Regular soldiers may have to train all over again

Regular to Reserve wrangle

“ I WAS TOLD I WOULD BE EXPECTED TO GO THROUGH THE WHOLE RECRUITING PROCESS AGAIN ”

If, as a serving Reserve corporal, I can be trusted to do my job as a section commander of soldiers on deployments such as Op Tosca, why do I have to start my application from scratch if I decide I want to join the Regular Army?

I made some enquiries about transferring recently and was told that if I were to apply I would be expected to go through the whole recruiting process again, including selection.

Yet, I have met my annual training requirements for the past three years and I'm currently serving in a Regular unit on a full-time Reserve service (home commitment) contract.

It's certainly off-putting and not in keeping with the "one Army" concept.

I know Regular personnel are urgently required in my particular trade so why is the Army spending money to recruit and train someone who is already a proven soldier all over again? – Name and address supplied.

Brig Ben Bathurst, Director Training (Army), replies: You need to seek advice on the transfer process from your chain of command in the first instance.

This is important because the system aims to place the right people in the right positions, having completed satisfactorily all appropriate training and education to meet the role and responsibility of the rank.

Our experience shows that the knowledge, skills, experience and employment preferences of those who transfer are rarely the same so each application and the necessary training needs are

considered on a case-by-case basis by the people who manage structures, employment groups, vacancies and development.

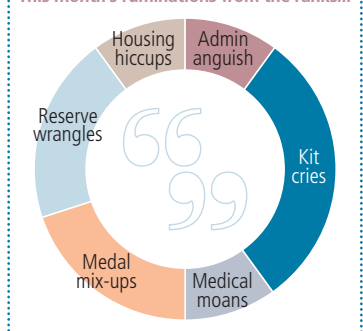
For example, any requirement to go through phase one would be determined by the appropriate directorate – and it would be unusual to have to attend this again where it could be demonstrated that level one military annual training tests had been completed successfully in each of the preceding six years.

The requirement to complete phase two and associated phase three career and trade development would be determined by the relevant capability director who would base any decision on factors such as technical advances within fields to ensure competence in your transfer rank and trade.

Your chain of command, together with capability directorate staff, are best placed to advise you on your next steps if you do decide to apply to join the Regulars.

SLICE OF SERVICE LIFE

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



Why BFPO is not delivering

“MAIL HAS TURNED UP LOOKING AS THOUGH IT'S BEEN SALVAGED FROM A TRAIN WRECK”

HAVE several complaints about the service that the British Forces Post Office (BFPO) provides.

I am serving in Kenya and to date over £150-worth of my mail has been lost even though some of it has been tracked and signed for at the BFPO sorting office.

I have been in contact with the organisation and they told me it was not liable and that I have to claim from the supplier, who as far as I'm concerned had clearly ensured that the mail had been received by BFPO.

A recent email from the service's headquarters said that "they may not check all the items that they have signed for if the driver is in a hurry".

What sort of system is it that shows such scant regard for a customer's personal possessions?

If I sign for something I check it and take care of it.

If BFPO employees are aware that they are not liable, or do not have to account for packages they sign for, then it opens the door for them to steal mail.

My other concern is the opening of parcels to check for prohibited items.

I do not have an issue if this needs to be done but so far no care has been taken to reseal the envelopes and boxes properly to prevent further damage or loss of items.

Some of my mail has turned up looking as though it has been salvaged from a train wreck, battered and held together with a few bits of old tape.

Until recently I thought that tracked and signed-for mail was safe in BFPO's hands but now I'm not so sure. – **WO2 Colin Judge, AAC.**

Lt Col Ian Stark, SO1 Policy and Strategy, HQ BFPO, responds:

There have been no discrepancy reports relating to missing mail from either our postal and courier detachment or the headquarters staff in Kenya.

If you have evidence that mail has gone missing or been tampered with then you need to formally report it in accordance



with advice provided by the BFPO's policy branch.

We operate a Department for Trade-regulated industry standard operation from a secure, modern and highly technical sorting office.

All mail is received, X-rayed and accounted for at varying stages of the sorting process and this includes bulk consignments accepted from all the accredited courier firms.

BFPO has numerous security safeguards in place, including cameras, security staff and a workforce mainly comprised of security-cleared MoD civil servants.

Mail is opened by our service if it contains items prohibited for movement by air and then only if there is no address for us to return to sender.

These parcels are opened and resealed carefully and duly marked to reflect this action.

They are always forwarded in a condition fit for movement and if mail is not arriving in that state this needs to be brought to our attention immediately as it could indicate interference by an illegal third party.

You have made no formal claims for compensation and while this process is straightforward for private mail there are additional complications relating to commercial items.

Goods purchased online constitute commercial mail and individuals enter into a contract with the retailer for delivery, not with BFPO.

Any discrepancies, including loss in transit, must be referred to the seller for replacement or refund.

If a retailer will not make good a loss then your next move should be to approach the credit card company as they provide safeguards for online purchases.

Only after this action, and if on subsequent investigation BFPO is found to be at fault, can we award a compensation sum.

CONTRACTOR'S MEDAL MIX-UP

I AM a former Infantry soldier, having served for 22 years, and I've been working as a Contractor on Deployed Operations (Condo) on Op Herrick for the past six-and-a-half years.

Like the troops serving here, we qualify for the Operational Service Medal and the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal.

I would be grateful if someone could give me a reason why Condo workers are omitted from the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal criteria yet are

eligible for both the service medals in recognition of their endeavours.

Some of us have deployed for six or seven years and we work at front-line bases while certain support troops and clerks stay within the relative safety of Camp Bastion.

I feel we deserve more recognition. – **Name and address supplied.**

Brig Matthew Lowe, Director Personnel Operations (Army), responds: Operational and Jubilee medals are quite different things.

To be eligible for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal you had to be in effective paid military

service on February 6, 2012 and have completed 1,826 days (five years) of service.

I'm afraid that civilian support staff along with retired officers and even military support function personnel are excluded from this criteria.





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“Those who cannot afford
it simply go without”

TALKBACK

Why my dental bill sticks in my throat

“I'M STILL
WAITING
FOR A
DECISION
SOME
MONTHS
LATER”

ARE Reservists who injure themselves while out on official military adventure training serials entitled to dental health support?

Early this year I sustained an injury on an exercise in France, where I was working as an instructor.

I am on full-time Reserve service (home commitment) and my injury required NHS dental treatment back in the UK that resulted in me having to fork out £214.

An enquiry to see if I could be reimbursed was sent from my pay department up the chain of command but I'm still waiting for a decision some months later.

Can you tell me if I, or any other Reservists, in this predicament are entitled to have our costs met?

Your advice would be greatly appreciated. – **Capt Ian Richardson, RAMC.**

Surgeon Cdr Robert Leyshon, SO1 Clinical Ops (Dental), HQ Defence

Primary Healthcare, responds: Feel free to get in contact with me if you need more advice but for now I would refer you to JSP 770, chapter 4, paragraph 1.4.07.

This states that Reserves who are undertaking officially sanctioned military activity, be it sporting, adventurous training or military drills, are entitled to medical support at public expense up to the point where they are fit to be discharged to the care of their own GP in the home base.

Following the appropriate rehabilitative treatment the subsequent long-term maintenance care becomes your responsibility.

To ensure comprehensive management and convenient access, it may be appropriate for you to be treated by your civilian general dental practitioner at the MoD's expense.

To reclaim your NHS dental charge on JPA you need to provide your administration unit with a



summary of the accident report to prove the incident happened and that it occurred while on duty, a description of the treatment undertaken by the civilian general dental practitioner and, of course, a copy of the bill.

IN THE DARK ABOUT WHITE GOODS



● I AM currently serving with 150 Provost Company in Catterick and in our accommodation we pay for washing and drying facilities through our mess bills.

However, in JSP 315 there is a chapter on white goods that clearly states that a washing machine and tumble dryer are to be provided along with a refrigerator and the necessary plumbing for units occupied by six people.

Each one of our dwellings has at least that number of personnel yet we must pay for the washing machines and dryers we have access to. Those who cannot afford it simply go without.

As we are in a pay-as-you-dine unit with no such facilities it's imperative we are provided with sufficient white goods so can anybody explain why we have to pay for them? – **Name and address supplied.**

Alan Kay, Mechanical and Electrical Manager, DIO Service Delivery Team, Catterick, responds: We are very sorry to learn of the issues you and your colleagues are experiencing.

The conditions from JSP 315 that you mention in your letter are from a revision that was applied in 2012.

The accommodation used by your unit was built before white goods were added to this entitlement so I'm afraid to say this benefit does not apply in your case.

But these utilities can be supplied to you if a significant refurbishment of the accommodation takes place – and this has been requested by your unit. Once the refit is underway we hope the funding will be found to provide them as part of your upgrade.

APPOINTMENTS

Brig Angus Fay to be appointed **Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Logistic Operations)** in the rank of major general in succession to AVM Graham Howard in November.

CAREERS

Cross Deck, a specialist military recruitment company, uses a digital job centre to match skills with opportunities in the private and public sectors. Supporting the Career Transition Partnership, their database has more than 12,000 jobs available. For more information visit www.cross-deck.co.uk

Living and Working in Wiltshire and Swindon Transition Fair on July 3 from 1000 to 1500 at Tidworth Leisure Centre, Nadder Road, Tidworth SP9 7QN. Advice on education, employment, health, housing and welfare. For further information visit www.army.mod.uk/transition

Living and Working in London Transition Fair on September 18 from 1000 to 1300 at Barking Learning Centre, Barking IG11 7LU. This event is open to all serving and former Service personnel and their families. For further information contact londist-so2transition@mod.uk

The Armed For IT Careers programme provides a one-stop shop for ex-military personnel looking to launch a career in IT, helping them find training, resettlement funding and qualifications. For more information visit www.armedforitcareers.org

Transition Force uses a combination of technology and events to provide personalised career support for ex-Service personnel nationwide. To register visit <http://events.transitionforce.com>

HighGround is a charity providing land-based skills to serving and ex-Service personnel, helping them move into civilian life. For details visit www.highground-uk.org

COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: Peter Fisher, Winchester, Hampshire; Maj Stuart Steele, Tamworth, Staffordshire.

Secret Life of Walter Mitty DVD: Dawn Haggerty, Bielefeld, BFPO 39; Natalie Walker, Gutersloh, BFPO 47; Chris Gillespie, Exeter, Devon; Ian Birtle, Norton, Worcestershire.

UK breaks:

Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel and Country Club: WO1 Chris Wright, DEMSS Kineton, Warwickshire.

Newquay Activity Centre: WO2 Robert Millar, Land Warfare Centre, Wiltshire.

Mar Hall: LCpl Thomas Dutton, Colchester, Essex.

Trenthorn Manor: OCdt Jade Haron, Chigwell, Essex.

DIARY

June 10-13: Army Officers' Golf Society summer meeting at Hillside and Formby Golf Clubs. Individual competitions will take place on June 10-11, with team events on June 12-13. June 9 is designated as a practice round at either venue. For details visit www.aogs.co.uk

June 21: The Royal Army Medical Corps Association north Midlands branch will be hosting a families day and formal dinner for members of 202 Field Hospital on their return from Afghanistan at the Army Reserve Centre, Cobridge Road, Stoke-on-Trent. For more information call 01782 551093.

June 23-28: Aldershot Military Festival 2014. A series of events taking place within Aldershot garrison, culminating with an open day on June 28. For further details visit www.armyshow.co.uk

June 24: Forces Pension Society briefs at 1130 and 1300 in the Ramillies Lecture Theatre, Army HQ, Andover. Providing an update on developments regarding Service pensions.

BULLET POINTS

June 25-26: DVD 2014, Millbrook. For those involved in equipment and support for the UK's land forces, an opportunity to meet industry providers. More than 160 companies will attend. Register online at www.theevent.co.uk

June 28: LGBT Pride in London parade. Authority has been granted for serving Regular and Reserve personnel to represent the Army as a uniformed contingent. For further details, including how to register, read ABN 41/14 and 2014DIN01-072 or visit armylgbt.org.uk

June 28-29: Bike Bath 2014. Marked rides of 20, 60 and 100 miles. All Armed Forces personnel are invited to take part in the event. For further details visit www.bikebath.co.uk

June 28: Armed Forces Day 2014. Details of various events at www.armedforcesday.org.uk

June 28: Unveiling and dedication of the **Watchet Somerset commemorative centenary memorial** on the Esplanade from 1030. For more information visit www.watchetremembranceproject.co.uk

June 29: SSAFA Fun Run, Aldershot. A ten-kilometre run, SSAFA mile and children's fun run around the sports stadium. Registration closes on June 20. For more information email isc_aldershot@ssafa.org.uk

July 26-27: Trailwalker Gurkha Challenge. Take on the Gurkhas in this epic 100km endurance challenge across the South Downs National Park. For more details visit www.oxfam.org.uk/trailwalker

DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

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

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

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

Armed Forces Muslim Association: Chaplain 0207 414 3252; www.afma.org.uk

Army Families Federation: 01264 382324; mil.94391.2324@aff.org.uk

Army LGBT Forum: www.armylgbt.org.uk; chair@armylgbt.org.uk

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

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

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

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

Career Transition Partnership: 0207 4696 661

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

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

Family Escort Service: 0207 463 9249

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

Forces Pension Society: 0207 820 9988

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

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

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

National Ex-Services Association: www.nesa.org.uk

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

Poppyscotland: 0131 557 2782; www.poppyscotland.org.uk

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

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion: www.britishlegion.org.uk; 0808 802 8080

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

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

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: 0808 1914 218 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

SSAFA: 0845 1300 975; www.ssafo.org.uk

Stoll: (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation) 0207 385 2110; info@stoll.org.uk; www.stoll.org.uk

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

The Poppy Factory: 020 8940 3305 www.poppyfactory.org

The Royal Star & Garter Homes: 020 8481 7676 www.starandgarter.org

uk4u Thanks!: 01798 812081; www.uk4u.org



INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 51/14 Concessionary tickets for Hampshire Cricket Club 2014

ABN 50/14 Basic close combat instructors' course

ABN 49/14 Changes to discipline and administrative action

ABN 48/14 Literacy and numeracy policy for integrated Force 2014

ABN 47/14 Access to resettlement for medical discharges under PAP10

ABN 46/14 Deployed welfare package entitlement for British Army Training Unit Suffield temporary duty staff

ABN 45/14 Equality and diversity adviser conference, June 11, 2014

ABN 44/14 RUSI land warfare conference 2014

DIN 2014DIN01-105: Uniform to work day, June 25, 2014

DIN 2014DIN01-103: Joining the Army Reserve: a process guide for individuals with previous Army service (including details of incentives available)

DIN 2014DIN01-102: MoD Armed Forces support to The Prince's Trust TEAM programme: appeal for short-term volunteer leaders

DIN 2014DIN01-101: Late Entry commission in the Corps of Royal Engineers

DIN 2014DIN01-099: Status of sports in the Services

DIN 2014DIN01-098: Support available for staff facing legal proceedings

DIN 2014DIN01-097: Lead first pilot scheme

DIN 2014DIN01-096: Army Medical Services professionally qualified officer bursary scheme

DIN 2014DIN01-095: Army Medical Services professionally qualified officer new terms of service

DIN 2014DIN01-093: Forces additional needs and disability forum

DIN 2014DIN01-092: General medical practitioner associate trainer pay

DIN 2014DIN01-090: Guidance to commanding officers when dealing with an

allegation of a sexual offence

DIN 2014DIN01-089: Dental treatment rates overseas

DIN 2014DIN01-088: Revision of maximum figure for car import duty

DIN 2014DIN01-087: Staff specifically recruited for overseas service – annual uplift to monthly accommodation charges

DIN 2014DIN01-086: Revised mess and single accommodation charges for MoD civilians temporarily residing in Service messes in the UK

DIN 2014DIN01-085: Implementation of changes to Army appraisal reporting for Reserves

DIN 2014DIN01-084: Potential parachute jumping instructor officers' familiarisation visit

DIN 2014DIN01-083: Late entry commission in the Army Medical Services

DIN 2014DIN01-082: Healthcare provision for British Forces in British Army Training Unit Suffield – directory of local health services and medical screening advice

DIN 2014DIN01-081: Service accommodation – four-tier grading boards of officers

DIN 2014DIN01-078: The Gill Sword Award

DIN 2014DIN01-077: Tranche 4 Army redundancy appeals (to be issued in June 2014)

DIN 2014DIN01-076: Selection process and service with Pathfinders, 16 Air Assault Brigade's advance force

DIN 2014DIN01-075: Future officer structure policy update – age restrictions for RMAS entry (Int Corps)

DIN 2014DIN01-073: Advance command and staff course

DIN 2014DIN01-072: Defence representation at LGBT Pride in London parade 2014

DIN 2014DIN03-013: Road movement clearance process for all visiting forces in the UK

DIN 2014DIN03-012: Scalable CBRN reach-back advice to UK MoD: for deploying and deployed formations

DIN 2014DIN03-011: JSP 510 *Parts One and Two International Defence Training*: publication of version five

DIN 2014DIN03-009: Diplomatic clearance requirements for foreign state aircraft in the USA

DIN 2014DIN03-008: Defence culture and language policy

DIN 2014DIN04-087: Defence Equipment Support transfer of battery management functions and change of contact details

DIN 2014DIN04-086: Portable radiation detection and monitoring equipment operating information

DIN 2014DIN04-085: Installed radiation detection and monitoring equipment operating information

DIN 2014DIN04-084: Declaration of obsolete – laying and recovery equipment, class 30

DIN 2014DIN04-083: Amendments to operational medical modules contents (April–May 2014)

DIN 2014DIN04-082: Obsolete secure communications cabins for reuse or disposal

DIN 2014DIN04-081: Respiratory PPE equipment

DIN 2014DIN04-080: The inventory management operating centre requirements change process and requirements change form

DIN 2014DIN04-079: Extension to shelf life expiry date of guided missile HE K130A4 high velocity missile and guided missile HE K130A5 HVM

DIN 2014DIN04-077: Amendments to operational medical modules contents (Apr 2014)

DIN 2014DIN04-076: Declaration of ALC obsolete equipment

DIN 2014DIN04-075: Declaration of ALC obsolete equipment

DIN 2014DIN04-074: Declaration of ALC obsolete equipment

DIN 2014DIN04-073: Minister (DEST) Acquisition Awards 2014 – calling notice for nominations

DIN 2014DIN04-072: Potential interruption of supply affecting the following DMCs: AN117F, FBFP, PIHP, PRC152, Y2SBMN, Z99BSS, Z1, Z42, Y1, Y2TELE, Y3, Z1BOW, Z42BOW, Z99BOW, PRR, EZPRR

DIN 2014DIN04-070: Declaration of obsolete of towed mechanical sweeper collector

DIN 2014DIN04-069: Required information on movements documentation

DIN 2014DIN04-068: Demand policy for aircrew boots

DIN 2014DIN04-067: Introduction of intrepid once only survival special measure size suits into multipack containers

DIN 2014DIN04-066: Declaration: out of service – defile marker. DMC X4 9905997446125 / 9905997446126

DIN 2014DIN04-065: Release of new C17-A DAP 101B-6900-11B and C130J DAP 101B-0704/0705-11B

DIN 2014DIN04-064: Movement support services enabling contract for the provision of an unscheduled road haulage service for the collection and delivery of palletised materiel within the UK (including Northern Ireland) and EU member states

DIN 2014DIN04-063: Declaration of obsolete for image intensifying and optics

DIN 2014DIN04-062: Equipment tables, scales and schedule

DIN 2014DIN04-061: MoD Sanctuary Awards 2014 – calling notice for nominations

DIN 2014DIN04-060: Re-classification of the rocket hand fired series

DIN 2014DIN04-059: Airworthiness and other domain implications of adhesive tapes and sealants contract, agreed firm schedule items

DIN 2014DIN04-058: Sea Survival Equipment Log, block amendment 78

DIN 2014DIN04-055: Defence Equipment and Support change of programme name from Soldier System Programmes to Soldier, Training and Special Programmes as of April 1, 2014

DIN 2014DIN04-054: Obsolescence of radar altimeter Mk7b (ARI) 23172 managed by air commodities team

DIN 2014DIN04-053: Declaration of obsolete – medical, dental and veterinary equipment

DIN 2014DIN05-017: Revised communication working practice for aeromedical evacuation update

DIN 2014DIN05-016: Defence primary healthcare reaches full operating capability

DIN 2014DIN05-015: Information services and systems and chief information officer organisations transfer into Joint Forces Command

DIN 2014DIN05-014: Roll-out of the cryptographic operational distribution electronic system release 2B

DIN 2014DIN05-013: The closure of Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit Peterborough

DIN 2014DIN05-012: JSP 441 *The Defence Records Management Policy and Procedures*: publication of version 4.3

Continued on page 62

DIN 2014DIN06-005: Revised JSP 520 *Safety and Environmental Management of Ordnance, Munitions and Explosives over the Equipment Acquisition Cycle*

DIN 2014DIN06-004: Resubordination of Range Safety Inspection Team (Army) to Defence Safety and Environmental Authority

DIN 2014DIN07-090: Defence operational individual pre-deployment training

DIN 2014DIN07-089: Army Education Services support to soldiers to schools

DIN 2014DIN07-088: Officers' petroleum course 2015

DIN 2014DIN07-087: Exercise Channel Challenge

DIN 2014DIN07-086: Phase one training of Army Reserve musicians and military annual training tests standards for Army Reserve musicians

DIN 2014DIN07-085: Army operational shooting policy, volume one, personal weapons – 2014 rewrite implementation plan

DIN 2014DIN07-083: Military annual training tests and workplace induction programmes policy update

DIN 2014DIN07-082: 2014/15 Defence cyber practitioner courses

DIN 2014DIN07-081: Physical training policy for Army Reserve and full-time Reserve service

DIN 2014DIN07-080: Information management courses for September 2014 – July 2015 at the Defence Academy College of Management and Technology, Shrivenham

DIN 2014DIN07-079: Exercise Transglobe 2015/16

DIN 2014DIN07-078: Government security classification policy: training implementation guidance

DIN 2014DIN07-077: Joint Equality and Diversity Training Centre: equality and

diversity training 2014/15

DIN 2014DIN07-076: Qualified weapons instructor intelligence surveillance reconnaissance course

DIN 2014DIN07-075: Organisation of international events for volunteer Reserve Forces

DIN 2014DIN07-073: Volunteering for duties with the Defence Cultural Specialist Unit

DIN 2014DIN07-072: *Officer Career Development Handbook: A Guide to Comprehensive Training and Education*

DIN 2014DIN07-071: Joint Service Parachute Centre (Weston) parachuting course schedule 2014/15

DIN 2014DIN07-069: Regular officer military knowledge programme – revised policy

DIN 2014DIN07-068: Army Inter-Unit Orienteering Championships 2014

DIN 2014DIN08-004: Net additional costs of military operations in Afghanistan standing instruction (version two)

DIN 2014DIN10-035: Army Football Association – affiliation and cup competitions

DIN 2014DIN10-034: Army ITF Taekwondo Club

DIN 2014DIN10-033: Army ITF Taekwondo squad selections, May 12-16, 2014

DIN 2014DIN10-032: Army level golf events organised by the AGA in 2014

DIB29/14: Launch of new 'means of identifying and developing internal talent' scheme and recruitment 2014

DIB28/14: Armed Forces Day 2014: national event programme finalised

DIB27/14: PUS writes to staff on ensuring PARs are successfully uploaded by April 30

DIB26/14: Public consultation on draft scheme legislation for the Armed Forces pension scheme 2015



REUNION

144 Parachute Medical Squadron past and present dinner will be held on June 21 at SHQ, 2 Priory Road, Hornsey N8 7QT. For further information contact W02 Tom Lock on 07866 165847 or via tomalock@hotmail.com

521 Specialist Team, Royal Engineers well drillers will celebrate their 50th anniversary on June 27-28 in Chilwell. This ticket-only event is open to all serving and former personnel. For details contact Sgt Chris Fuery on 0115 957 2857

Arboretum Old Boys Association 75C reunion on July 5 at the Travelodge, Basingstoke Road, Reading, followed by a photo call at the Old Gates on July 6 at 1200. For details visit Facebook page 75C Army Apprentice College Arboretum

Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association. The annual veterans day will take place at ATR(W) Sir John Moore Barracks, Winchester on July 12. Attendance is open to all past and present riflemen and their partners. For more information contact Roy Stanger on 01962 887916

7th Intake AAC ACC 40th anniversary reunion dinner on August 2 in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. Any permanent staff serving at the AAC at the time are also invited to attend. For further details contact Stephen Carroll at stephencarroll441@btinternet.com

The Somme Platoon recruits 1978 will be holding a reunion in the sergeants' mess, Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Strensall on August 30 from 1930. Early arrivals to meet in the Six Bells pub from 1400. For more information contact Philip Elwell on 01904 668233

No. 871

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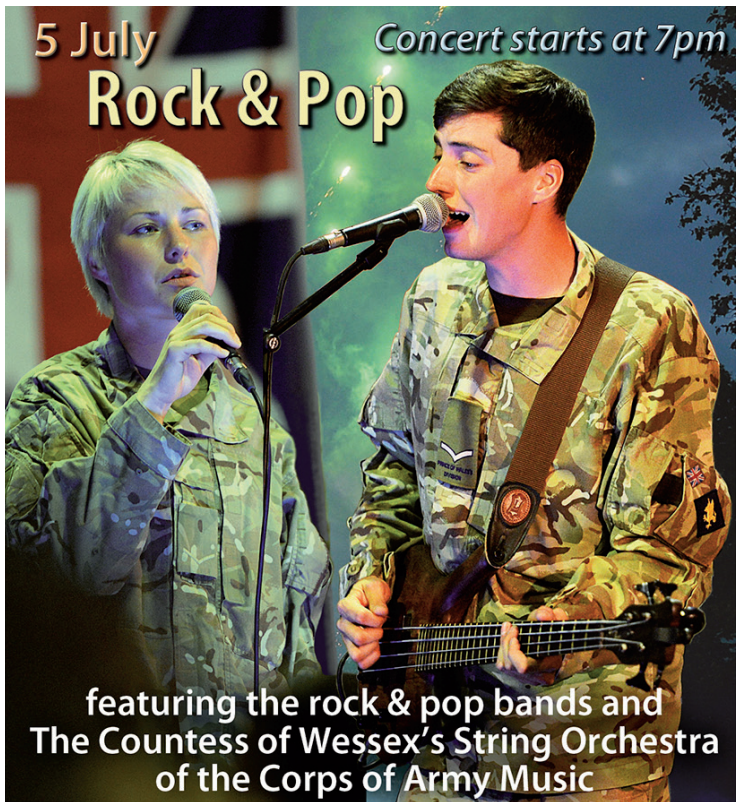


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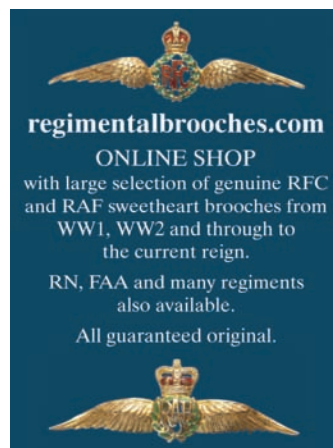
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REVIEWS



RED-HOT RELEASES

JUNE'S JEWELS

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MOVIES

PICK OF THE MONTH:
LONE SURVIVOR

PERILOUS ASSAULT

TRUE TALE OF COVERT AFGHANISTAN
MISSION PACKS ON-SCREEN PUNCH

Review: Joe Clapson

BASED on the literary bestseller of the same name, *Lone Survivor* tells the incredible true story of four US Navy SEALs on a covert operation to either capture or kill a notorious Taliban leader.

Set in the unforgiving mountains of Afghanistan, the movie's title does prove to be something of a spoiler but otherwise this is a remarkable piece of filmmaking that brings to life both the moral dilemmas and fierceness of modern warfare.

In 2005 the memoir's author, Marcus Luttrell, played on screen by Mark Wahlberg, set out on a perilous assault and soon faced the decision of having to kill, detain or release a group of Afghan mountain herders.

However, if released there was little doubt that the locals would inform their insurgent masters of the Americans' whereabouts.

Describing the process of working alongside Luttrell and other members of the elite unit to create an authentic film, Wahlberg said: "It was different from any other experience I have had in my entire life and certainly my professional career.

"I immediately felt an enormous amount of pressure but then my instinct kicked in and I started feeling a great sense of pride that I could be part of something that was so special and important and make a tribute not only to Marcus and his team but to the Afghan people who risked their lives to save them and others who still live in these conditions."

Ensuring the film accurately reflected Luttrell's story was vital for the American actor.

"We had to get it right," added the star of *The Fighter* and *Ted*.

"There is no failing when it comes to this: there are too many people depending on you, too many people with really high expectations and they deserve to be portrayed accurately, considering what they went through and what they lost.

"We just said to them 'guys, if you see anything that is remotely false, just snatch us by the neck and show us how to do it right'."

Starring alongside Wahlberg as the other members of the special operations force are Taylor Kitsch, Emile Hirsch and Ben Foster, working under the direction of Peter Berg (*Battleship*, *Friday Night Lights*), who clearly revelled in portraying the powerful comradeship formed by men under extreme pressure.

The movie took five years to get into production after Berg built a strong relationship with Luttrell, observed SEALs on operations and even visited the families of the fallen soldiers depicted in the story.

"All that time spent together ended with Marcus on the set lending his support, with the SEALs he asked to be a part of our film being there to help us too," revealed Berg.

"That was something that took time and when it finally happened it was invaluable."

Such attention to detail is clear in the finished product and audiences will feel every injurious bump as the troops struggle for survival on the treacherous mountainside.

As an action-packed, realistic military movie, this title has triumphed.

"Everybody was so committed to making it as good as possible," added Wahlberg.

"People usually have their own agenda but that wasn't the case with this." ■

VERDICT: The research pays. This title successfully brings to screen the realities of war ★★★★★



DELIVERY MAN out June 9

WHEN the Temazepam fails, you'd be well advised to keep this 102-minute cinema atrocity on your bedstand. If the clumsy and predictable attempts at humour don't see you drift off, **Vince Vaughn's** listless performance may well do. The story centres on a delivery driver who discovers he has fathered more than 500 children through sperm donation. But frankly this one's more of a floater than a swimmer.

Sarah Goldthorpe, *Soldier*

VERDICT: The PR says "outrageously funny". Half right, at least ★★★★★



GINGA out now

THIS Brazilian documentary captures the flare and style of football that the country is globally famous for through the stories of five aspiring locals. One of the film's subjects is a man with one leg whose football skills astounded me. In fact, the natural ability of each of the stars is breathtaking. With the World Cup now in sight this topical film should be part of the build-up for fans.

Cpl Adam Jackson, *Para*

VERDICT: A great World Cup warm up for football aficionados ★★★★★



THE LADY ASSASSIN out now

THIS is not the low-budget martial arts fodder viewers might expect. With striking females taking the lead roles, the movie has a decent plot and plenty of action to keep things moving. In short, the owner of a small hotel armed with a team of lethal waitresses routinely slaughters the corrupt officials and businessmen who visit. It is understandable why this is one of the biggest ever hits at the Vietnam box office.

Joe Clapson, *Soldier*

VERDICT: A good start point in the genre of martial arts films ★★★★★



SPARKS out now

ALTHOUGH an indie production, *Sparks* garners the spirit of classic *Pulp* heroes through and through. It follows a young boy who, after an accident, develops superhuman strength. He teams up with fellow hero Lady Heavenly to defeat an evil killer. The film is shot in the same vein as *Sin City* but is not as visually stunning due to its low budget. The plot becomes overly complicated in the middle but regains itself at the end.

Capt Damian Hern, (AGC (SPS))

VERDICT: A decent throwback to the *Pulp* heroes of yesteryear ★★★★★



SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK out now

IT is too dark to be a full on chick-flick but a welcome dose of humour does lighten the mood of this film. Pat (**Bradley Cooper**) has been released from a mental institution to the care of his parents. However, his dad (**Robert De Niro**) is equally troubled so Pat's plans to patch up his marriage are flawed. A date with widow Tiffany (**Jennifer Lawrence**) challenges the protagonist as he realises others have problems too.

Maj Neil Johnson, *AAC*

VERDICT: Save this "couples' movie" for at least your second date ★★★★★



WIN... CRIMSON FIELD

THE flagship BBC drama commissioned to mark 100 years since the start of the First World War has been released on DVD and Blu-ray. *Crimson Field*, a six-part series, tells the story of the Great War's front-line medics and their personal tragedies as they care for wounded troops. *Soldier* has teamed up with RLJ Entertainment to offer copies of the DVD to five lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning tell us who wrote the series. Send your answers to the usual address or alternatively by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Closing date: June 30

MUSIC



PICK OF THE MONTH:
ANTONY RAINE

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE

FORMER SOLDIER LIVES THE
DREAM IN NEW CAREER

Interview: Richard Long

WHEN soldiers finally call time on their Army careers they are often left with the daunting prospect of what to do next in the vast world of civvy street.

But for Antony Raine there was no such dilemma and having completed six years' service he headed straight to the studio to pursue his musical dream.

The singer-songwriter, a former captain in the Queen's Royal Lancers, released debut EP *Farewell to Arms* late last year and having seen the record feature prominently in the iTunes charts he is looking to build on his initial success.

Follow-up effort *Blood and Treasure* is now available to download and the 30-year-old hopes his "British Americana" sound will strike the right note in what is a highly competitive market.

"My tracks are not very commercial – they are rather niche," he told *Soldier*.

"They hark back to the days of storytelling and draw on various social issues; I'm really proud of the music and the lyrical form.

"This EP looks at a wide range of things, including my own experience of not being afraid to follow a dream.

"There is a track about London that asks how there can be so much disparity between people living in the same city, while another looks at foreign policy and the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan.

"It does not say that the war was necessarily wrong but it asks questions of those in power."

Raine revealed that pushing his songs into the mainstream has been challenging but his efforts have started to pay off.

He has become a regular fixture on the London music scene, playing at venues such as The Barfly and St Pancras Old Church, while also receiving airtime on BBC Radio 6.

"It has been great fun, although it has taken a while to get the material out there," the ex-Serviceman added.

"I have worked with a lot of different musicians on this record and I'm really pleased with the outcome – there is nothing I would change.

"Joining the Army was what I always wanted to do but when I picked up a guitar later in life I soon found out that music was a talent I never knew I had.

"I then decided to have a real go at it while I was still young and had no responsibilities – it has been my full-time focus for the last year or so."

Raine believes his time in uniform offered the ideal preparation for his new career path in what was an unlikely crossover between the two worlds.

He added: "As a soldier you adapt to things quickly and find ways round different problems. There hasn't been a lot of help out there and I have had to work independently.

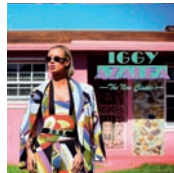
"This is one of the most challenging things I could have done after leaving the Army but it has been a real adventure and that is what life is all about." ■

● *Blood and Treasure* is now available via iTunes and other download sites

The New Classic by Iggy Azalea

IGGY Azalea

apparently came to the mainstream following an underground smash hit last year. I wish this album stayed underground because it is beyond boring and disappointing. Even with the help of pop princess pretender **Rita Ora** on *Black Widow*, this release gets nowhere near the hype. It is neither groundbreaking nor unique and is no different to anything else you can expect to find on the plethora of satellite television music channels. If you value your spare time stay well clear.



LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

VERDICT: Less new classic and more pressing-the-off-button ★★☆☆

Cursing The Sea by September Girls

UNFORTUNATELY, this album isn't strong enough to be described as amazing. Before listening for the first time I did some research on the **September Girls** and discovered they received good press for their earlier EPs. However, these songs do not reach such highs and the lyrics are too soft, which makes them difficult to hear. *Cursing The Sea* is the outstanding track and while this offering does not possess much in the way of hit-single qualities, the rawness and lo-fi feel will appeal to many.



Cpl Nick Reader, Rifles

VERDICT: An enjoyable listen from start to finish ★★☆☆

Embrace by Embrace

IF you like **Embrace** then you will probably appreciate this latest offering from the Yorkshire-based five-piece. However, as a newcomer to the band I struggled to find much positive about it. It is best described as "not bad", which is hardly ringing praise. The sole qualification for achieving this status is that it is inoffensive and reasonably melodic but if it was played in the background you would be unlikely to notice it or remember anything about the tracks once they had finished.



Maj Euan Mathieson, Yorks

VERDICT: An unremarkably average self-titled offering ★★☆☆

Live 1976-1998: Tonight's the Night

IF you're a **Rod Stewart** fan you're

going to want this album in your collection. The four-disc package contains 58 live tunes – all of which are previously unreleased and include material from a fine solo career, his time with **The Faces** and some outstanding covers. Smash hits such as *Maggie May* and *Some Guys Have All The Luck* feature prominently and the quality of each track is spot on, which just adds to the overall listening experience. At times it is hard to believe these are live songs.

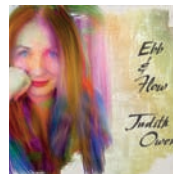


Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

VERDICT: An absolute must-have for any Rod Stewart fan ★★★★★

Ebb and Flow by Judith Owen

EVEN though **Judith Owen** has been on the American music scene for many years, this is the first UK release from the Welsh singer. I found her music to be very dated as she sticks to a folk vibe with a slightly jazzy twist. Two of the tracks are based on tragic personal experiences, with *You're Not Here Anymore* focusing on her mother's suicide and *I Would Give Anything* charting the more recent loss of her father. She also sings a laidback version of **Mungo Jerry's** *In The Summertime* – which is ideal to relax to.



Julie Jessup, civvy

VERDICT: Perfect music for a sleepy Sunday afternoon ★★★★★

May Death Never Stop You

THIS CD and DVD pack is the 12-year anniversary album from **My Chemical Romance**. It has everything the over-emotional among us could wish for, celebrating the diversity and genius of **Gerard Way's** songwriting on classics such as *Teenagers* and *Welcome to the Black Parade*. The painful truth played out in *Cancer* will wrench the heart strings but the dark theatrics of tracks like *Mama* and *Blood* ensure you are smiling in the end. You can't deny that this band has something for everyone.



Matt Walpole, ex-PWRR

VERDICT: A celebration of commercial material and emo roots ★★★★★

BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:
AN ENGLISHMAN AT WAR

NORTH AFRICA TO NORMANDY

SON REFLECTS ON HIS FATHER'S
REMARKABLE WARTIME DIARY



An Englishman at War is available now,
priced £25



Interview: Becky Clark

LIKE many of the 132,715 Allied troops who came ashore in Normandy 70 years ago this month, Sherwood Ranger Stanley Christopherson kept a journal.

His account of June 6, 1944 and the weeks of heavy fighting that followed provides a startling record of ordinary men caught up in extraordinary events.

But what makes Christopherson's story even more remarkable than other contemporary diaries is not so much what happened on D-Day but what came before and after.

Published for the first time under the title *An Englishman at War*, his memoirs chart the incredible tale of a man who was at the sharp end of fighting in almost every campaign on the Western Front, from North Africa to Europe.

Between 1939 and 1945, Christopherson would play a role in all 30 of his regiment's battle honours, rising from junior subaltern to commanding officer and collecting a Distinguished Service Order, two Military Crosses, an American Silver Star and four Mentions in Dispatches along the way.

"It's a story that needed to be told and I'm thrilled to see it published," said Stanley's son David, whose chance meeting with historian James Holland led to the book's release.

"Like most men of that generation my dad didn't really discuss the war and I never read the diaries while he was alive so I never knew the extent of what he had achieved.

"When James saw the journal he got excited because he could see it was an illustration of the British Army's transformation over the course of the Second World War into a highly professional killing machine.

"The Sherwood Rangers went from a traditional cavalry regiment with horses and swords to being in tanks, fully-versed in the sophistication of modern warfare and to see all that through the eyes of one man I believe is genuinely unique."

Throughout the book, Stanley's uncomplaining, upbeat narration is in sharp contrast to the struggles he and his men endured during six long years of conflict.

"These guys had extraordinary camaraderie, bravery and esprit de corps when you consider the extreme casualty rate," explained David.

"After D-Day they were involved in very heavy fighting for almost 50 days and the life expectancy of a tank commander was about a week-and-a-half.

"That juxtaposition of humour and good cheer in the face of the most appalling adversity is very striking."

When Stanley passed away in 1990 the family was inundated with tributes from those who had served with him.

Reflecting on what his father would have made of the book's publication, David said: "I think he would have been very proud that the Sherwood Rangers are getting the recognition they deserve.

"He was extremely modest. In the diary he fails to mention any of his many decorations but he was passionate about the achievements of his troops.

"We enjoy so much today that is down to this remarkable group of men and it's important that people understand what they did." ■

D-Day Hero

by Mike Morgan

A MODEST man who achieved unwelcome notoriety as the only individual to win a Victoria Cross during the D-Day landings, Stan Hollis has been described as the greatest British soldier of the Second World War. This book takes a detailed look at his life and military career. Twice recommended for the highest decoration, his leadership and individual bravery saved many lives. Worth a read to know more about a remarkable Serviceman who shunned the label of hero.



Mike Peters, ex-AAC

VERDICT: Hero is an overused term but aptly describes this man ★★★★★

D-Day

by Stuart Robertson and Dale Booth

IF you are thinking of touring the D-Day beaches then this is a great wee book to take along with you. It covers all the landing sites starting from Utah to Sword, as well as the drop zones from Sainte Mere Eglise to Merville. Brought together superbly by two experienced battlefield guides, the title features individual soldiers' stories, illustrations, maps aplenty and advice on how much time to spend on each site.



Andy Kay, ex-RS

VERDICT: Worthwhile even if you aren't visiting the battlefields ★★★★★

The Longest Day

by Cornelius Ryan

ORIGINALLY released in 1959, this weighty tome has been reprinted as a glossy D-Day 70th anniversary edition, complete with 30 removable documents and a CD of previously unheard interviews. Many will be familiar with the film of the same name but not the book upon which it was based. This glossy, coffee table-style offering will introduce a new generation to Cornelius Ryan's work, as well as making an impressive, if pricey, addition to any military historian's collection.



SSgt Mike Owens, RE

VERDICT: Beautifully presented and packed with new material ★★★★★

The Manner of Men

by Stuart Tootal

PUBLISHED in paperback to coincide with the 70th anniversary of D-Day, this is the story of the assault on the Merville Gun Battery. Supplemented with first-hand accounts, the book offers an unequivocal account of the raid and subsequent actions, as well as an insight into German defences. The narrative focuses on 9 Para but does not lose the wider context of Operation Overlord. If you have any interest in military history this is a must – I'll be reading it more than once.



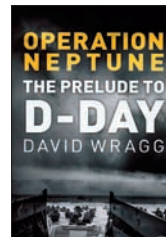
Cpl Adam Jackson, Para

VERDICT: A fascinating story – couldn't be any less than five stars ★★★★★

Operation Neptune

by David Wragg

THE scale and complexity of the Normandy landings remains impressive even today. This book looks at the painstaking and meticulous planning of this vast, high-risk amphibious operation, the use of innovative technology and the very effective utilisation of deception to maintain the advantage of surprise. If you want a well thought out and easy-to-understand overview of Operation Neptune then look no further.



Mike Peters, ex-AAC

VERDICT: A comprehensive and easy-to-follow account ★★★★★



Win... A set of D-Day books

TO mark this month's 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings *Soldier* has teamed up with Casemate UK to give away a collection of six recent D-Day titles. To be in with a chance of winning tell us the names of the five landing beaches where troops came ashore in 1944. Send your answers on a postcard to the usual address or alternatively by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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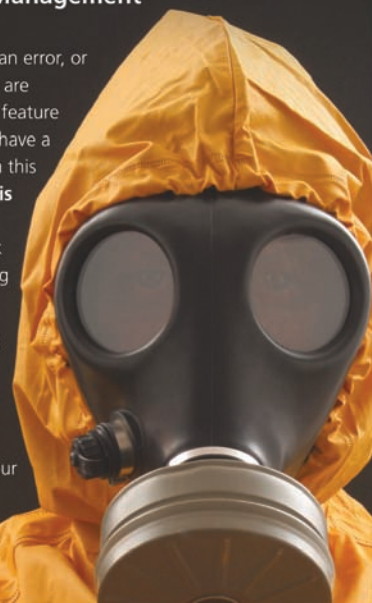
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SOLDIER SPORT

EDITED BY RICHARD LONG PICTURES BY GRAEME MAIN AND STEVE DOCK

History makers: Fighters from 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment won the Army Team Boxing Championship for the first time with a 7-2 victory against 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland. Read more about their success on page 83...





Pictures: Gareth Davies

Twinkle toes: Man-of-the-match Pte Jack Prasad (Scots) dances through the Royal Navy defence during the Army's 30-17 victory at Twickenham

REDS REPEL NAVAL THREAT



ARMY 30 - NAVY 17

**Babcock Trophy match
Twickenham Stadium, London**

Army: Dixon; Speight; Hiscock; Wessels; Rokoduguni; Prasad; Chennell; Reeves; Dwyer; Budgen; Ball; Jones; Lennox; Mundy; Jope
Subs: Austin; Titchard-Jones; Koroiyadi; Nayacavou; Read; Nacamavuto; Tamatawale
Tries: Budgen; Lennox; Rokoduguni
Conversions: Dixon (3)
Penalties: Dixon (3)

Navy: Humphrey; Fleckney; Tichias; Sleeman; Myers; Huntley; Pascoe; Mason; Priddey; Terry; Harvey; Cormack; Fairbrother; Taylor; Evans
Subs: Collins; Owen; Cowley; Laird; Vakalutukali; Stephen; Davies; Welling; Pascoe; Beasley
Tries: Priddey (3)
Conversions: Pascoe

A STORMING second-half fightback saw the Army continue their triumphant run against the Royal Navy as they secured yet another **Inter-Services** crown at the home of English rugby.

A sell-out crowd at Twickenham Stadium witnessed a below-par performance from the Reds in the early stages but an injection of urgency after the break saw them cruise to a comfortable 30-17 winning margin.

The sun-drenched encounter mirrored the pattern of last year's match as the Senior Service made a blistering start to the showpiece fixture.

Skipper CPOAET Dave Pascoe missed a first-minute penalty and his waywardness with the boot prompted a swift change in tactics.

Fly half Mne Nathan Huntley broke through the Army's rearguard moments later and when the resulting phases of play produced a further penalty the challengers shunned the chance to kick for goal.

And the decision reaped maximum dividends as the line-out option created a platform for the Navy pack to surge

forward and hooker LA (AH) Ben Priddey bundled his way to the line.

Pascoe converted the extras and the defending champions were dealt a further blow as scrum half Cpl Tom Chennell (REME) was sent to the sin bin for a misdemeanour at the breakdown.

However, their rivals failed to capitalise on their numerical advantage and with

the Army forwards flexing their muscles up front veteran prop LCpl Chris Budgen (R Welsh, pictured left) touched down from a yard out.

Spr James Dixon (RE) confidently dispatched the conversion to square the contest but the parity between the sides did not last long.

With the Navy oozing confidence a further penalty was kicked to touch and the powerhouse pack again worked their magic as Priddey

crashed home from the line-out.

Dixon missed a relatively easy kick on the half-hour mark as the Army continued to struggle, with basic errors disrupting their flow. They also saw danger man LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) shackled by a well-drilled defence.



Picture: Roger Thompson



Points machine: Flying winger LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) outpaces the Senior Service defence on his way to scoring the Reds' third try

Half-time brought some welcome respite for the soldiers and they returned to the field as a transformed team – with mercurial fly half Pte Jack Prasad (Scots) at the heart of the action.

Dixon found his range with the boot to reduce the arrears minutes after the restart before a devastating break from LCpl Ledua Jope (RE) sparked a second Army try.

With winger LBdr Sam Speight (RA) in support the ball was quickly shifted across the field, where Capt Rob Lennox (Scots) was on hand to score in the corner.

Dixon slotted a superb conversion from wide on the left and the champions threatened further points via the superb running of their backs.

LCpl Gerhard Wessels (RE) scythed through the Navy lines to find Speight out

wide but the speedster was forced into touch, while Prasad and replacement centre LCpl Peceli Nacamavuto (RE) looked dangerous every time they had the ball in hand.

Dixon maintained his fine form from the tee to extend the lead and the teenager turned provider moments later when he found Rokoduguni on the outside with a pass that saw the winger ghost home from the half-way line.

The devastating 20-minute burst effectively sealed the Senior Service's fate but Priddey had the last laugh as yet another forward drive saw him complete his hat-trick late on.

Dixon excelled on his Twickenham debut and Prasad deservedly took the man-of-the-match award following another near-perfect display. ■



15

POINTS KICKED BY FULLBACK SPR JAMES DIXON (RE) ON HIS TWICKENHAM DEBUT. THE TEENAGER ALSO HAD A HAND IN THE ARMY'S DECISIVE THIRD TRY AGAINST THE NAVY

THE TALK OF TWICKENHAM...



LSGT MATT DWYER

"All credit to the Navy. They pushed us really hard and we needed to consolidate at the break. After that we hit our straps and were unstoppable at times," said the Army skipper.



SSGT AXEL REES

"We tried a bit too hard in the first-half to produce a performance worthy of an 80,000-strong crowd. We played to the plan in the second period and gave a match-winning team effort," the coach noted.



LA (AH) BEN PRIDDEY

"Our forwards have been great all season and we cannot ask for much more. We need to keep building and hope this pack can carry on for a good few years to come," the Navy's hat-trick hero explained.

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TIGERS ROAR TO TITLE WIN

Army Team Boxing Championship

2 PWRR 7 – 2 Scots 2

FIGHTERS from 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment made history in the ring by winning the **Army Team Boxing Championship** for the first time.

The Woolwich-based soldiers outgunned their rivals from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland to triumph 7-2 in the competition's grand finale as their pace and power proved too hot to handle.

Pte Mitchell Popman set the tone in the opening bout as he met the challenge posed by Fus Jordan Painter. After two strong rounds the featherweight prospect landed a barrage of blows to force a standing count and seal the victory.

But the Tigers were given a swift reminder of their opponents' talents as Cpl Tom Burton made an electrifying start against Pte Brett Felix. The Scots star used his height and reach advantage to great effect throughout – with the jab proving particularly effective – and come the final bell he had done enough to claim the win.

The setback spurred the champions elect on and LCpl John Ratcliffe (pictured) produced the performance of the night to down Fus Brett Cruickshank. A brutal assault in the last round left his rival dazed and after claiming a standing count he finished the job with a flurry of punches that led to a technical knockout.

Pte Bill Farrimond spectacularly built on the momentum and his intensity and accuracy of shots were too much for Fus Rob Thomson as he matched the outcome from the previous fight to give the Tigers a 3-1 lead at the interval.

A walkover victory for Cpl Terry Ratcliffe strengthened their hand and Pte Danny Bannister gave the team an unassailable lead as he defeated LCpl Euan McAvoy.

Light heavyweight Cpl Andy Hornbuckle continued the winning run as his reach advantage and quick feet saw him triumph against Cpl Alan Wilson before Fus Ed Davies narrowed the deficit in his cruiserweight clash with Pte Leigh Paine.

But 2 PWRR had the last laugh as Pte Zac McKinney edged a bruising heavyweight encounter with LCpl Lati Latianara – much to the delight of the

squad's travelling support.

Speaking after the final bell, Tigers coach SSgt Tony Richardson told *SoldierSport* lifting the trophy offered maximum reward for eight months of relentless hard work.

He added: "We lost to 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in the semi-finals last year and our commanding officer was impressed with what he saw.

"We have had 12 guys in full-time training since September and after winning our first bout we have gone from strength to strength.

"As a team we have never been to the final so this is history for The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

"I didn't want to make a prediction but I knew we had guys who could score points. They are at a level where they can go for six minutes without any dramas and I'm delighted to win 7-2 – it could not have gone any better." ■

**"I KNEW
WE HAD
GUYS WHO
COULD
SCORE
POINTS"**



INFANTRY SHINE IN CORPS FINAL



Inter-Corps Twenty20 Championship final

Royal Artillery 115-9 Infantry 116-2

AN unbeaten half century from Capt Storm Green and a three-wicket burst from Rfn Ronald De Freitas laid the foundations for a commanding win for the Infantry in the final of cricket's **Inter-Corps Twenty20 Championship**.

Having overpowered the Royal Logistic Corps in the semi-finals the challengers were in confident mood as they locked horns with defending champions the Royal Artillery and a ruthless performance with the ball set the tone for a dominant display.

A tight opening over from Rfn Alex Ollerinshaw restricted the gunners to a handful of singles and with De Freitas maintaining the stranglehold at the other end the first wicket soon arrived as Gnr Graham Wiseman perished for just four runs.

His dismissal brought Army ace LBdr Sherwin Govender to the crease and he went about repairing the damage alongside Sgt Adam Cooksey. The left-hander struck a flurry of boundaries and his partner looked set to join the party before being bowled by Ollerinshaw to reduce the total to 28-2.

Their struggles continued throughout the opening half of the innings and when Govender holed out off the bowling of Pte Greg Barton for 27 any hopes of setting an imposing total were lost.

The middle and lower order was blown away with little resistance as the champions slipped from 57-3 to 85-9 and it was left to Gnr Matthew Ward and LBdr Mishak Belfon to take the score to 115-9. De Freitas recorded figures of 3-11 from four overs, with Barton (2-20) playing a superb supporting role.

Green signalled his side's intent with the bat by crashing the opening delivery in the run chase for four and the Infantry went on to reach their target with relative ease – despite having Fus Marlon Simon (pictured left) and Capt JP Palmer run out.

Fus Thilina Batangala upped the pace with an unbeaten 21 while Green eased to 54 not out as their victory was confirmed in the 16th over.

"I am absolutely elated," skipper Green told *SoldierSport* afterwards. "Our bowlers have been dominating the batting in every game and we could not have asked more of them. We have been outstanding in the field and our batters pulled it out of the bag when it really mattered. Everyone made a contribution and that was great to see." ■

**"OUR
BOWLERS
HAVE BEEN
DOMINATING
THE BATTING
IN EVERY
GAME"**

SKIPPER PRAISES TEAM EFFORT

WHILE assessing his own contribution to the cause, Army batsman Green also paid tribute to the efforts of others.

"I have been in horrendous nick recently," he said. "It was a scratchy knock but I knew I had to anchor the innings. De Freitas has performed like that against two or three teams and Greg Barton (pictured below), who leaves the Army this year, has been outstanding with bat and ball."





● THE all-conquering Army cricket team return to Lord's this month on a mission to retain their Inter-Services Twenty20 crown. Having recorded back-to-back wins over their rivals in 2013 the soldiers will be considered favourites for the showdown, which takes place on Tuesday, June 3. The iconic venue is hosting the military tournament for a fifth successive season and this year's extravaganza also features a women's match for the first time as the Combined Services face the Marylebone Cricket Club ladies on the Nursery Ground. The Royal Navy take on the Royal Air Force in the competition's opening fixture at 1000, with the Army taking to the middle for matches at 1315 and 1630. For tickets and more details visit www.interservicest20.co.uk



Taking the lead: Bdr Charles Chapman (RA) offers expert advice to judo players in Camp Bastion

JUDO THRIVES IN THEATRE

ARMY judo is looking to inject new talent into the ranks by hosting regular sessions for British and Estonian soldiers based at Camp Bastion.

The initiative is the brainchild of instructor Bdr Charles Chapman (RA), who believes the backdrop of a Helmand tour offers the perfect introduction to the martial art.

"For most people coming here judo is something they've always wanted to try but have never really had the chance," he told *SoldierSport*.

"Out in theatre there is not much to do in any spare time so they can come to us and train twice a week.

"Guys can go from novice to intermediate level very quickly; it's quite intense and there's a lot of one-on-one tuition involved."

With the Army team dominating Forces judo Chapman is hoping his efforts in

Afghanistan will see a stream of new players bolstering the Service squad.

By holding regular gradings in theatre he has been able to boost their progress and he has arranged for colleague Sgt Phil Devine (RLC) to take over as coach once his tour commitments are complete.

He added: "This is a stepping stone into the sport.

"We are looking to get more people coming through so we can grow judo from the bottom up.

"Hopefully we can feed them into the Army Championships to build strong novice and intermediate teams.

"The guys have come on very well. From knowing nothing some have been able to grade twice while out here.

"Post-operations this is going to be my main effort. I have my own club at home and I'm going to drag as many people into it as possible." ■



SQUAD STRIKES GOLD

THE Battle Back team secured the gold medal at the National Sitting Volleyball Championships in Kettering.

In a tense final match the Help for Heroes-funded outfit lost the opening two sets before rallying to win the next three and lift the trophy.

Skipper Corrie Mapp (pictured), a former lance corporal in the Household Cavalry who lost both legs in an IED blast in Afghanistan, said: "I feel privileged to play for such an inspirational team.

"We are all delighted with the result and we're pleased that all our hard work has paid off."

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Pride of the north: 1 Yorks defeated 17 P&M Regt to claim the men's inter-unit sevens trophy

STANNING SUFFERS BELGRADE SETBACK

OLYMPIC gold medallist Capt Heather Stanning (RA) has been forced to withdraw from this month's European Rowing Championships in Belgrade on medical grounds.

The 29-year-old was being considered for inclusion in the Great Britain squad having returned to the sport after a year of active duty with the Army, which included a tour of Afghanistan.

She resumed full-time training in November and in April won Team GB's senior team trials in the pairs alongside Helen Glover – her partner at London 2012.

However, in recent weeks she has shown signs of fatigue and a decision was made to withdraw her from the selection process and reduce her training load.

"I am clearly disappointed not to be travelling with the team to Belgrade and I wish everyone luck out there," the officer said.

"I am still training and will focus on the programme I've been set to regain intensity at the very top end of the percentages."

Performance director David Tanner added: "We have decided to take the pressure off, knock back her training and we think that will open the opportunity for a swift return to top form."

"We're sure that Heather will be back on song soon."

"WE'RE SURE THAT HEATHER WILL BE BACK ON SONG SOON"



SPARKLING SEVENS

Army Rugby Union Sevens

1 Yorks 14 – 17 P&M Regt 7

Royal Artillery 29 – AMS 0

THE curtain came down on a highly successful Army rugby union campaign at the traditional end-of-season sevens tournament in Aldershot.

Having battled their way through a day of gruelling action it was players from 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment who emerged victorious from a hard-fought final.

A try from LCpl Savenaca Diani gave 2011 champions 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps a half-time advantage but the challengers hit back with scores from Pte Rusiate Waqa and Pte Sikeli Rokovunicagi to seal a 14-7 win.

"We came here with a game plan and we knew what was expected of us," said team manager Maj Malcolm Birkett.

"But 17 Regiment need to be congratulated for how well they have played. They had a cracking start to the match and got the first points on the board so we had to change our tactics slightly to get the victory."

"The CO is fully committed to the cause. The recruits see we are not just an armoured infantry unit; we excel at sport as well."

The Royal Artillery capped a superb season on the pitch by winning the women's inter-corps competition.

Having already taken top honours in the sport's full code the gunners cruised to a 29-0 triumph over the Army Medical Services thanks to scores from Capt

Gemma Rowland, Gnr Jess McAuley (pictured), Gnr Jade Turner and LBdr Sophie Etheridge.

"Sevens is something we don't get much experience of," said skipper and player of the tournament Rowland.

"It is a completely different game."

"For the girls to come out fighting in every match was great to see."

"We have gone from being one of the lowest ranked teams to having five or six players in the Army squad; that shows how well we have developed as a side."

Two tries from LCpl Vuniani Cavuilati helped Germany-based 32 Engineer Regiment to a 17-14 win against 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland in the final of the men's plate competition. ■





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Skiers set for slope season

THE Combined Services Disabled Ski Team has welcomed a raft of newcomers to the snow as they prepare for another hectic season.

Since forming in 2007 the squad has enjoyed a prolonged run of success, the culmination of which saw former soldier Mick Brennan represent Team GB at the Winter Paralympics earlier this year.

With new recruits joining the ranks the organisation hopes to see more personnel being tested at the highest level but chairman Col Fred Hargreaves wants to expand the remit further.

"The main ethos remains competition and allowing people to be more active," he told *SoldierSport* during the newcomers' event at Hemel Hempstead's Snow Centre.

"But that is not the be all and end all. We want to make sure their lives are better for being part of the team.

"We also hope to make this more attractive for families and give opportunities to those who wish to come away with loved ones."

Darren Stephens, a former sergeant

in 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment, joined the team at last year's newcomers' session having been a keen skier since the age of nine.

He suffered blast injuries to his arm and leg while serving in Iraq and a return to the sport has helped his recovery.

"I did a bit of skiing during my time in the Army but operational commitments meant it was not as much as I would have liked," he explained.

"I wanted to get back into competitions but my main motivation is to instruct.

"It is an inspirational set-up with experienced staff. It is all about technique and adapting the way you ski. I had picked up a lot of bad habits but now I really notice the difference in myself.

"The team gives you a chance to get away with people who have been through similar situations and the freedom of being out on the snow is so relaxing."

Reservist Sgt Craig Gadd (RE, pictured) shares a similar background but having lost a leg in Afghanistan he thought he would never ski again.

He said: "I saw pictures of adaptive skiing while I was at Headley Court and the first opportunity I had to get back on the snow, I was there.

"It is a great environment. It gives guys the freedom and support they need and I now have the independence to go skiing with my family."

For more information on the team visit www.csdst.co.uk

"IT GIVES GUYS THE FREEDOM AND SUPPORT THEY NEED"



ARMY FESTIVAL OF FOOTBALL



● THE Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers triumphed in the inaugural Edwards Challenge Cup final at the end of a highly successful women's season.

A hat-trick from Cfn Bianca Ross (pictured) and a brace from Cfn Jemma Dinning saw the side beat the Army Medical Services 5-0.

The match pitched the winners of the Women's Corps Football League against the victors in the end of season tournament and is set to become a regular fixture on the calendar.



● A BRACE from man of the match LCpl Andy Roman fired defending champions 22 Signal Regiment to glory in the Army FA Cup final.

The midfielder's strikes helped the signallers to a 4-0 victory over 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment as they became the first team to retain the title since 28 Engineer Regiment did likewise at the turn of the century.

Sig Warren Scanlon and Cpl Jay Bates completed the scoring in the showpiece fixture.



● IT was a case of football history repeated last month as players from The Royal Regiment of Scotland and The Mercian Regiment took to the pitch to re-enact the inaugural Army FA Cup final of 1889.

The match formed the finale to the Army FA's 125th anniversary celebrations and, in the first-half, adhered to the full rules of the time.

Traditional attire was also used and the Scots matched their original triumph by running out 3-2 winners.



Making waves: The Army's outrigger canoe team is looking to attract new members before targeting the sport's premier race events in Hawaii

RIGGERS GET READY TO RACE

ARMY paddlers are looking to dominate the high seas in the latest discipline to be added to the Army Canoe Union's roster.

Outrigger canoeing sees six-man crews race on gruelling stretches of ocean in locations as far away as Hawaii and the fledgling team is hoping to join the party after taking to the water last year.

The River Thames may not seem like the backdrop for such adrenaline-fuelled adventures but it is proving to be the perfect training ground for the squad as they prepare for their debut event in France on June 21.

"THE CONDITIONS THERE SEPARATE THE MEN FROM THE BOYS"

With backing from the Royal Canoe Club in Teddington they have made rapid progress in recent months but further investment is needed to ensure the success continues.

"Because we are a new sport there is no real exposure and it is

hard to get funds," Sgt Steve

Potter (AGC [SPS]), the team's co-founder, told *SoldierSport*.

"We managed to get our paddles and membership fees paid for and we are now trying to get more people involved.

"We want to enter some competitions this year to see how the training is going.

"It is a different style of paddling and most of the races are done at sea. The big events are in Hawaii but we will be pushing ourselves in a 21-kilometre leg in the south of France this month."

Potter had little knowledge of the discipline prior to last year but he was able to draw on the experience of his teammates who stem from the South Pacific – a region where outrigger canoeing is one of the main sports.

"When I started it was a case of practice making perfect," he explained. "However, you can easily transfer skills. We have some guys from a kayaking background and having that skill set allows them to put strokes together.

"A complete novice can come down and over the course of a few sessions they will pick it up."

Sgt Tony Luciano (AGC [SPS]) was a regular on the water in his native country of Fiji prior to joining the Army and a posting to Knightsbridge allowed him to rekindle his love of the sport.

He then drafted a proposal letter to the Army Canoe Union and four months later things started to take shape.

"This is very popular in the South Pacific, it has a massive following," the co-founder said.

"We've had a promising start but the financial side is the challenge now. We have to prove ourselves so we can get this established.

"The aim is to compete in Hawaii with its 41-mile run and big waves.

"Training on the river is fine but the real test is at sea – the conditions there separate the men from the boys.

"Each individual plays a key role. It is almost like an elite Forces team – you have a point man, signaller and captain and they all have to work together."

For more information on how to get involved contact Sgt Luciano on military 94631 2858 or 0207 4142858. ■



CANOEING FACT FILE

- A variety of boat types exist but the six-man variant is most commonly used for racing
- Events range from sprints of around 500 metres to longer competitions – including marathons
- Paddlers sit in line facing towards the front of the canoe
- Each position has a specific role, with the person at the rear steering the boat. The first seat sets the pace while those in seats three and four are known as the powerhouses
- Outrigger canoe racing is the state sport of Hawaii and there are numerous clubs and competitions located around the world



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Picture: Sgt Russ Nolan, RLC

Pedal power: The Army Inter-Corps Road Race Series enjoyed a successful outing at Rock Barracks as 90 cyclists battled it out on the track

ROAD RACE LIFTS OFF

A FIELD of 90 riders descended on Rock Barracks in Woodbridge for the latest round of the **Army Inter-Corps Road Race Series**.

Having enjoyed a successful debut last year the event has continued to go from strength to strength and organisers welcomed experienced and novice cyclists to the circuit for the third leg in this season's competition.

LCpl Ian Cullen (RE) took top spot in the 24-mile men's elite contest in what is only his second year of competitive action.

"I am really proud to win the race," the 26-year-old said. "Events like this manage to be very competitive and very relaxed."

"You get to know fellow cyclists and everyone supports each other – until the racing starts."

"I came back from a tour of Afghanistan

in 2012 and decided to buy a bike to ride to work and it progressed from there. I put in about 15 hours of structured training a week and my unit is very flexible about giving me the time to race."

More than 500 riders took part in last year's series and corps are now developing their own teams with a view to feeding personnel into the Army set-up.

"After successive British winners of the Tour de France and the triumph of the Olympics cycling is on a real high and we're seeing the same surge of interest across the Service," said Capt Darren Clarke (REME), the Army Cycling Union's performance director.

"It's always been a strong sport but we're now getting more and more soldiers taking it seriously and turning up for these races." ■



● **LEADING** Argentine athlete Cpl Emmanuel Zapato took top honours in the men's competition at the Army's annual international modern pentathlon event at Sandhurst.

German Army sergeant Eva Trautman triumphed in the women's field before the Combined Services won the men's team event courtesy of Mne Lee Ormerod and Cambridge University officer cadet Archie Myrtle.

Other Army competitors included debutant Capt Sally Williams (RAMC, pictured), Lt Rob Willis (RE), Sgt Zoran Maric and Cpl Sammy Farish (both REME).

This is the third successive year the Army has hosted an international-class contest and Pentathlon GB has been fully supportive of the Service's efforts.

SPORT SHORTS



● **A THREE-goal** burst in extra time saw 71 Engineer Regiment emerge victorious in the final of the Army Reserve Challenge Cup in Aldershot.

The 4-1 win over Yorkshire OTR saw the team become the first Royal Engineer unit to lift the trophy since it was initially presented in 1921.

LCpl Robert Toal gave the sappers the lead with a first-half penalty and extra-time strikes from LCpl Marty O'Neill, Spr David Wright and Spr Ryan Cameron secured the cup.



● **MIXED** martial arts star Tpr Mahmood Besharate-Kererode (RY) suffered an agonising defeat in the final bout of his ring career.

The 36-year-old, who recently joined the Army Reserve, was cheered on by his colleagues from S Squadron but lost to Rany Saadeh in a televised fight at London's Copperbox Arena.

"Even though I didn't win, it's been a fantastic night," he said. "It's so good to have the lads come down to see me. It is great to go out on a high."



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Final word

We asked personnel deployed on the penultimate Herrick tour what they think are the Army's biggest achievements during the campaign in Afghanistan.



Gdsm Jon Hill (Coldm Gds)

When we're out on patrol in Kabul we see young boys and girls going to school. That would never have happened in the Taliban days and it is great to see the way the city has developed. It is a pretty vibrant place and the people are able to get on with a normal life.

Cpl Kyle Betteridge (REME)

I think it is the impact we have had on the locals. There are now less Taliban members around and it is harder for them to operate, which means there is a better quality of life. Education is a key thing and people are free to live their lives without fear.



Dmr Jason Pitman (Coldm Gds)

The biggest difference is the Afghan National Security Forces, which we have trained to a good standard. In Kabul there are checkpoints everywhere and they minimise the enemy threat. Also, being based at Camp Souter we have seen a lot of locals working at the site, which is a great way for them to find employment and support their families.



LCpl Dean Walker (REME)

I would say it is the Afghan National Army Officer Academy and the mentoring we have been doing. It has looked at things in a different way and has helped their soldiers move in the right direction. The reports we have been getting back from the Nato forces involved are very positive.



Cpl Waisake Natui (4 Scots)

We have made a real difference out here in winning the hearts and minds of the locals. They are now more friendly, especially the children. The elders keep their distance but the youngsters are keen to integrate with Isaf. The ANA are now in a good position to carry on that work.



Bdr Edward Toma (3 RHA)

I think the biggest success of the campaign is the way we have trained members of the Afghan National Army to become instructors to their own personnel. It allows them to carry on and teach themselves; it is a big achievement that gives us a chance to step back as they take control.



Lt Stuart Buchan (4 Scots)

The elections that have just been held are the main thing. The fact there were minimal issues shows we have provided credible security, with the ANSF now taking the lead. It proves we have built up their forces to the stage where they can do things independently.

LCpl Richard Perkins (Coldm Gds)

I was in Kabul in 2007 and on the first day of this tour I immediately saw a massive difference in the city. There is a lot of lighting, more infrastructure and the locals are onside. It is completely different to my previous deployment and great to see.



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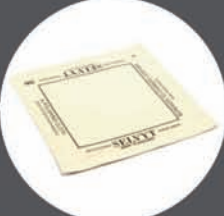
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