

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

Desert Rats deliver the peace

ALSO INSIDE:

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Sultan's salute

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ARMY

Cover picture

Oil watch: Pte Viliame Ratulevu of Burma Company, 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, on an anti-smuggling patrol west of Az Zubayr in southern Iraq.

The patrol was protecting the "crown jewels" in the area – a strategic pumping station critical to the flow of oil to Umm Qasr and Baghdad for export.

More stories on Operation Telic, beginning with the Banker of Basra, start on Page 17.

Meanwhile, 19 Mechanized Brigade is preparing to relieve the Desert Rats of 7 Armoured Brigade in Basra (see Page 8) and British soldiers are about to move into a new type of tented accommodation at Umm Qasr (see Page 13).

Picture: Graeme Main



"And they've already had to go through his sheep dip." – Army's Welsh 'countryside alliance', Pages 4-5

In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine

Mission in Iraq

- 17** Banker of Basra gets the big money moving
- 18** Desert Rats in southern Iraq: who's doing what
- 21** Bridgers: 2 HQ Sqn RE; Fd Tp, 39 Armd Engr Sqn
- 23** Loggies' key role; RE in Baghdad; EOD on the run
- 25** PM tells troops: 'You won respect of the world'

- 27** War was 'life-changing experience' for Virgin DJ
- 28** Quick impact projects make a difference in Iraq



33 This is sheer Tor-ture

But teenagers love Army-led Dartmoor challenge

34 My Army: Uri Geller

It was him or me – so I fired

38 Brunei: Sultan's salute

Attractive posting for the lucky few

42 D-Day Dodgers' 60th

Forgotten heroes who fought the length of Italy



Top teamwork



IN March we reported that Capt Graeme Scott RE was making an impact in the world of sleddog racing. Now we can reveal that fiercely loyal lead dog Huckle, above left, and shy and retiring but hard-working Jenny, right, have produced ten new members for the team. They also teamed up to pull Graeme to victory in the UK. Full story in Page 49.

"The issue of body armour and plates was slow, with personnel being sent into battle without plates as not enough had been received. The issue of ammunition and weapons was also slow. We received our RGGS (rifle grenade general service) ammunition the day after we attacked Basra (six weeks after arriving in-theatre)." – Feedback from Light Infantry colour sergeant

Five pages of letters start on Page 72

PLUS

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 31 Money column | 64 Wish list |
| 37 Chip | 66 Book reviews |
| 46 Sport | 69 Top ten books |
| 53 Win £100 | 71 Soldier to soldier |
| 60 Info section | 72 Mail |
| 62 Diary | 78 Vox pop |

Hearts and minds on Welsh hills

160 (Wales) Brigade help Army to forge a stronger countryside alliance

Report Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

WALES has long been ingrained in the psyche of most British soldiers as a place of hard, arduous training.

For decades military commanders have relied on the remote terrain of the Brecon Beacons and the surrounding Welsh countryside to conduct escape and evasion exercises and hone troops' infantry skills.

However, in recent years rumblings of discontent from livestock farmers who have traditionally permitted the MoD use of their land, almost always at no cost, for military training, have echoed through the valleys.

Angered by the Government's meat purchasing policy, and in particular by the fact that the MoD buys some commodities of foreign rather than British produce, activists within the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Farmers Union of Wales (FUW) organised a series of protests encouraging Welsh farmers to deny British Forces the use of their land.

"It is still a highly contentious issue here in Wales," explained John Davis, who owns a 350-acre farm which adjoins Sennybridge military range and on which he keeps 120 cows and more than 1,000 ewes. "Many of my counterparts in the farming

industry are taking a very hard line that if Welsh farmers do not get fair play, then they will no longer allow the Army to exercise on their land.

"We see soldiers driving British-made Land Rovers and Bedford trucks, and flying British Harriers, so why isn't British meat on the menu?"

Although sympathetic to the complaints of the Welsh farmers, the MoD's hands are somewhat tied.

Its food supply contractor, 3663, is governed by Article 30 of the EU Treaty of Rome, which prohibits it from unfairly favouring British products and requires it to source the most competitive produce.

The comparatively high price of Welsh lamb, coupled with the finer intricacies of European law, means that little can be done by the MoD to appease the farmers.

However, staff at Headquarters 160 (Wales) Brigade have been making every effort to

restore parity and goodwill to the Welsh hills in a bid to prevent an abrupt end to military access to the region.

Brig Robert Aitken, Commander HQ 160 (Wales) Brigade, told *Soldier*: "It became clear to me that the MoD meat purchasing policy, for sound economic reasons, was having a significant impact on the Army's ability to generate the right levels of operational capabilities.

"By sticking to the open competition rules we are running the risk of denying our dismounted infantry the opportunity to train in arduous, high altitude and remote conditions," he said.

"There is a strong military tradition throughout Wales and consequently the Army enjoys a lot of goodwill here, but I am more than aware that that could be lost overnight.

"Therefore, we have made it a matter of policy for all units based in Wales to, wherever possible, buy local produce. We have also been actively encouraging our Sergeants' and Officers' Mess staff to shop at the local butchers for dinner nights. Soldiers living out of barracks are also encouraged to buy, and be seen



It's good to talk: Brig Robert Aitken, left, Commander 160 (W) Bde, gets to the heart of the matter with livestock farmer John Davis

buying, Welsh meat for their families."

A drop in the ocean? Not according to a recent survey conducted by the brigade, which revealed that, thanks to

the localised policy, British soldiers and MoD civilians posted in Wales are spending more than £400,000 on Welsh lamb and beef each year.

The Cambrian Patrol, which is acknowledged as the most demanding exercise of its kind in Nato and attracts military teams from across the globe, is a good measure of the success of the initiative.

"When it came to organising the Cambrian Patrol two years ago we had big problems with one in three farmers refusing to let us use their land," explained Brig Aitken. "Last year there was only a small smattering of land owners not willing to help us, but this year we have been granted complete clearance with not a single farmer denying us access.

"I truly believe that what we are doing here on the ground is having a positive impact, and that the farmers know that we are doing everything we can to

help resolve this issue," said Brig Aitken.

Championing the brigade's efforts to renew the Army's countryside alliance with their rural neighbours, John Davis said: "We are really pleased to see that the

soldiers are making an effort to buy British.

"Our gripe is with the government, not them. There has never been a problem between the soldier and the farmer, as soldiers largely have no say as to whether they are fed

British, Brazilian or Argentinian beef.

"Everyone in Wales always supports our boys 100 per cent when they are sanctioned to go somewhere," he said. "Ahead of the Gulf War I personally lobbied for the dispute with the Ministry of Defence to be put right to the back of the agenda and full access to land was given.

"If the MoD asked if it could use my land tomorrow, I'd let it, but one day it will need to realise that there is no such thing as a free lunch."

The meat of the issue - what you're eating...

● FOOD for the armed forces is purchased from many countries throughout the world, but United Kingdom products are always sourced if they are competitive, they meet the relevant minimum specifications and the supply chain can be guaranteed.

● Currently 55 per cent of the armed forces' total consumption of beef is British.

● Lamb is sourced from New Zealand, Uruguay, Australia and the UK.

● 100 per cent of pork and bacon is British supplied.

● Chicken is sourced from France, Brazil and the UK.



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Tank transporter in M1 death crash

FOUR people died last month on the M1 in Leicestershire in an accident involving a low-loader transporting three armoured vehicles returning from Iraq. The incident caused gridlock on main roads through the Midlands.

Eyewitnesses claimed the civilian con-

tracted low-loader jack-knifed and smashed through the central barrier, scattering the military vehicles across the road. Even after emergency services had recovered the dead and injured and removed 11 vehicles, south- and north-bound lanes remained closed for many

hours for repairs. The vehicles, which belong to The Queen's Royal Lancers, were being returned from the military port at Marchwood, near Southampton, to their base at Catterick, North Yorkshire.

A motorist in another vehicle was later charged with a driving offence.



Pomp and circumstance: The Queen takes the salute during the march- and ride-past of troops who escorted her to Buckingham Palace after the Trooping the Colour parade to mark the Sovereign's official birthday. The Colour of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, presented by the Queen on May 26, 1992, was trooped on Horseguards. Picture: Mike Weston

Harry opts for military career

PRINCE Harry has set his sights on making a career in the British Army. He is to apply for a place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, St James's Palace has announced.

The Prince, who is third in line to the Throne, will be assessed by the Army. If he is successful, he is expected to join late next year. Speculation has linked him with the Welsh Guards.

Prince Harry, 18, recently completed his education at Eton and is to take a gap year. He was an enthusiastic member of the school's Combined Cadet Corps.

His father, the Prince of Wales, and uncle, the Duke of York, served in the Royal Navy. Prince Charles commanded a minesweeper while Prince Andrew's naval career included service as a heli-



Military: Princes Harry, left, and William at the Queen's Birthday Parade last month

copter pilot in the 1982 Falklands War. Prince Michael of Kent went to RMA Sandhurst in 1961 and commissioned into the 11th Hussars, and the Duke of Kent was there in 1955 before joining the Royal Scots Greys as a second lieutenant.

Girl killed as freak storm demolishes Army show

THE five-year-old daughter of a British soldier was killed during a freak accident at the annual JHQ International Show at Rheindahlen.

The show was immediately cancelled.

Isobel Callaghan's right arm became entangled in a rope when a sudden fierce storm ripped a helium balloon free of its seven moorings as the show's opening ceremony was finishing.

The balloon was found two hours later at Hamminkeln near Wesel, 65km north of JHQ. Isobel's body was nearby, the rope still wrapped around her arm.

Her father, Cpl Robert Callaghan, of 35 Engineer Regiment, his German wife Hannalore, and their four-year-old son Stuart were cared for by counsellors from the Royal Military Police.

The family took shelter in a tent as the storm hit the showground, but left it when the roof blew off. An anchor rope trailing from the balloon, which was being blown across the showground at high speed, appeared to entangle Isobel, snatching her from her mother's grasp.

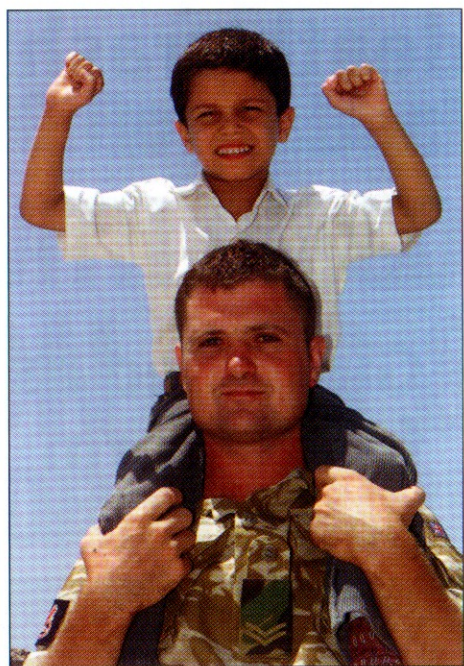
The Special Investigation Branch and the German Police are investigating and have appealed for witnesses.

Soldier dies at vehicle depot

CPL Thomas Rees, 33, serving with the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment based at Boulton Barracks, Catterick, died from injuries sustained in an accident while moving vehicles at a depot at Teesport.

The vehicles were being marshalled for deployment to Iraq under Op Telic 2. An investigation is being led by Cleveland Police.

Cpl Rees, who joined the Army in 1986, leaves a wife and two children.



My hero: Young Komel with Cpl Scot Larner

Scot's whiff of heroism goes down well in Basra

CPL Scot Larner is a celebrity on Basra's streets after saving a boy from drowning in a septic tank.

Scot, a sapper plumber serving with 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 32 Engineer Regiment, was checking water mains when he noticed a group of civilians panicking. The side of the drain had collapsed and seven-year-old Komel Kareem had fallen in.

"We lifted up the cover and spotted the boy's head pop up. I have a child myself and knew I had to do something. I lowered a strop from the vehicle 3m into the sewer and slid down. I managed to pull the kid out alive after three attempts."

When Scot got back to the Black Watch to clean off the chef wasn't happy with him in the kitchen area so some local people took him to their house, washed him down and gave him an old tracksuit to wear.

WO2 Nick Heaton said: "It was an act of heroism and the squadron is tremendously proud of him. It's as well he had an excuse to explain the dodgy 1970's style tracksuit."

Kareem's mother Saloa said: "I was very frightened, I thought I'd lost my son forever. Scotty saved Komel's life, he is a hero and I will never forget what he did. I will tell my son when he is a man that a British soldier rescued him."

"We thank the British Army because they came to help our people."

● Basra's banker – Page 17



Big moment: A new Standard for The Life Guards is unfurled before its consecration on Horse Guards Parade. The Queen, Colonel-in-Chief of the Household Cavalry, presented Standards and a Guidon – the equivalent of the Infantry's Colours – to the Life Guards and The Blues and Royals during a major ceremony involving troops on horseback, foot and in armoured reconnaissance vehicles. Among the troops on parade were soldiers recently returned from front-line action in southern Iraq.

Picture: Mike Weston

Mechanized brigade relieves Desert Rats

AS this issue went to press, the Desert Rats of 7 Armoured Brigade were preparing to hand over their area of responsibility in southern Iraq to 19 Mechanized Brigade.

Command of the British security and stabilisation operation switches from Germany-based HQ 1 (UK) Division to Bulford's HQ 3 (UK) Division on July 12.

Deployed with the headquarters are soldiers from 3 (UK) Div Signal Regiment. The new elements will complete

a six-month tour, based on the British HQ at Basra international airport.

Major elements of 19 Mech Bde, from Catterick, include the 1st Battalions of The King's Own Scottish Borderers, The King's Regiment and The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, and 40th Regiment RA. Two squadrons and the RHQ of The Light Dragoons from Swanton Morley will deploy with the brigade, as will 3 RMP from Bulford.

● Op Telic coverage begins on Page 17

Sappers support Congo force

A DETACHMENT of Royal Engineers based on 42 Field Squadron, part of 28 Engineer Regiment from Hameln, were preparing to deploy to the troubled northern Congo to support a European Union peacekeeping force. Hundreds of

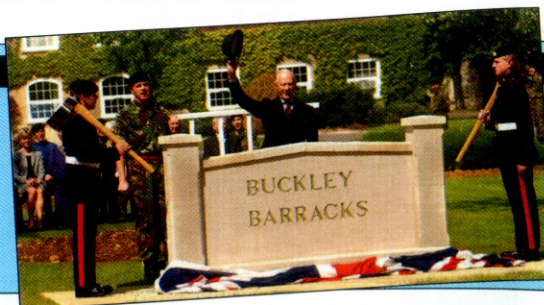
people have died in Bunia and the surrounding area, swamping UN troops stationed in the Ituri province.

France, which has already deployed troops to Bunia, will lead and provide the bulk of the force.

IN BRIEF

● A tri-Services recruiting bus appeared on the streets of London last month to advise potential recruits in areas of the capital which do not have permanent Armed Forces recruiting offices.

● After ten years in RAF Hullav-



July 2003 SOLDIER

At last, a clasp for veterans of Canal Zone

Suez personnel will have to apply for award – but not until eligibility criteria have been announced

SUEZ Canal Zone veterans are to receive a medal clasp following the Prime Minister's announcement that their service between 1951 and 1954 has been officially recognised.

An estimated 200,000 troops are thought to have served in the zone and more than 300 lost their lives to violence or accidents. Veterans believe 54 of the deaths were a direct result of terrorist attacks.

The clasp is the culmination of 40 years of campaigning by veterans to force the Government to acknowledge their active service in what was effectively a war zone.

Last July a sub-committee of the Honours and Decorations Committee, chaired by former Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Guthrie, was set up by the Government to reconsider the case.

Mr Blair has now accepted Lord Guthrie's recommendation that the Naval General Service Medal 1915-1962 and the General Service Medal 1918-62, with the clasp "Canal Zone", be awarded for service in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954.

Some, including National Servicemen, who never got a general service medal but who meet the criteria for the

clasp, will now receive the appropriate GSM and clasp.

It is understood that eligibility will require 90 days' service in the zone

YOU will need to be patient for a little longer: When eligibility criteria have been announced, Suez Canal Zone veterans and next-of-kin of those who have died will need to apply to the appropriate medal office. It will be some time before the issue of medals and clasps begins.

between October 16, 1951 and October 19, 1954, with lesser periods for those killed or wounded.

In April 1956 *Soldier* published a letter from a soldier making a case for a Canal Zone medal. In the years since, the magazine has given a platform to hundreds more voicing frustration, anger and disappointment at Government refusal to accept their case.

It is on record that Gen Sir Brian Robertson asked the War Office for a medal for troops in January 1952, by which time 33 Servicemen had been killed and 69 wounded. Campaigners believe it was vetoed by the Foreign Office to appease the Egyptians.

● Zoners' triumph – Page 73

'We will wear clasp with pride on Remembrance Day'

FORMER WO2 Charles Golder RE, who was active in the fight for a medal, said: "It's nice to know our efforts have been acknowledged and 40 years of campaigning is over. We will wear the clasp with pride on Remembrance Day and

remember our many colleagues who sadly didn't live to see it."

Soldier cartoonist Col Dickie Bird, 1 Loyals, who was in the zone at the beginning of the operation, said: "I'm glad that at last justice and honour have been

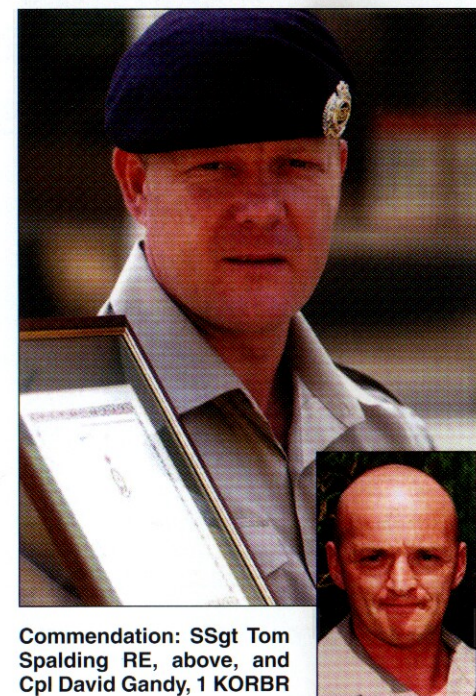
achieved, if a little late for some."

"I'm thrilled," said ex-Sgt Daniel McNeil REME, who was attached to The Royal Sussex Regiment and served in Egypt between 1949 and 1953. "We've waited long enough."

ington, 9 Supply Regiment RLC has changed the name of its Wiltshire base to Buckley Barracks, after Conductor John Buckley who was awarded the Victoria Cross during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Just before the supply specialists deployed to Iraq they marched out of Hullavington Barracks and back into Buckley Barracks.

● Soldiers from 20 Field Squadron, 36 Engineer Regiment who had recently returned from Iraq took part in a simulated row from Basra to Baghdad, a distance of 537km. The event was to raise funds for the Army Benevolent Fund and a local children's hospice. The squadron is based in Invicta Barracks, Kent.

Very commendable



Commendation: SSgt Tom Spalding RE, above, and Cpl David Gandy, 1 KORBR

Pictures: Cpls Pete Mobbs and Will Craig

Man brought back to life by sapper

TWO Cyprus-based soldiers have been awarded commendations for their actions in emergency situations.

SSgt Tom Spalding, a Royal Engineer serving with the Joint Service Signal Unit at Ayios Nikolaos, saved the life of a contractor who had been struck on the head by a rotating bar on a sewage farm at Dhekelia.

He found the man had stopped breathing and brought him round with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and cardiac compressions. The man later made a full recovery.

SSgt Spalding had been taught resuscitation techniques in the Army but had never before used them. His wife, Beverly, the Eastern Sovereign Base Area school nurse, was very impressed with his efforts.

Meanwhile, Cpl David Gandy, serving with Episkopi-based 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment as a company storeman, has received a commendation from Commander British Forces Cyprus for his part in containing aggressive demonstrations last summer against the building of antennae by British Forces at the Salt Lakes near RAF Akrotiri.

Then a lance corporal newly arrived on the island, Cpl Gandy took on responsibilities normally associated with a senior NCO and worked 18-hour days to establish a camp for 160 soldiers involved in the operation.

● Cyprus boat crew rescue surfer – Page 13

Assaulting the objective was the easy part ...

... reading orders and calculating the distance were the real challenges!

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Ill Gulf veteran wins appeal

THE High Court has dismissed an MoD appeal against a war pensions tribunal ruling that former Parachute Regiment medic Shaun Rusling is suffering from illness linked to service in the 1991 Gulf War.

The tribunal had upheld an appeal by Mr Rusling, a sergeant in the 1991 conflict, against the War Pensions Agency, which refused him a pension.

Of the High Court's original decision, the MoD issued a statement saying: "The judge found that the MoD discharged its obligations in respect of the identification and treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in the past, and we are committed to continue to do so in the future."

It said the MoD took very seriously the wellbeing of its personnel and continued to follow the latest medical guidance on diagnosis and treatment of PTSD.

"The MoD continues to monitor and raise awareness of PTSD and other stress-related disorders that may occur among Service personnel at any time," it said.

The MoD said it would not comment in detail on the latest ruling until it had studied the judgement, but it noted that it "does not find that Gulf War syndrome exists. The judge expresses no opinion on whether Gulf War syndrome exists."

Service home of the future goes on show in Germany



Nice kitchen: Gen Moore-Bick ticks off a Puma checklist. Soldiers and families are being asked to comment

A MODEL house which incorporates the many improvements to be made to family accommodation in Germany has opened at Herford.

The class B soldier's quarter, with two bedrooms, was unveiled by Maj Gen John Moore-Bick, GOC UKSC(G).

Under Project Puma – Programme to Upgrade and Modernise Accommodation – nearly €70,000 (about £50,000) was spent on upgrading the property to the quality of a show house on a new British estate.

The interior is light, bright and airy, with modern heating and light fittings and contrasting carpet colours. Old kitchen surfaces have been replaced by fitted units, with a fridge-freezer, new cooker and extraction fan, and a plumbed-in location for a dishwasher.

Other new features include a curved bath with shower attachment and fitted shower guard; wiring for TV and telephone in the main bedroom, which has an enormous built-in wardrobe; an insulated attic with easy access for storage; washing machine fittings and tumble-dryer vent in the cellar; plenty of power points; an outside tap for watering the garden; and mains-wired fire alarm systems with battery back-up.

Troops find weapon cache and hit crime

TROOPS from the 1st Battalion, The Highlanders moved in before dawn to cordon off a town near Banja Luka in Bosnia after weeks of intelligence-gathering had identified the probability of large caches of illegal weapons in the area.

Using back roads and farm tracks, 300 Sfor soldiers moved on the town to prevent anyone leaving. While B Company searched an area of several miles, Gurkhas on attachment to 1 Hldrs sealed off the town centre, taking a local crime ring by surprise.

The security paid off when the Gurkhas broke down a sealed door to expose box after box of

hunting rifles, pistols, signalling equipment and ammunition. There was also a quantity of explosives in dangerous condition.

With enough evidence of non-compliance with the Dayton Peace Accord to widen the search, the troops searched cellars and garages, in many cases digging up the floors of suspect rooms. The Gurkhas collected a vast haul of weapons and ammunition, with A Company accumulating nearly 15,000 rounds of ammunition, 30 guns, grenades and explosives by mid-afternoon. Elsewhere an anti-aircraft missile system was found.

Operations in the town are still going on.

Battle Axe heads north

THE **Battle Axe Company** – otherwise known as 74 Battery – has transferred its Multiple Launch Rocket System skills from Larkhill-based 32nd Regiment RA to the 39th Regiment RA in Newcastle. It paid farewell to the 32nd, of which it has been a part for 56 years, on the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Hook in Korea, during which the battery kept its guns in action for 24 hours.

Minimi to boost firepower

BRITISH infantry units are to get 2,472 5.56mm FN Herstal Minimi light machine-guns. The belt-fed weapon, which was issued to infantry units when they arrived in Kuwait before the coalition offensive against Iraq, quickly won the respect of British troops.

It will supplement the light support weapon, which is to remain in service.

Light Infantrymen on target

DHEKELIA-based 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry was top team at the Cyprus skill-at-arms meeting, which attracted 13 eight-man entries. Four 2 LI soldiers, Sgt Chris Kelly, Cpls David Warren and Michael Gibbons and LCpl Haddud, were selected to go to Bisley. Others to make the British Forces Cyprus team were Dm Maj Paul Keeble, 1 KORBR, and WO2 Beau Gambon, manager of Dhekelia ranges.



Under Big Ben

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

Medics' morale 'generally high', says minister

RESPONDING to a question on low morale among medical reservists mobilised in Iraq, Defence Minister Lord Bach told the House of Lords that personnel returning from the Gulf had indicated that morale was generally high.

He said senior officers in the Defence Medical Services had met returning reservists to thank them personally for their contribution and, if necessary, to explain decisions and listen to concerns.

Reports from theatre, he said, indicated that as future plans had now been clarified, and individuals knew their part in them and when they were to return to the UK, those still deployed were generally content.

(● See letters in Talkback pages)

Injured: Between February 14 and May 21,

1,241 UK Service personnel were evacuated from the Gulf as a result of injury, including non-battle injuries, or for other medical reasons, said the then Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie in a written answer.

Casualties were sent to the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham and to MoD hospital units at Frimley Park, Northallerton and Haslar.

AS90 performance: Early indications are that the Royal Artillery's AS90 fleet

deployed on Op Telic was very reliable and performed impressively. A report on lessons from the operation is expected to be published by the end of the year.

Lost air vehicles: Twenty-three Phoenix unmanned aerial vehicles were lost on Op Telic. In all, 29 have not been recovered since Phoenix entered service in May 1999.

Beefburgers: Beefburgers supplied to the Armed Forces are processed in Normandy, France. Currently, 55 per cent of the Services' annual consumption of beef is British.

Domestic violence: The MoD is to contribute to consultations on the Justice for All White Paper relating to domestic violence. Any changes to laws applying to incidents of domestic violence would apply equally to the Armed Forces. The MoD's latest guidance on reporting incidents within the Forces was published in a DCI on February 1, 2002 and is being incorporated into Service regulations.

New minister

Ivor Caplin, MP for Hove, has been appointed Defence Under Secretary and veterans minister.

His responsibilities include Armed Forces and MoD personnel issues, veterans' affairs, cadet and reserve forces, defence estates and the Defence Medical Services.

Mr Caplin replaces Dr Lewis Moonie.



Picture: Darren Setter, DLO Photographic Dept

Hurst Point delivers, ahead of schedule

AN Army lorry, left, is dwarfed by mv Hurst Point as it is driven on to the MoD's sixth and latest ro-ro ferry at the Sea Mounting Centre, formerly known as Marchwood military port.

The 20,000-tonne ferries, which provide Britain's Armed Forces with a state-of-the-art strategic sealift capability, are almost as big as an Invincible-class aircraft carrier. First task for the Hurst Point, which was delivered 20 months ahead of its target date, will be to deliver 19 Mechanized Brigade's vehicles and equipment to the Gulf, where the brigade begins a six-month tour of duty this month.

Under a Private Finance Initiative, the six ships will be used for commercial trading by AWSR Shipping Ltd when not required by the MoD.

Jungle Gurkhas set for Balkans

THE role of 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles as the British Army's fully-acclimatised operational reserve in the Far East is coming to an end.

During the three years it has been based in Brunei the military mantra of train hard, fight easy has been 1 RGR's objective. As a result, the Gurkhas have achieved high levels of fitness and stamina.

"In my opinion 1 RGR is probably the fittest infantry battalion in the Army today," said commanding officer Lt Col Craig Lawrence. "The nature of our job as the Army's deep jungle battalion is physically draining and hugely debilitating. The jungle isn't fun if you're not fit and we can't afford to carry anybody who finds operating in this environment too demanding."

"If your body is fighting the climate because you are unfit and unacclimatised and you are not hard enough to actually do the job, you won't even begin to be able to fight the enemy if we deploy on a jungle operation."

"There is nothing mystical about the jungle and provided soldiers are trained for it properly, and their navigation skills and personal admin are sharp, it's a good environment to be in."

The Gurkhas are also trained in non-combatant evacuation and riverine operations and, uniquely, the battalion has a fully-trained platoon of trackers.

They are to be relieved by their 2nd Battalion and will return to the UK to begin training for a tour of duty in a very different environment – the Balkans.

● 1 RGR in Brunei – Pages 38-41

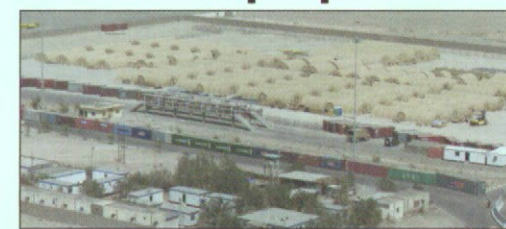
Tent city opens for troops at Iraqi port

CONDITIONS for troops in Iraq will improve significantly with the opening of the first 500-man temporary deployable accommodation (TDA) camp at Umm Qasr.

Soldiers started to move into the air-conditioned, eight-man TDA shelters (as featured in *Soldier*, June) at the end of last month. A further 4,500 of the dome-shaped PVC-covered TDA bed spaces are planned for the theatre.

At Shirab Airfield, sappers from 32 Engineer Regiment have completed two 500-man expeditionary camping infrastructure (ECI) camps and four more will open on the airfield by the end of this month. Another is being built at the Naval Academy in Basra.

The ECI camps, which use conventional-style tents, also have toilet and



Under PVC: Temporary camp for 500 at Umm Qasr

shower units, kitchen and dining areas, and plumbing for water and sewage. The tents are insulated and will be upgraded with air-conditioning.

Quality of life for military personnel is improving throughout southern Iraq. All soldiers are on fresh rations and most have access to Paradigm telephones and internet cabins.

New arrivals are being warned to get used to the soaring summer heat and not rely on the air conditioning.

Rescue crew



Picture: Cpl Will Craig

In the nick of time: These soldiers helped save a surfer who was in danger off the coast of the Sovereign Base Area Akrotiri in Cyprus.

Pictured are **LCpl Ben Trussler**, kneeling, in front of **WO Ginge Crook** and **Cpl Rob Barton** (all 62 Cyprus Support Squadron) and **Cpl Steve Finch** (417 Maritime Troop).

The Cypriot man had got into difficulties off Ladies Mile near Limassol and was being blown offshore by strong westerly winds. SBA Police relayed the news from another surfer to the rescue coordination centre at HQ British Forces Cyprus.

WO2 Crook, Cpl Barton and Cpl Trussler were dispatched in a rigid raider, accompanied by Cpl Finch for his local knowledge. They soon spotted Stelios Isaia sitting calmly on his board more than 2.5km from the shore and picked him up.



IN BRIEF

● Bosnians who want to give information about illegal weapons to British Sfor troops can now do so electronically and in confidence under an initiative launched by the **1st Battalion, The Highlanders**. Commanding officer Lt Col Tim Lai has introduced voice mail, SMS text messaging and e-mail for the use of informants.

● More than 100 eight-man teams are expected in this year's **Cambrian Patrol** from October 24 to November 2. More details from the patrol office on 94351 2280, cambrianpatrol@milnet.uk.net or DCI JS 33, dated March 7, 20 03.

● Two platoons of junior soldiers from the

Army Foundation College, Harrogate, helped marshal 10,000 women taking part in a Race for Life organised by Cancer Research UK in Leeds.

● Baby Spice **Emma Bunton**, right, joined comedian **Jim Davidson** to put on a show for Service personnel in Gibraltar. Jim was there

to film with the BBC and used the opportunity to entertain soldiers, sailors and airmen through his British Forces Foundation charity. **LCpl Samantha Watson** AGC, serving at HQ British Forces Gibraltar, said of Jim's performance: "I really can't remember the last time I laughed so hard. There were people literally in tears."

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Post haste: Territorial Army soldiers help sort mail at BFPO London's Mill Hill headquarters. Since mid-January when troops began to deploy in numbers to the Gulf, 1,123,739 blueys had been processed by the Forces' mail service by mid-June.

In the same period, 608,528 e-blueys were

dispatched to units in Kuwait and Iraq. With units now returning to their bases in Germany and the UK, the daily volume of mail has tailed off from the 1,000 bags a day during the height of Op Telic to about 400. Even so, on one day in mid-June 1,061 e-blueys and 473 letters and packets were sent.

Soldier wins more awards

YOUR favourite magazine scooped three top awards in Europe's biggest and most prestigious corporate communications competition.

Soldier's excellence was recognized with awards in the main internal magazine class (for the November 2002 edition), photographic and humour sections at the national Communicators in Business awards ceremony at Harrogate.

The magazine has been nominated regularly for CiB awards since it was redesigned six years ago. Staff photographer Graeme



Top men: Chip, left, and Graeme



Main received an award of excellence for his striking picture of world endurance record-holder Paddy Doyle, published in the February 2002 issue. It was Graeme's third major recognition of the year: he won first prize in the MoD's Media Challenge and was runner-up in the Army Photographic Competition image of the year category.

Our third success was for former Royal Engineer Chip Wood, whose regular Chuckle with Chip earned him a well-deserved award of excellence.

Best foot forward: Territorial Army signallers, led by SSgt Chris Ogg from Heaton TA Centre in Newcastle, ran the 140-mile coast-to-coast route from Workington Lighthouse in Cumbria to Tynemouth Castle in Northumbria to raise £2,000 for Cancer Research UK's Man Alive 2003 campaign.

The runners, who completed the course in 24 hours, were from 34 (Northern) Signal Regiment.

Picture: Chris Barker



Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● Prince William hopes to take a commission in the Welsh Guards after completing his studies and the regiment is making discreet preparations in the hope that his family and senior courtiers will approve. – *Daily Mail*

(Prince Harry to go to Sandhurst – Page 7)

● Hundreds of reservists returning from Iraq are set to leave the Territorial Army amid widespread concern over the way they are being used and the MoD's failure to pay them properly. – *Daily Telegraph*

● The graves of thousands of soldiers from the First World War were saved from destruction when the French government abandoned plans to build an airport through the Somme battlefield in the Chaulnes region, 80 miles north of Paris. – *Daily Telegraph*

● A former paratrooper has been turned down by the police after recruiters told him his tattoo of the Union Jack could be offensive. Police told Simon Dixon they were also unhappy about his other tattoos: one depicting a grim reaper holding a sword, and another of an elf smoking a pipe underneath a mushroom, which they said had drug connotations. – *Times*

● Heroic British tank crews who fought their way into Basra just ten weeks ago are facing the axe. Army chiefs have been ordered to sacrifice 400 top tank troops as part of a ruthless operation to save money to buy new technology. – *Sunday Express*

● British troops could be stuck in Iraq for up to four years if pro-Saddam Hussein militias continue to undermine coalition efforts to bring security to the country. – *Times*

● LCpl Adam Barrett and Pte Kelly Bridson, combat medics with 4 General Support Regiment, are to be married by the unit padre at Umm Qasr port. As they have chosen to get married on active service, they will be allowed only 24 hours' leave. – *Times*

● A team from Amnesty International has investigated claims that British troops on training in Kenya raped hundreds of women and sexually abused boys between 1970 and 2000. The evidence will be used to press for an inquiry. – *Times*

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Banker of Basra

Desert Rat officer puts second city's financial institutions back on track

Report: Andrea Frazer
Picture: Graeme Main

MEET Maj Ian Jaggard-Hawkins AGC, officer commanding 7 Armoured Brigade Field Administration Office, and the man who got Basra's economy buzzing again.

For the past two months "JH", the Army's answer to Daddy Warbucks, has acted as caretaker for Basra's finances, a budget running to \$20 million and 72 billion Iraqi dinars.

He and his team re-established the city's banking system in record time and coordinated the rebuilding and opening of a new Central Bank of Basra, a project costing \$380,000.

JH accomplished what many thought was impossible in the time. His final task before leaving theatre on June 21 was to formally hand the bank and the responsibility for the security and storage of money back to the people of Basra.

At the end of the war JH identified that the Central Bank was in bad order and that the money in it was in danger of being stolen. British soldiers thwarted attempted robberies on a nightly basis and in one swoop the Irish Guards arrested 50 people trying to break into the safe.

"The Royal Engineers were called in to open the safe and soldiers from The Black Watch battle-group and No 2 Company, Irish Guards basically rescued the contents. The cash was then taken to 7 Brigade HQ for safekeeping and stored in ISO containers," said Maj Jaggard-Hawkins.

The bank is now guarded by the new Basra River Service.

He established a working relationship with former bankers, audit departments and key movers and shakers in Basra to find out how the city's economy worked.

"We needed to know where the money came from, where it went to and, most importantly, who needed to be paid and when. We audited and checked the money before releasing it for the payment of civil sector workers.

"Before the bank opened, we operated from brigade headquarters and held an economic meeting every morning. But it



Loads of dosh: Maj Ian Jaggard-Hawkins with some of the money he has dealt with

was very obvious that a city of 1.6 million people needed a proper bank. We were left with just a shell of a building and had only ten days to get it up and running again.

"I contemplated phoning up one of those 'Changing Rooms' programmes to see if they would fly over and help out but I think even they would have thought it was a mission impossible.

"I contacted the contractor the night before the project was due to start, gave him the order, and the next morning at 0730 he had 200 local Iraqi people on site to begin work."

The design for the internal bank complex consists of six offices, 15 payment points for the up-and-coming pension payments, three highly secure teller points behind armoured glass and a safe complex to store all the money in.

"This is a massive undertaking for an

AGC officer who normally deals with 8,000 people's pay and administration," said Maj Jaggard-Hawkins. "I was responsible for a huge amount of money. We have already paid out nearly \$8 million in emergency aid and more than 43 billion dinars to civil sector workers by hand. It's phenomenal.

"Everyone calls me the banker of Basra and I suppose that's what I am. It's been hard work and outside my level of competence but all military personnel have done a tremendous job out here, adapting to situations as they arise and doing things that they are not normally expected to do.

"By opening the bank we will hopefully encourage people to put their faith and their money back in again and this will help to develop an economic regeneration of the city."

The day after it opened, the bank started issuing emergency payments to 80,000 pensioners.

'We have already paid out nearly \$8 million in emergency aid'



Desert rats deliver the peace

In just three months 7 Brigade has given Basra a kick-start into a brighter future

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

WHEN 7 Armoured Brigade handed over command of the Basra province to 19 Mechanized Brigade last month, the Desert Rats finally had the chance to reflect on all that they had achieved.

Less than three months after the liberation of Iraq's second city, the Brigade's area of operation had spread to cover the entire province.

Responsibility for the city itself was shouldered by the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch, while the northern reaches of Basra were covered by the 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and Cyclops Squadron, 2nd Royal Tank Regiment.

Before being replaced in mid-June by a Danish contingent, the Joint NBC Regiment had set up home in Al Qurnah – the location of the Garden of Eden and the ancestral dwelling of the marsh Arabs.

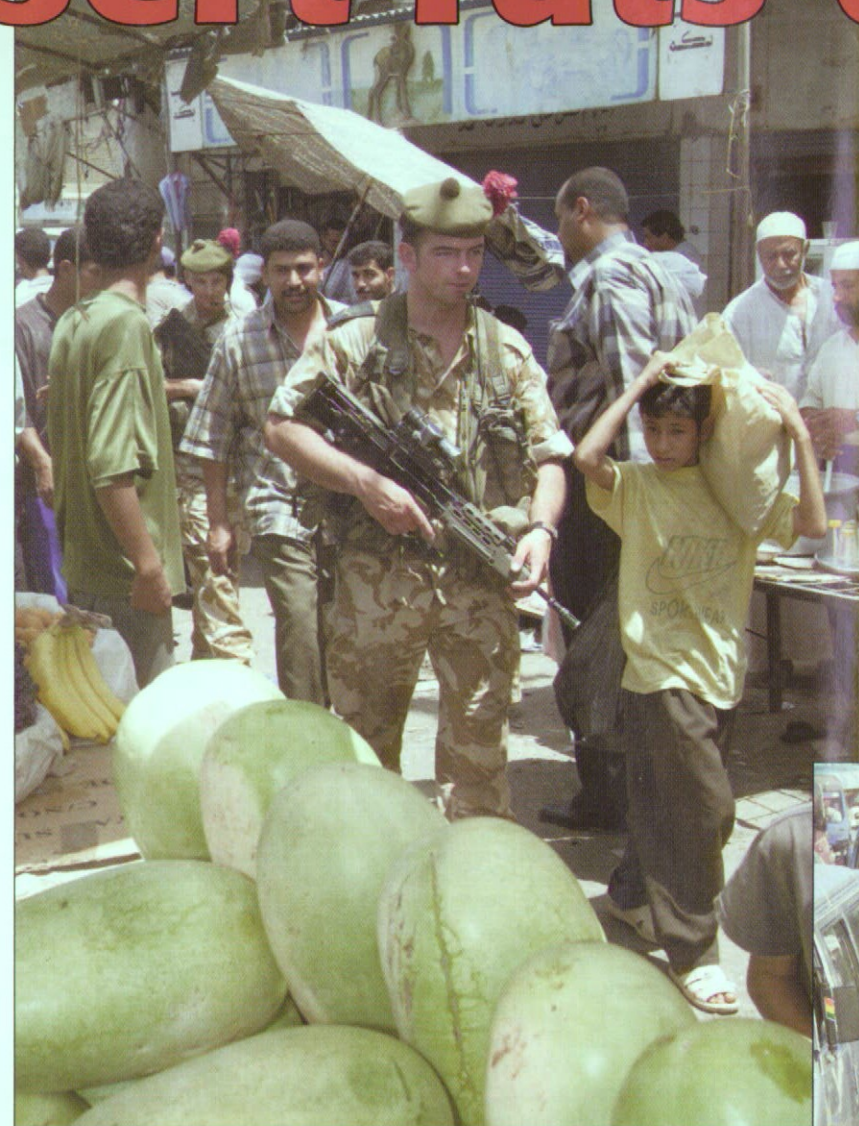
The 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, reinforced by J Battery, 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, controlled the south, taking in Umm Qasr, Az Zubayr and the Rumallah oilfields.

Despite being the most dispersed unit in theatre, the 5th Regiment, Royal Military Police helped bring law and order back to southern Iraq, re-establishing 33 police stations and training Iraqi regular and auxiliary police forces.

Sapper, logistic and communications expertise was provided by 32 Engineer Regiment, 2 Close Support Regiment RLC and 207 Signal Squadron.

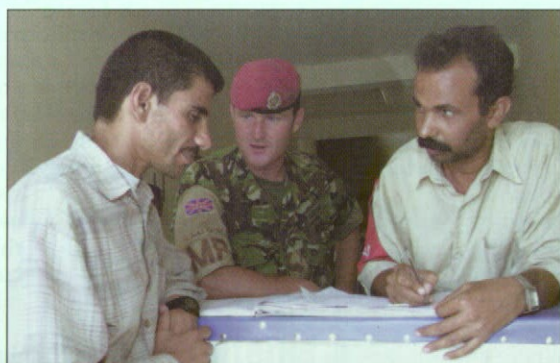
The Rats made a rapid transition from war-fighting to peace support operations and battle-groups, some of which had played leading roles in the fight for the city, moved quickly into a dismounted infantry role.

Soldiers provided force protection to British military personnel and bases, as well as guarding Basra's infrastructure



Hustle and bustle: LCpl Colin Edwards of D Coy, The Black Watch, patrols through Basra's thriving market, above

Watchful eye: Cpl Neil Clifford, centre, of 5 RMP trains Iraqi policeman Abdulla Mohammed at the new police station in Umm Qasr



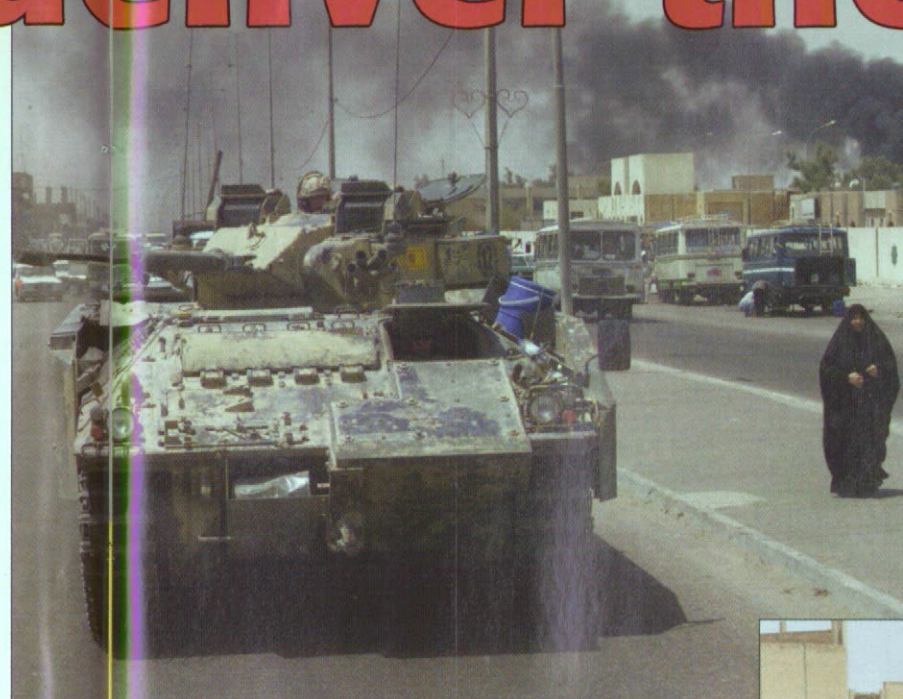
and key installations. Regular foot patrols were conducted to reassure the local population, reduce incidents of crime, smuggling and tribal feuding and encourage the removal of weapons from the streets.

Many of these static duties have now been handed over to locally-employed security guards and the Iraqi police.

Maj Chris Parker, Chief of Staff, 7

Armd Bde, said: "It's been a huge effort and I don't think that there has ever been a time in history when we have had a brigade move straight from war-fighting into a peace-keeping operation within the space of a few months."

"We are at a stage in Basra now that took almost two years to reach in Kosovo and things are going well. The honey-



Troop movement: A Warrior transports Black Watch soldiers into Basra



Riding high: Soldiers from 1 RRF conduct anti-smuggling patrols on the Shatt al Arab, above, with support from 28 Engineer Regiment boat section

Fancy footwork: LCpl Jamie Moore and Pte Villame Ratulevu of 1 DWR, left, on patrol in the town of Az Zubayr

Power station security: Tpr Gavin Walker of Cyclops Sqn, 2 RTR, supervises a new guard force with the help of interpreter Abbas Hassan Salim, right



moon period has lasted, people are still waving and giving us the thumbs-up."

Soldiers have worked hard in temperatures above 50C to raise the standard of living for the Iraqi people. Significant progress has been made in the areas of security, law and order, water and food supply. Improvements to sanitation, health and education, and the electricity

supply are ongoing, as well as the maintenance of ports, airports and roads.

In short, the province has come to life again. The markets are full, shops are well stocked, the culture of fear is being eroded and people are smiling.

"There is still a lot to do," said Maj Chris Parker. "And when the climate is right, the next priority will be to start the

process leading to democratic elections and self-governance, but that will take time."

Departing British troops can hold their heads high at a job well done in Iraq. However, the heat will not be the only challenge to face those replacing them. As the saying goes, "winning the peace is more complicated than winning the war".



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Building bridges

When mad dogs, sappers and a former Iraqi para went out in the midday sun

Report and picture:
Capt Angus Beaton

ABOUT 8km south-east of Basra, among majestic date palms straddling a muddy tributary of the Shatt al Arab, lies Hamdan. Until the conflict, two sturdy bridges linked the two parts of the village, carrying local daily traffic.

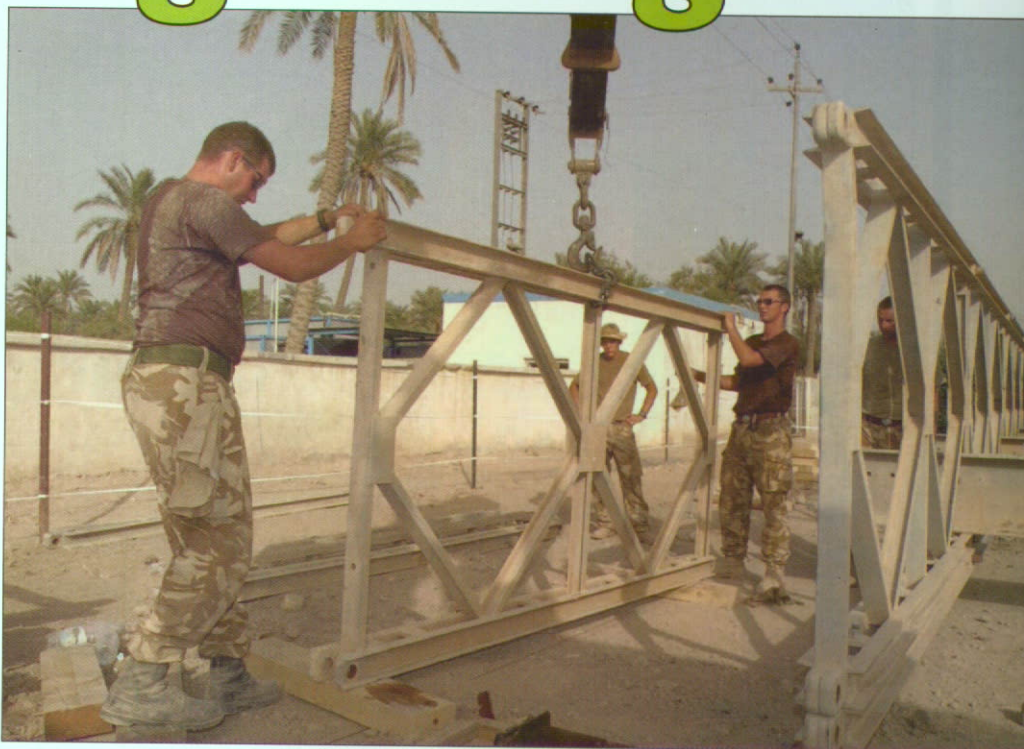
To delay the coalition advance, Iraqi militia destroyed both bridges with explosives, leaving villagers with either a precarious balancing act across the wreckage or a vehicle journey of many kilometres.

Restoring Hamdan's bridges was a task that needed prompt attention and soldiers from 2 Headquarters Squadron RE spent several weeks labouring in intense heat to reinstate the town's vital links.

A temporary crossing was placed over the northern bridge while work began on removing the wreckage of the second. This was a Bailey-type girder bridge, much of which was salvaged for reuse.

"The greatest problem has been finding replacement parts for those destroyed in the explosion," said SSgt John McLean, who, with colleagues, had scoured the countryside for suitable plates, girders and framework.

With the approach of the Iraqi summer and daytime temperatures above 40C, there was a risk of dehydration so the sappers took regular breaks and drank several litres of water a day. Troop commander



New from old: Sappers from 2 HQ Sqn, 32 Armd Engr Regt manoeuvre sections from an Iraqi Bailey bridge into position at Hamdan. They were rebuilding the crossing using wreckage salvaged from the original bridge, demolished by militia early in the conflict

2nd Lt Rich Marsh said that although the gap could have been spanned in five minutes using one of the squadron's armoured bridge-layers, the structure at Hamdan needed to be permanent and the squadron would eventually want its bridge back.

Once the main framework of the bridge was complete it was launched across rollers and towed into place by a large winch on the opposite bank. Spr Dean Hudson, who was responsible for positioning and levelling the rollers to a tolerance of four millimetres, described his

involvement with the project as "brilliant – what being an engineer is all about".

The troop was augmented by Kaleed, a local man, who had been involved with the construction of the original bridge and had tried to dissuade the militia from destroying it.

Kaleed (or Harry as he was known to the sappers) a former Iraqi paratrooper, acted as interpreter and "fixer" for the squadron.

Thanks to the sappers of 2 HQ Squadron RE, life for the villagers of Hamdan is getting back to normal.

Engineers rise to scrapheap challenge

PUTTING Basra back in touch with Abu Bushayr on the eastern bank of the Shatt al Arab turned out to be an ambitious "Scrapheap Challenge" project for soldiers of Field Troop, 39 Armoured Engineer Squadron.

They were tasked with spanning a 200m gap across the site of a two-lane, multi-span concrete bridge destroyed in the 1991 Gulf conflict. Local people had been relying on a pontoon bridge which was destroyed in the opening stages of Op Telic.

The sappers decided to construct a new



pontoon bridge and foraged for Bailey panels and other components before building the bridge in sections near their base and floating

the parts 2km down the river for assembly at the crossing point. To make way for the new structure, the 33m remains of the old bridge had to be removed from the river.

First vehicle to cross the finished article was the Warrior of Maj Doug Gibson, officer commanding 39 Armd Engr Sqn. The bridge – named after SSgt Simon Cullingworth, 33 Engineer Regiment EOD, who was killed in action during Op Telic – was

officially opened with a fanfare of pipes and drums supplied by the 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Battle-Group.

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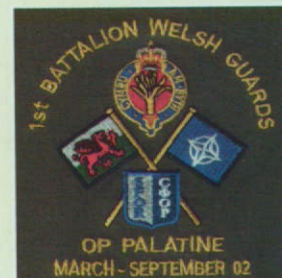
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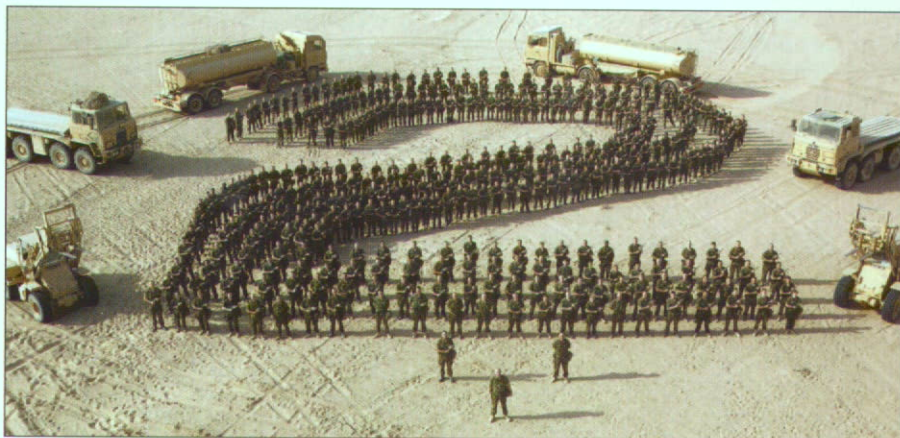
Sappers help our man in Baghdad

OUR man in Baghdad was able to move in soon after the war ended – thanks to a little help from sappers serving with 36 Engineer Regiment's 20 Field Squadron.

Following a Foreign and Commonwealth Office request for British Army help in reopening its embassy in the city, soldiers from 20 Fd Sqn searched the

building and grounds, screened the embassy and tested the water supply. They also provided access for the ISO containers from which the diplomatic staff began their work.

Before moving on, the Royal Engineers signed the embassy visitors' book as "The Liberators".



Two's company: Not so much drawing a line in the sand as writing their name in the desert, soldiers of 2 CS Regiment RLC form up for an Op Telic picture for the regimental scrapbook

Gutersloh loggies so close to action

GUTERSLOH-based 2 Close Support Regiment RLC deployed in strength to sustain the Desert Rats in Iraq.

The loggies flew out 511 troops at short notice to support the operation, all of them drawn from within the regiment except for one Territorial Army soldier.

Kept as close to the warfighting elements as possible, 2 CS Regt deployed with its RHQ, 76 Brigade Support Squadron, 45 Divisional Troops Support Squadron and the regimental workshop.

During the build-up to March 22 the loggies issued training and operational ammunition and a mass of urgent opera-

tional requirements. In the space of seven weeks they provided support to 53 units and 16,500 personnel.

They moved 5,200 pallets of stores, 1,100 pallets of ammunition and pumped 4.5 million litres of fuel and provided 600,000 litres of drinking water.

The regiment also ran a "rehabilitation centre" in which units leaving the theatre could prepare vehicles and personnel for movement to Kuwait and onwards.

Its soldiers have been heavily involved in helping civilians, in particular villagers near the regiment's camp at Al Shaibah airfield, 20km south-west of Basra.

IF the stats are a reliable guide, 10 Transport Regiment RLC's role in the Gulf was crucial to the success of the British Army's mission in southern Iraq. Between February 20 and the end of May, the loggies moved vast quantities of combat supplies and materiel in theatre.

The regiment was reinforced by more than 150 Territorial Army soldiers, drivers from several transport units and a squadron of Pioneers.

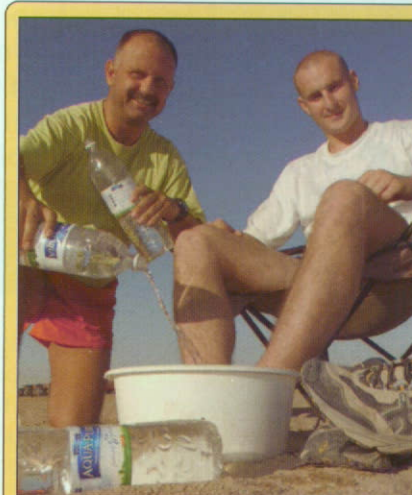
They covered 1,246,525km of road,

Keeping show on road

moved 1,619 ISO containers, notched up 2,214 store moves by flatrack and transported nearly 52 million litres of water.

The regiment, part of 102 Logistic Brigade, also shifted 550 tonnes of food and rations to local people and delivered 144 tonnes of medical and hygiene stores and 13.5 million litres of water.

Due back in the UK at the end of this month, the regiment has been based near Basra in southern Iraq after changing locations on several occasions.



Hot foot: RSM Nick Petit and LCpl Jamie Rowe cool off after their marathon stint

Desert run will help children of fallen comrades

LCpl Jamie Rowe and RSM Nick Petit from the Tri-Service Bomb Disposal Unit based in Iraq took their turns in a 100-mile sponsored run to raise money for the children of colleagues killed in the war, writes **Capt Angus Beaton**.

The marathon run was from Basra International Airport, headquarters of British Forces in Iraq, to Camp Coyote in northern Kuwait, from where British troops mounted operations.

Twenty runners ran the course in 15 hours to raise cash which will be used to build a trust fund for four young children of three of the unit's soldiers – SSgt Simon Cullingworth RE, Spr Luke Allsopp RE and SSgt Chris Muir RLC – killed during the conflict.

Elements of the EOD group were among the first coalition troops into Iraq, clearing mines and bombs to secure key installations.

Members of the team, drawn from all three Services, are now supporting the United Nations and non-governmental organisations to identify areas requiring clearance. They are also helping to educate Iraq children to the dangers of playing with mines and unexploded ordnance.

London Redcaps called up for Iraq

TWENTY-five Territorial Army policemen and women from South London were mobilised last month for service in Iraq.

While the Redcaps from 253 Provost Company RMP, based at Upper Tulse Hill, were deploying to the Gulf, two members of the unit, Cpl Maria James and Cpl Lisa Lovell, were taking part in a two-week exchange with US reservists in Indiana.

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Gurkha sappers in hot seat

A VITAL task taken on by Gurkha sappers during Op Telic was producing deep trench latrine covers.

Four hundred of varying designs were constructed by the Workshop Troop of 70 Gurkha Field Support Squadron, part of 36 Engineer Regiment.

Quality was the order of the day, with troop commander Capt Ray Morris Shaheb said to have sat on them all before allowing them to be sent forward to units.

The troop reckons it has designs to suit every need, as long as privacy is not at the top of the list. Other tasks taken on by the

workshops included markers for the berm breach into Iraq, dog traps, Tac signs and never-ending requests to improve living conditions for units in the field.

A key job was the production of flooring for 84 Medical Supply Squadron RLC.

Within 24 hours of the start of the coalition ground offensive, 59 Gurkha Fd Sqn had deployed into Iraq, G Tp to Umm Qasr in support of 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, the squadron HQ to lead the building of a prisoner-of-war facility, and I Tp north with 20 Fd Sqn in support of the Joint Helicopter Force.



You did well: Prime Minister Tony Blair addresses soldiers stationed in southern Iraq

You won respect of world – Blair

PRIME Minister Tony Blair told British troops deployed in Basra that they had won universal respect and admiration for the manner in which they had conducted themselves during the war to liberate Iraq.

Speaking to soldiers engaged on peace-keeping and reconstruction tasks in the country's second city, Mr Blair said: "I know there was a lot of disagreement in the country about the wisdom of my decision to order the action, but I can assure you of one thing – there is absolutely no dispute in Britain at all about your professionalism and your courage and your dedication, and not just in the way you won the war – which was extraordinary – but in the way you are conducting the peace, which is remarkable.

"The taking of the Al Faw peninsula and then the taking of Basra, and the way it was done with the minimum loss of civilian life, is famous right around the

world now," he said. "You should know that you have brought tremendous honour on our country and respect and admiration everywhere for the way that you did that."

Mr Blair said he hoped that in a year or two it would be possible for soldiers to return to Iraq to see the changes they had brought about "because in a way what you did serves as a model of how armed forces anywhere in the world should conduct themselves.

"You fought the battle and you won the battle, and you fought it with great courage and valour, but it didn't stop there – you then went on to make something of the country that you had liberated, and I think that's a great lesson for armed forces the world over."

He concluded: "You've made our whole country hold our head up high and I think that's a wonderful achievement. It's your achievement and thank you."

If you've got the Gem of an idea, let's be having it

MORE than 100 ideas had been submitted to the MoD's Gems reward scheme by the end of May as a direct result of experience gained on Op Telic.

They ranged from suggestions for Land Rover mirror mounts to laptop computer protection, from local public announcement systems to military webbing designs.

The Gems scheme was started in-theatre during February specifically to cash in on ideas coming thick and fast out of the pressure-cooker environment of a major military deployment. Awards and interim payments of more than £2,000 were made in-theatre to promote the scheme.

● Personnel deployed on Telic are being encouraged to submit their good ideas to their local award group at ES Branch, HQ JFLogC, BFPO 643.

Jock's way with words proves useful in Basra

AS an Arabic speaker in The Black Watch, Pte James Fyfe, below, is unique.

When the 1st Battalion was warned off for Op Telic, it was decided he would be best used with the signals platoon and battalion headquarters.

From there he could be deployed wherever

he was most needed, whether assisting with the handling of enemy prisoners-of-war in Az Zubayr or helping to control crowds surging on food and water distribution points in the slums of Basra.

James, whose father is a marine contractor, learned to speak Arabic while his family was based in Cairo for several years. He had planned to join the Royal Navy, but suffers from dyslexia and struggled with the entrance tests.

But he was determined to make a career in the Services so took the advice of the Dunfermline Army Careers Information Office and joined The Black Watch.

James has been a vital link between the operational planners in the battalion headquarters and local people. He has researched key information requirements for the Army, explained coalition policy to people he has met and passed back their fears and concerns.



Pte James Fyfe

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Virgin territory

Broadcasting to troops at war was life-changing for rock 'n' roll DJs

Report: Andrea Frazer
Picture: Graeme Main

VIRGIN Radio's "Backing our Boys" programme, broadcast every weekend during the Gulf War, generated such an overwhelming response that the station's DJs described it as a "life-changing experience".

Teaming up with BFBS, Virgin dedicated a two-hour radio show to the troops every Saturday and Sunday morning for an eight-week period. The station was swamped with more than 12,000 requests from family, friends and well-wishers for those on operations. Extra staff worked seven days a week just to process the calls.

With the help of BFBS, it also managed to broadcast messages from the troops to those waiting for news at home.

The response had a powerful effect on Virgin DJs Jezza Kyle and Ben Jones, who fronted the show with BFBS's Glenn Mansell.

"It was an extraordinary experience, definitely the most uplifting thing I have ever done," said Jezza. "When you hear a kid saying 'Daddy please come home', it's heartbreaking. This was the first time in my broadcast career that I nearly lost it."

The "Backing our Boys" show was a significant commitment for a rock 'n' roll station with a reputation for good music and having a laugh. It provided an invaluable lifeline, lifting the spirits of those deployed and their families.



Good morning Iraq: Broadcasting to Servicemen and women in the Gulf and talking to their families and friends back home was an "extraordinary experience" for Virgin Radio DJ Jezza

"Communication was a problem, satellite phones had been turned off, blueys were irregular . . . and all of a sudden here was a radio show that was linking people, simultaneously broadcasting messages in Britain and across to the 40,000 troops in the Gulf," said Jezza. "It was all about human beings and it definitely struck a chord with our listeners as well as people who had never heard the station before."

"I think the show captured the mood of the nation without getting political and without discussing the rights and wrongs of the conflict."

The programmes tried to strike a balance between the seriousness of the situation, the strong emotions generated and the humour which the military inevitably finds in the darkest situations.

"We heard from women who had become mums while their partners were in the Gulf, we broadcast on-air marriage proposals and talked about what sort of parties they were going to have when it was over," said Jezza. "We heard of Servicemen and women who had missed anniversaries, weddings and funerals. It was

extremely touching. One minute we had someone sobbing their heart out and the next we're being told about the more unusual items people sent out in food parcels.

"One woman told me she'd sent her son a food parcel every day and had got a letter back from him saying five had turned up at once and that all his mates were calling him a charity case, so would she please stop sending them."

None of the Virgin DJs had previous experience of the Forces. Glenn Mansell explained: "It was a steep learning curve for them - we got a few bombardiers instead of brigadiers, but they caught on quickly."

"It didn't matter to me if it was a squadron leader, a staff sergeant or a sapper," said Jezza. "It was all about people. What struck me most was the camaraderie between men and women in the Gulf and families back home. They were all supporting each other, looking out for each other."

"I'm glad we were able to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get their stories across. We were there at the right time to provide a line of communication that had been closed but once that line was opened again, it was important that we stepped aside."

"But I did get three wedding invites out of the experience," he added.

Casualty lists put a premium on accuracy

A daunting aspect for the broadcasters was cross-referencing calls, messages and requests against casualty lists.

"When somebody gives you a list of those killed ten minutes before your programme, it really makes you think hard about what you're doing," said Jezza.

He relied heavily on the experience BFBS has gained over the years to minimise the chances of mistakes and avoid unnecessary distress to families.

Can't get quicker than a QIP fixer

Military plays vital role in delivering aid projects where they are needed most

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

ACTIONS are certainly speaking louder than words in the British area of operations in southern Iraq, where £10 million of UK cash is funding quick impact projects to help rebuild the country.

QIPs, as they are known, are one of 1 (UK) Armoured Division's best-kept secrets. Developed as a result of experience gained in Afghanistan, the system is viewed as the most efficient way of providing timely, quick-fix projects in-theatre.

It forms a fundamental part of the military's approach to peace-support operations in southern Iraq. British troops are responsible for identifying and implementing projects on their patch.

So far, 90 have been completed, 200 more are in progress and about 40 new ones are being authorised each week.

WO2 Mark Brockway, of 1 (UK) Armoured Division Civil Affairs Group, said: "We rely heavily on the eyes and ears of the guys on the ground to identify needs at local level.

"The vast majority of QIPs have come about from soldiers listening to local people, realising something is not happening and passing that up through the G5 [civil-military cooperation] chain.

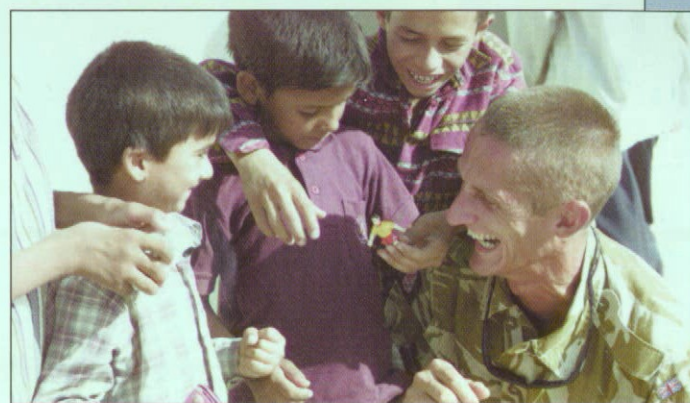
"The beauty of the programme is the speed with which projects are turned around. Control of the money has been given to G5 to make the process as quick as possible.

"The mechanism works very efficiently. Proposals are assessed within 24 hours and, if approved, money is released and work can begin within days."

QIPs now cover the entire British area and affect all aspects of Iraqi life, from providing food, water and healthcare to kick-starting southern Iraq's oil industry.

Other nations have been impressed by the scheme. "Projects can range from something simple but necessary, such as fitting new tyres on an ambulance and replacing batteries on essential generators, through to large-scale infrastructure," said WO2 Brockway.

"We have completed various projects relating to health, education, the economy, power, public services, telecommunica-



All smiles: Cpl John Ryan, above, of 207 Signal Squadron shares a joke with children at an orphanage in Basra

Thirsty work: Spr Paddy Black and Cpl Ty Starke, right, both with 32 Engineer Regiment, fill water tankers at the British Army's reverse osmosis plant in Basra

It's good to talk: 2nd Lt Gareth Jones, below, of the Joint NBC Regiment, discusses local issues with a community leader in Al Qurnah during a foot patrol north of Basra



tions and transport and have done a lot in relation to food and aid distribution and the provision of water and sanitation.

"The largest spend so far has been on law and order. Over 60 per cent of the total funds have gone into refurbishing 56 police stations, three prisons, and seven court houses. Cash has also been used to provide uniforms and equipment for nearly 10,000 Iraqi policemen."

Progress achieved in the two months

since the conflict has been staggering. "More than 200 schools are returning to full effectiveness, the phone system in Basra is up and running again and catering for 45,000 subscribers, and we are working on a strategic health programme to inoculate the entire population of southern Iraq against various diseases."

"Most of the labour for the projects is sourced locally. To date we have employed about 16,000 Iraqis, so the money we are

spending is being largely kept within the Iraqi economy."

Non-military organisations are consulted to ensure aid is not duplicated and that there is a balance of assistance throughout the area.

"The money has been used wisely and demonstrates the commitment of the British Army and the British Government to the people of southern Iraq. They can clearly see money being invested in the

infrastructure to directly benefit them. We still have problems with people stealing the infrastructure we repair, but with the support of religious leaders we hope these incidents will reduce.

"Inevitably we will never be able to do everything as quickly as people would like us to, but the quick impact projects really are making a huge impact in this area and I am incredibly proud to be involved," said WO2 Brockway.



Duke's donkey sanctuary

Fresh start, left: An Iraqi policeman shows off his new-look uniform during a joint patrol in the town of Az Zubayr

Why the long face? Pte Matthew Hawes, above, of 1 DWR, with Copenhagen. Ever on the look-out for a pet project, soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment rescued the donkey from the streets of Az Zubayr.

Named Copenhagen after Wellington's charger, the animal had been beaten, was covered in sores and suffering from malnutrition.

Capt Peter Lee, 1 DWR, said: "We took him back to our base, where our medic is getting him back to good health. The soldiers have been treating him as a pet.

"We hope to hand him on to the unit replacing us, unless of course he is fit to return to donkey society in Az Zubayr."

● Eagle-eyed tankies: A team of tankies from Cyclops Squadron, 2nd Royal Tank Regiment apprehended a car-jacker north of Basra and handed him over to the judicial system.

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Incoming: Soldiers serving with 460 Port Troop RLC, part of the Falkland Islands Transport and Movements Squadron, unload supplies at East Cove Military Port in Mare Harbour on East Falkland. The troop's parent unit is 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, based at the Army's other – and better-known – independent military port, the Sea Mounting Centre at Marchwood, near Southampton. The troop's plant, movements, vessel and LAD sections provide the islands with a comprehensive reception, offloading and re-loading service.

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Maj J Perez, Royal Gibraltar Regt.

QVRM: Sgt W G M Anderson, RA TA; WO2 S Priddle, Royal Rifle Volunteers TA; WO2 S C L Smart, Cambridge UOTC TA; Brig J R Thomson TD, late RA TA; Maj T Walker TD, General List TA.

Manage your money



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

Grief for best mate drove L to spend, spend, spend

PRIVATE L couldn't believe it when he heard his best mate, his closest friend since he was ten, had been killed in a motor-cycle accident.

They had done everything together and he had been looking forward to their next trip, to France to stock up on duty-free.

The tragic news made Pte L think about life and how it could be snuffed out so easily. He had a motorbike too. As he thought things through it made him determined to live life to the full and so for the next 12 months he spent as if there was no tomorrow.

SPENDING SPREE

He bought a new Suzuki on credit, changed his wardrobe and took an expensive holiday to the Maldives. It wasn't long before he was struggling to pay even the minimum amounts due on his credit cards and within a few months he even started missing some of these. He ignored letters sent to him requesting payment and before long one of his loans was put with a debt collector.

This was bad enough but he was now facing an additional pressure. He had met a girl and they wanted to live together. She was in a good job and they wanted to buy a small flat together. The trouble was that he was being threatened with a county court judgement (CCJ) which would have threatened his ability to get a mortgage or any other type of credit for six years.

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Pte L realised that this was not a sensible way of starting a serious relationship. Worried, he contacted the Credit Action-Consumer Credit Counselling Service helpline (0800 1381111) and explained the situation.

Having dealt with the emergency and getting the creditor to remove the threat of the CCJ, they were able to interview Pte L over the phone at his convenience and arrange for him to go on a debt management plan. This in effect means that out of his surplus income he made one payment to CCCS every month and they distributed the money to his creditors free of charge.

And, yes, they got their mortgage and are in the flat today.

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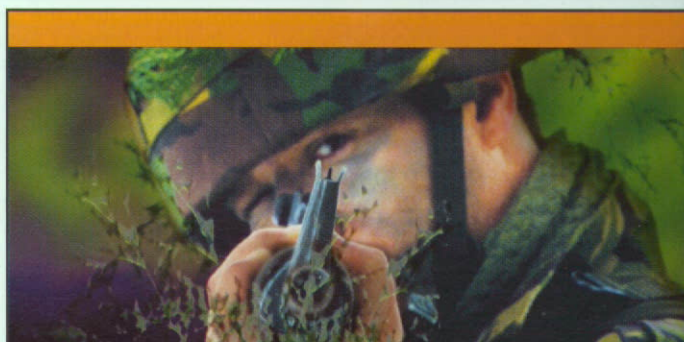
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The great annual adventure in late spring on Dartmoor has been running for 43 years, the last 17 of which have been organised by 43 (Wessex) Brigade. Four hundred teams of six participants from schools, Scout groups, cadet forces and clubs across the South West brave the moor's infamous weather to walk and map-read their way to the finish line via ten of the craggy tors.

Depending on age and experience, the youngsters walk 35, 45 or 55 miles. Although much preparation takes place beforehand, the teams do not know which route they are allocated until just before the event starts.

The well-established Jubilee Challenge for youngsters with special needs takes place over the same weekend. Participants, many in wheelchairs, enter as members of a team or as individuals and trek a predetermined route of seven-and-a-half to 15 miles across northern Dartmoor. They are assisted by volunteers from Exeter University Officers' Training Corps.

Fields surrounding the normally quiet Okehampton camp, an old Victorian base high on the moors overlooking the town, were reminiscent of a holiday site, with hundreds of tents set up to accommodate the teams and their managers.

The night before the event suppers were cooked over camp fires and young people, many in distinctive team colours, played football and frisbee. The kit of every walker was checked to make sure they had all the compulsory equipment to keep them safe.

Early the next morning the walkers gathered on the start line for a blessing from the Bishop of Plymouth and words of encouragement from Maj Gen Nick Cottam, GOC 5 Div. Blasts from two light guns of 29 Commando Regiment RA sig-

Keeping them going: LCpl Jane Davarian, 243 Fd Hosp, right, attends to one of the Ten Tors walkers



Not far to go: Event organiser Maj Mike Pether, left, with Martin Stewart, Kirston Sanders and Daine Jones at the start of the Ten Tors Challenge across craggy Dartmoor

Picture: Sgt Brian Gamble

nalled the start. One person described the dash down the slope and across the valley as reminiscent of the native hordes swarming down the slopes in the film *Zulu*. They quickly disappeared from sight, to spend two days in a mixture of sunshine, showers and the inevitable mist.

Maj Mike Pether of 43 (Wessex) Brigade, who has organised the event for the past 11 years, described this year's Ten Tors as an outstanding success. "The courage and determination of all who took part is a credit to the youth of the South West," he said.

"The young people are the stars of the show and this event helps them to learn self-reliance, discipline and an awareness of the environment. For many, nothing in

their lives will match the feeling of real achievement when they crossed the finishing line."

Ten Tors is no gentle walk in the countryside; north Dartmoor is exposed, remote and hard to walk. Out of the 400 teams taking part, 352 completed the course and crossed the finishing line by 1700 the following day.

Although it is not a race, the first teams home were Plymouth Duke of Edinburgh Award (45 miles) at 0849; Erme and Yealm Valley Hill Walking Club (35) at 0918; King Edward's School, Bath (35) at 0923; and Kings School, Ely (35) at 0924. Katherine Lady Berkeley's School, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos, was the first 55-miles team home at 1034.

'It was me or him – so I fired'

The celebrated psychic entertainer is haunted by the memory of the soldier he killed in the Six-Day War of 1967

Interview: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Graeme Main

TO the world Uri Geller is the man who bends forks, spoons and keys, and starts (or stops) watches and clocks by the sheer power of his will.

Sceptics say it's some kind of trickery, but seeing is believing and where Uri goes, scientifically unexplained phenomena follow. Many of the things he does defy rational explanation.

A paranormal person? Well maybe, but Uri is certainly charming, impressive, engaging and energetic.

But what most people may not know is that before his rise to worldwide stardom, this extraordinary man was a soldier who survived a war and battlefield wounds.

Uri was born in 1946 in what is now Israel, but what was then Palestine.

His father was a career military man, serving first with the Hungarian Army, then as a sergeant in the British Army in North Africa with the Jewish Brigade before joining units fighting for a free Israel, and finally with the Israeli Army.

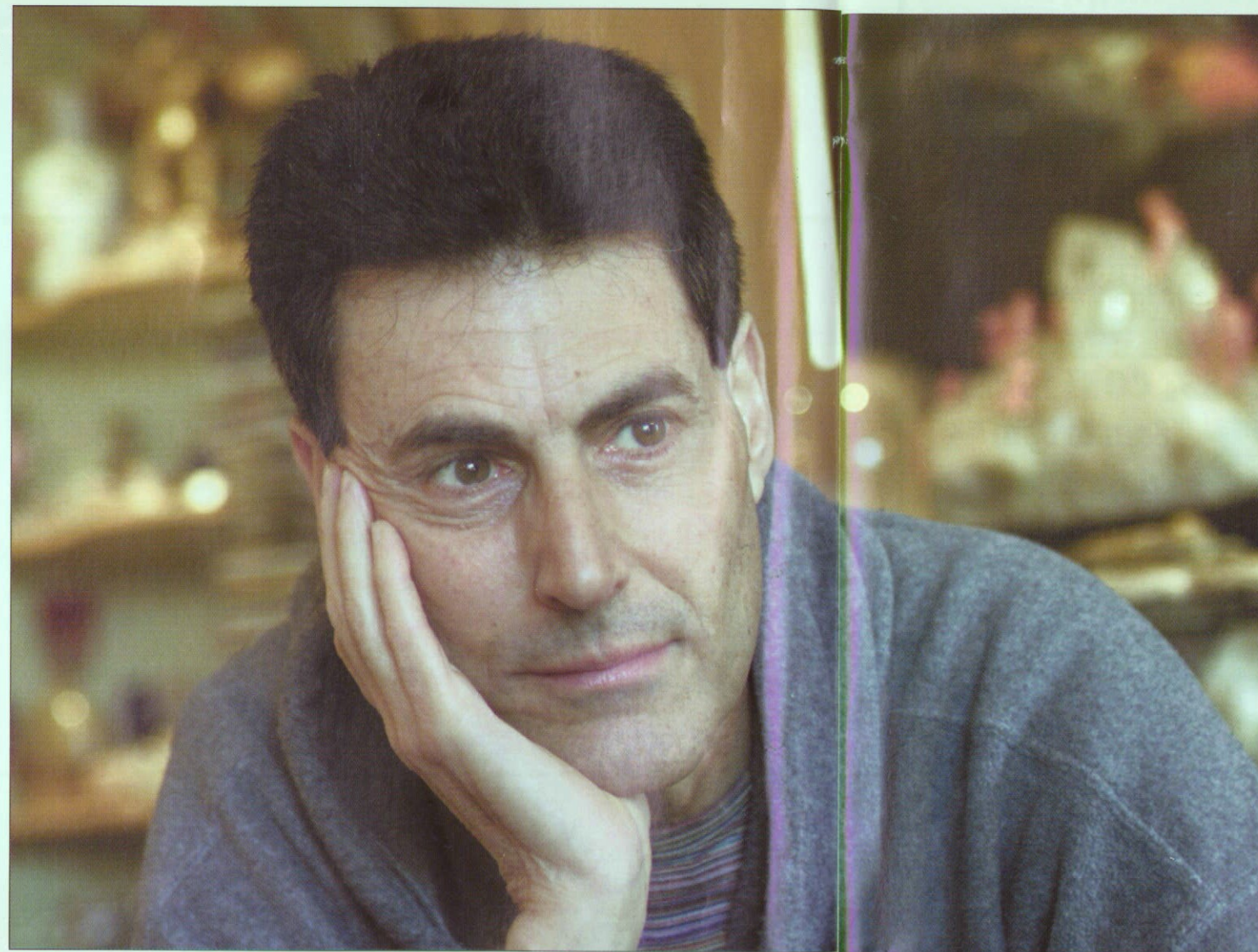
Describing his early life when *Soldier* visited him at his home in Berkshire, Uri said that when he was ten he moved to Cyprus, where his parents ran a small hotel that held a secret.

"It was a safe house for agents from Mossad, the Israeli intelligence-gathering, covert-action and counter-terrorism organisation," he said.

"One of the agents living there witnessed me bending spoons and told me that when I became 17 I should go back to Israel, join the paratroopers, go to officer school, and then come and find him.

"I was so excited because I thought I was going to become a super-spy for Mossad."

The return to his homeland came about when the hotel closed and his stepfather died. When he was old enough, Uri fulfilled his promise and volunteered for the paratroopers, earning his red beret and wings. When he learned that his



Contemplation: Uri Geller recalls his time as a paratrooper in the Israeli Army and the horrifying moment when speed of thought resulted in survival

mentor had been killed he was shattered.

"That night I fell asleep during a manoeuvre in the officer school and I was kicked out. I was gutted anyhow."

The following morning he awoke to sirens wailing all over Tel Aviv and the news that Israeli Air Force jets had destroyed the Egyptian Air Force. It was the first day of the 1967 Six-Day War.

"I went back to my unit and they weren't sure what to do with me. Eventually I was put in charge of eight men in two command cars. We were ordered towards Jerusalem and our instructions were to take over the French Hill in Ramallah.

"We were a back-up unit for eight light-armoured vehicles but were no match for the Jordanian tanks we had to fight. We

came under a huge barrage of fire that I had never experienced even in my worst nightmares.

"I got my men behind the wall of a local Arab cemetery. Our light-armoured vehicles were being plucked off. I saw my captain die and my soldiers blown apart."

Then came what Uri described as the most horrifying moment in his life.

"A Jordanian soldier jumped out from behind a rock aiming his gun at me. I had an Uzi and we looked each other in the eye – it was milliseconds.

"The thing that flashed through my brain was whoever pressed the trigger first would survive.

"I shot him and killed him."

Half an hour later Uri was hit, a bullet passing through his right forearm,

although luckily it did not hit the bone. Then his left elbow was shattered and 20 minutes later he was hit again, probably by a ricochet.

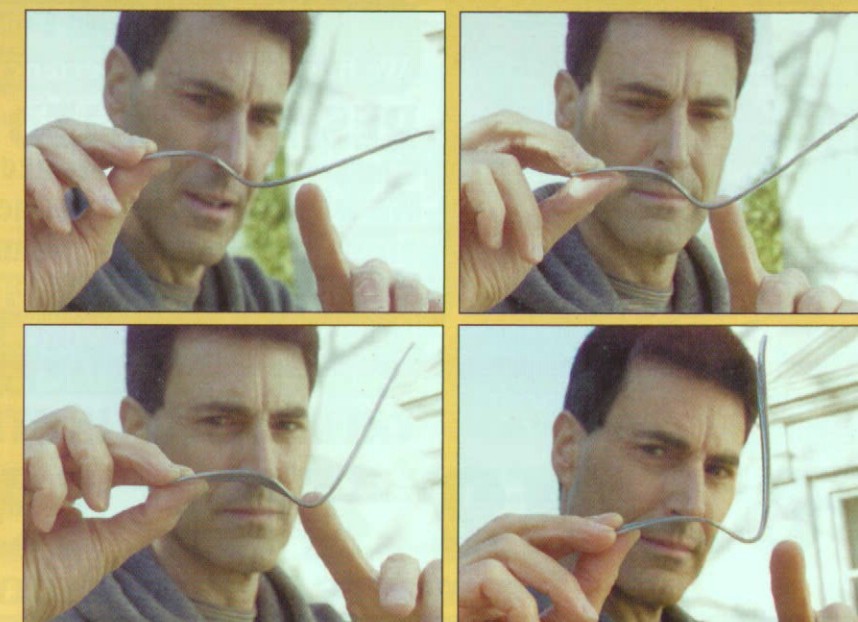
He woke up in hospital in Hadassah in Jerusalem.

"That was when it dawned on me that I had killed a man, another human being. I still find it difficult to come to terms with. I know that I will meet this man again on the other side.

"He is almost like a part of me now."

Recovering from his injuries, Uri left the Army and soon his extraordinary abilities made him a household name.

From mineral dowsing to bending and softening spoons and keys, mending broken watches, moving compasses with the power of thought and myriad other



Proof: In this *Soldier* picture sequence, Geller bends a metal fork through 90 degrees

Top-drawer tip started it all

URI Geller puts his rise to fame down to luck – and a recommendation from former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir.

It all started when he was working as a male model after he left the Army.

"One day I bent a key and a photographer was so shocked that he invited me to his home to demonstrate my powers to his friends. I said OK, as long as you pay me. I needed the money; my mother was still working as a seamstress and waitress.

"So I went to his home and that was when I realised I have something that can astound people no matter how trivial it is,

such as spoon-bending or fixing watches."

People began inviting him to parties and one day he attended an event at which the Israeli premier was present.

"I sent her to the loo to do a drawing in secret and when she came back I drew what she had done without being shown.

"The next day she was being interviewed on Israeli radio and the presenter asked her what she predicted for the future of Israel.

She replied without hesitation: 'Don't ask me, ask Uri Geller.' That was it. The phone starting ringing."

activities, Uri is by any standard a remarkable man.

After several years as a TV celebrity in Israel, he went to the Stanford Research Institute in California in 1972 for his abilities to be scientifically examined. But the boffins could not explain his skills.

Now he has found a new avenue for the talents which have made him a celebrity.

"Today I teach people not spoon bending but motivation. Anyone can, with the power of belief, change their lives for the better and I believe we can all do it. Believe in your own talents."

Away from his unusual world, Uri has written 13 books and has been closely involved with Exeter City Football Club. How his links with the team known as "the Grecians" came about is a story in

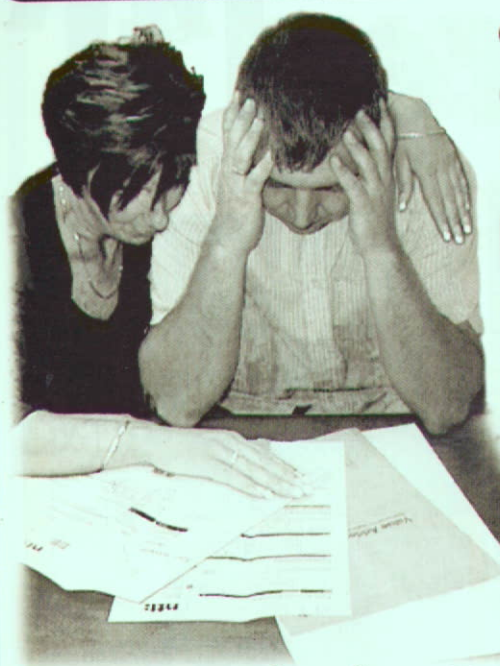
itself. His son Daniel developed a "fixation" about the club and persuaded Uri to visit the city with him. When they arrived, Daniel navigated their way through the streets and took his father to ancient sites and places that even the locals weren't aware of. Uri believes his son lived there in a past life.

Thirty-six years after his wartime exploits, Uri is still haunted by the memory of the Jordanian soldier he killed. Although he is a pacifist, he has strong views on the value of military service.

"I recommend that everyone should be a soldier of their own country," he said. "Your heart is with your country; you have to guard your country. I did it for three years, I took part in the war and I know what it is about."

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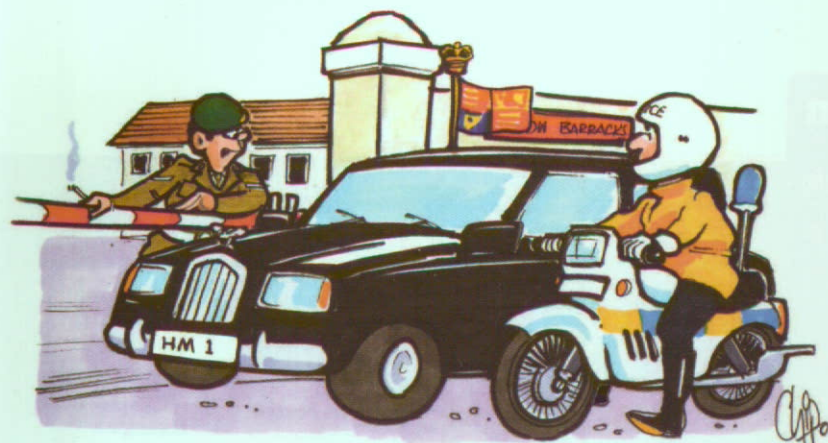
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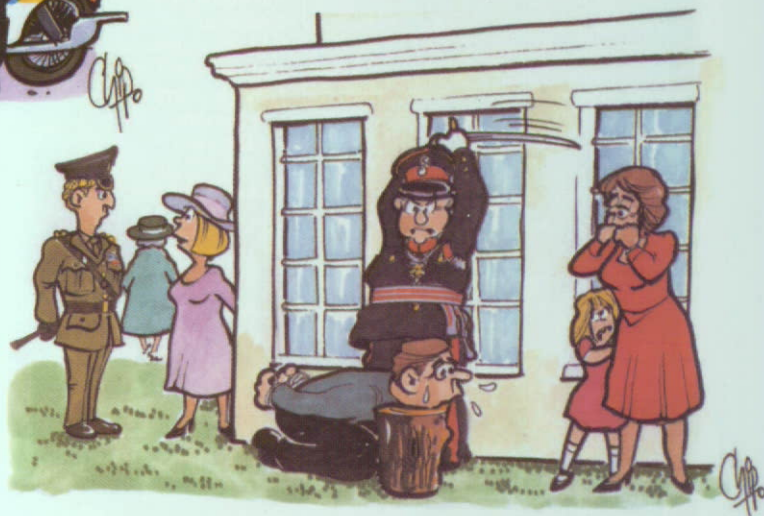


"Er... fng is... we're not quite ready yet. Could you drive round the block a couple of times?"

By Royal Appointment

An affectionate look at THOSE visits

Chuckle with Chip



"Her Majesty is worried that the Lord Lieutenant may regard the councillor's failure to bow rather too seriously."



"The escort, Your Majesty? Ready as always."



"Look, Philip... how marvellous... old paint!"



"One understands that a visit might be a right royal pain to you, young man... but let me tell you that sometimes they're not a bundle of laughs for me either."

Selamat datang* to heaven

Brunei Darussalam, or Abode of Peace, is a tiny oil-rich Islamic sultanate situated on the north west coast of the island of Borneo.

The country, famous primarily for the wealth of its Sultan and its tax-free, subsidised society, is described by tourist guides as the "Kingdom of unexpected treasures" and a "little slice of Islamic heaven".

One of Asia's best-kept

secrets, Brunei has a population of just 330,000 and remains largely undeveloped, untouched and unexploited by the outside world.

Lying just 400 miles north of the equator, it boasts remote coastlines and unexplored rainforest which cover half its land area. It enjoys a warm and wet tropical climate throughout the year.

* Bruneian for welcome

Work hard, play hard



Jungle ops: Rfn Bhim Gurung, front, with Rfn Prakash Gauchan and Cpl Hombahadur Gurung. For those posted there, jungle training is an essential ingredient of the Brunei experience

A posting to this Asian garrison provides a rare opportunity for general service soldiers and families

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

WITH opportunities for overseas postings shrinking, Brunei is an attractive prospect to those with a taste for adventure.

"It's a brilliant place to be if you enjoy the heat, want to get fit and are into outdoor activities and travelling," said Garri-

son Commander Lt Col Craig Lawrence.

"It's a work hard, play hard environment. There are opportunities for those with an interest in diving, waterskiing, canoeing, sailing, windsurfing and climbing, and for those who want to play sports such as football, rugby, basketball and volleyball.

"But if your idea of a good afternoon is sitting in front of a television with a handful of DVDs and a six-pack of beer then you are probably not going to enjoy it here."

The garrison has its own swimming pool and gymnasium facilities and soldiers and their families can apply for membership of the Shell International Staff Club, which includes a range of social, sporting and boating

activities. There is a real sense of community within the garrison and the quality of life is generally very good. The standard of education at both primary and secondary level is high and teachers are trained in the UK.

Garrison personnel are keen to point out, however, that despite the weather and the activities on offer, Brunei should not be viewed as a sunshine posting.

"It's not a holiday resort and the guys do work hard," said Maj Phil Cook, o/c 7Ft AAC. "But when they get down time they've got a bit more cash to go and enjoy themselves."

Brunei is the perfect jumping-off point to explore South-East Asia and during their tour most soldiers take full advan-



CO of 1RGR and Garrison Commander Lt Col Craig Lawrence

Eye in the sky

DESPITE operating from probably one of the most picturesque pans in the world, the men and women of 7 Flight, Army Air Corps have little time to take in the stunning views of the South China Sea from their base on the north-west coast of Brunei.

Saving lives in the jungle is what their job is all about and an aircraft and crew is permanently on one hour's notice to move.

SSgt Gordon McBain said: "We provide casualty evacuation cover 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year round. Our flying rate here is very high. We support the garrison, the resident battalion, the Jungle Warfare Wing and a number of exercises."

But it is the unit's night flying capability which sets it apart. Brunei's own air force does not have this ability.

Maj Phil Cook, o/c 7 Flight, said: "It's probably the most demanding night-flying you'll do in Army aviation. It's just so dark in the jungle; there are no extra lights out there and if you've got low cloud cover, no moonlight and a thunderstorm, it's particularly challenging, but fun."

Tasked crews take to the skies in Bell 212 helicopters. These robust 30-year-old twin-



Ready: Pilot Sgt Clive Stevens prepares for a night flight

engined aircraft thrive in the soaring temperatures and humidity of the jungle. Capable of carrying ten passengers, the 212 is likened by its technicians to a four-tonner with blades.

SSgt McBain added: "The metal blades have a strimming effect so we can get quite close to the trees. When they come back from the jungle it's just a case of wiping off green stains as opposed to totally replacing the blades as you would with a Lynx."



In charge: Maj Phil Cook, o/c 7 Fit



Cutting a dash: Maj Ross Daines waterskis on a jungle river, one of many sporting options

Sultan's salute

Report: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

IT was an event to remember for the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, Brunei Garrison's resident battalion, when the Sultan of Brunei marked the end of its three-year posting with a farewell visit to soldiers and their families.

"This was an important day for us," said commanding officer Lt Col Craig Lawrence. "It was a formal goodbye from the Sultan to this battalion before we return to the UK and a chance for His Majesty to come and give support to the garrison he continues to invest in."

Later this month, the soldiers of 1 RGR will move to Sir John Moore Barracks at Folkestone, where preparations for a six-month deployment to Bosnia in the autumn will gather pace. They will be replaced in Brunei by 2 RGR.

The 800-strong 1st Battalion, formed nine years ago in Hong Kong as part of an amalgamation, recruits predominantly from the west of Nepal, from the Gurung, Thapa, Magar and Pun castes.

Brunei's association with the Brigade of Gurkhas dates back to 1962, when troops were deployed from Singapore to suppress an uprising by Brunei communists against the present Sultan's father.

Their success in putting down the rebellion led the Sultan to request the permanent stationing of a Gurkha battalion, with support elements, in Brunei at the expense of his government. A further



Musical welcome: The Sultan is piped to the officers' mess

British presence in the sultanate is provided in the form of loan service personnel working with the Bruneian Armed Forces.

The arrangement between the UK and Brunei is renewed at intervals of five years and was signed earlier this year by the Sultan and Prime Minister Tony Blair for the period 2003-2008.

Proud moment: The Sultan of Brunei Darussalam inspects the guard of honour. He is accompanied by o/c B Coy, Maj Lawrence Fowlkes. Behind them is the CO and the Gurkha Major



Show of arms: The Sultan takes an interest in weapon systems demonstrated by soldiers of 1 RGR



This is how we do it: 1RGR conducts a public order demonstration, left, for the Sultan. The battalion is preparing for a deployment to Bosnia on peace support operations

Precision: B Company, right, mounts a guard of honour to greet the Sultan on his arrival at Brunei Garrison



For 'D-Day dodgers' read 'Italy stars'

Sixty years ago these 'forgotten' heroes fought – and finally won – a campaign bitterly contested the length of Italy

Report: Nigel Kendall

ONE can excuse people today for thinking that the invasion of France – the D-Day landings – heralded the liberation of Europe and the beginning of the end of the Second World War.

After all, the frequent commemorations of the June 1944 landings have attracted international attention on several occasions over the past half-century. But spare a thought for the men of the Italy Star Association, who fought a succession of bitterly-contested battles through Italy a full year before the Normandy Landings.

The association is made up of men who served in all three Armed Services and the Merchant Navy, and who were awarded the Italy Star campaign medal for their part in battles in Italy and in Italian waters from 1943 to 1945. They remind everyone that Rome was liberated two days before D-Day unfolded in the early hours of June 6, 1944.

Their job became progressively more difficult as their resources were sapped to prepare for the great assault on Normandy's beaches. To their horror – and abiding anger – the troops slogging their way wearily across the bloody battlefields of Italy learned that Lady Astor MP had describe them in the House of Commons as "D-Day dodgers". It was an ill-conceived tag that came to haunt them.

Liberating Italy cost 330,000 Allied and enemy lives, 44,750 of them British and Commonwealth. The dodgers paid an immense price for clearing the Germans out of Europe's underbelly.

The decision to open the front was taken at the Allied summit in Casablanca in January 1943. It began with an amphibious operation to occupy Sicily, expanding into an advance on the Italian mainland designed to knock Italy out of the war and capture the Foggia airfields.

ITALY Star Association members feel the 60th anniversary of their campaign should be remembered by the nation.

Every year they hold their own reunion, with a service of commemoration and remembrance. This year it was held in Chichester on Sunday, May 18. It marked the July 1943 Sicily landings and the September 9, 1943 landings on the Italian mainland.

The service was in Chichester Cathedral followed by a parade and march past in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex and the Association Patron, Field Marshal Lord Inge.

The association has 2,150 members and branches all over the UK and in New Zealand. They are proud to include members of the Polish Carpathian Infantry Division, who fought so valiantly at Cassino.

From there the Allies planned to attack previously inaccessible areas of eastern and southern Germany. Lessons learned in Sicily, at Salerno and at Anzio became vital in the planning of D-Day.

The campaign began on July 9, 1943, with the 5th US Army and the British 8th

Army landing on the toe of Italy. Soon, both armies had captured much of southern Italy, including the Foggia airfields and the important port of Naples.

The Germans retreated to natural fortresses along the Liri Valley, south of Rome. Up to 180,000 men were killed or wounded during this four-month period. The many rivers and ridges that crossed their paths guaranteed the British a hard time on the east coast.

On the Cassino front – or Gustav Line – the Americans suffered a setback while trying to cross the Rapido River. Making excellent use of the terrain, the Germans had chosen their positions well to delay the advance. To relieve the pressure, II Corps landed farther to the north, behind enemy lines at Anzio. After three attacks on the Gustav Line had been repulsed, both fronts bogged down into stalemate.

With fresh troops, the Allies launched a spring offensive on May 11, finally break-

ing through. By June 4, 1944, the Allies on the two fronts had linked up and advanced into Rome. Barely 48 hours later the greatest armada ever assembled sailed under cover of night from ports along Britain's south coast.

The Germans gave up the Eternal City without causing further damage, choosing instead to fight a delaying action as they retreated north of the Arno River and into the mountains.

North of Rome, German troops formed another defence line along the Apennine Mountains. The British attacked up the east coast.

The main crossing of the Apennines was the heavily-defended Il Futa Pass, so the attack went in at Il Giogo Pass to the east. It was an uphill battle, with several peaks having to be assaulted.

Gradually the 5th and 8th Armies were drained of troops as units were pulled out to prepare for the invasion of Normandy and Southern France, and the fighting in Italy drew to a stalemate as the second

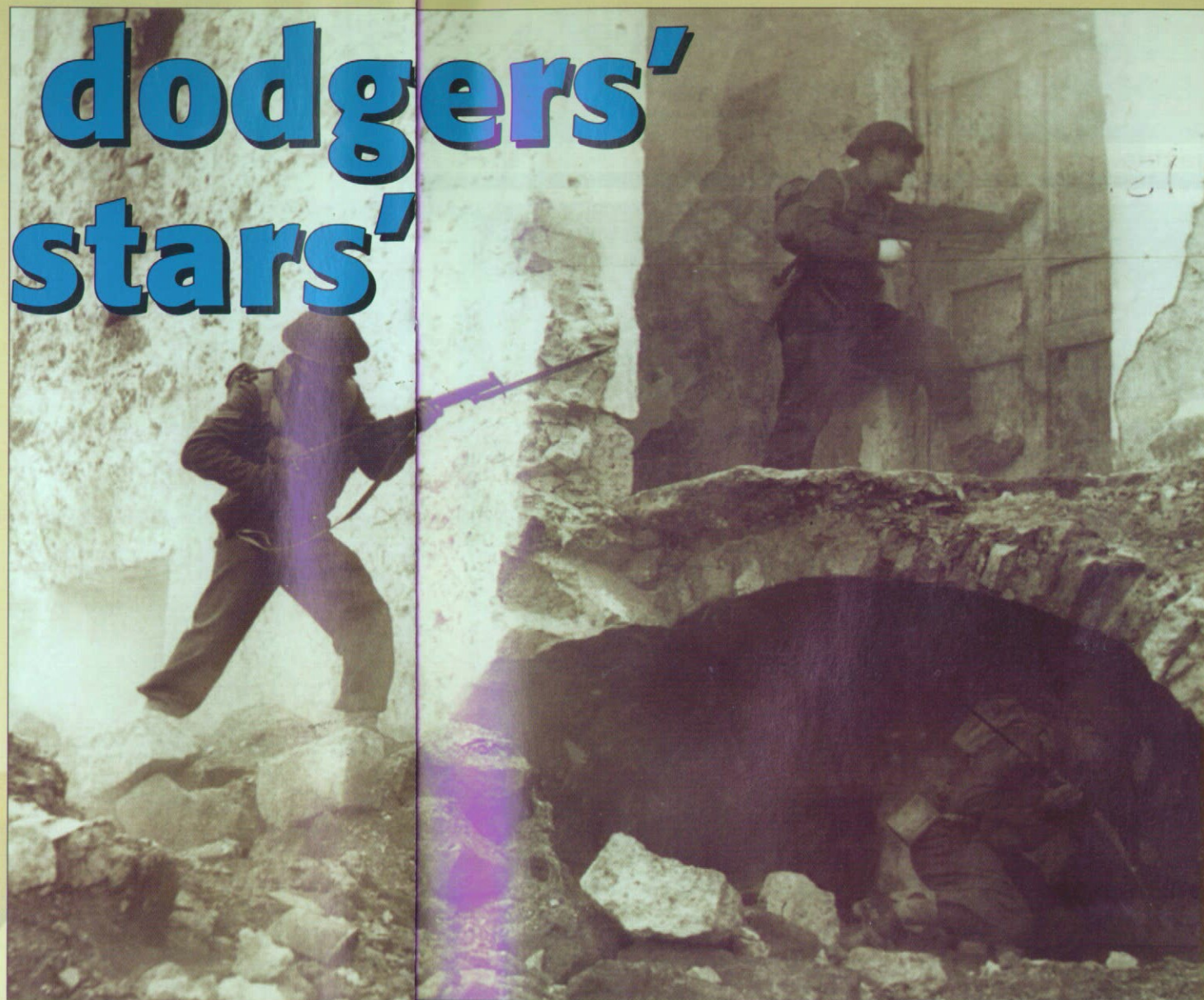
winter of the campaign set in. From February to April 1945, a few new units arrived, most notably the 10th Mountain Division, which was effective in winter operations.

On April 19 the British began an attack on Bologna, followed by another mounted by the 5th Army.

After the fall of Bologna, the Allies pushed out of the mountains and raced across the Po River Valley. Amid much confusion they advanced rapidly, chasing the retreating Germans into the Alps. The Italian campaign was over. It was fought under conditions that tested the training, endurance and qualities of the fighting men to their limit.

Despite the advantages given to the Allies by their superior aircraft, the Italian campaign was a slow, desperately contested advance throughout the length of the country, which had never before been totally overrun from the south.

Now the D-Day dodgers turned their attention to the second front.



Bitter conflict: British infantrymen clear a building at Cassino on March 24, 1944. The German Army fought furiously from well-prepared positions

'Suddenly the house was struck. It collapsed and buried us in rubble'

Signaller and despatch rider Graham Swain, 7th Battalion, The Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry

"I was ordered to make contact with the company commander and report. I left the battalion HQ on my motor bike and drove up the road leading from the Anzio bridgehead. The road was under constant shellfire, so I eventually ditched the bike and took cover in a house. To my surprise I found another despatch rider in there."

"Suddenly the house was struck. It collapsed and buried us in rubble. We were there for some time. Eventually we heard German voices so decided to keep quiet. The rubble was then pulled away, and I saw the largest German paratrooper I'd ever seen. Just as I thought we were to be taken prisoner, I saw British troops. It turned out that the German had been taken prisoner himself and was under escort back to our lines."



Gunner James King, 86th Mountain Regiment RA:

"Our howitzer came apart so that it could be carried by mules."

"It was decided that our gun would be

used to destroy a German mountain position that was shelling us. We waited until dark, then an Italian partisan led us with our mules to the base of the mountain. We got the range and elevation and we fired around

five rounds. Our Germans got a nasty shock. A pill box was removed and we were able to return in daylight with no Jerries to bother us!"

Bdr Maurice Cheadle, 93rd Anti-Tank Regiment, 6th Battalion, The Argyll and Southern Highlanders

"Early on, I wasn't to know of the continuing horrors of war which revealed sights and sounds beyond description – Antona, Coriano and then Forli, Faenza and the costly action on the Senio River."

"Having seen my driver killed and being buried under rubble from Jerry shelling, I count my blessings that both I and my brother returned home."



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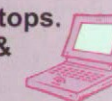
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First, first again in Army Sevens

Royal Scots lift trophy for third successive season

Report: Roger Thompson

BOOKMAKERS stopped taking bets on The Royal Scots retaining their Sodexo-sponsored Army Sevens title months ago.

With 7 Para RHA, the Black Watch and the Dukes away in the Gulf, there appeared to be little in the way of serious opposition, and the men from Edinburgh almost fell into the complacency trap. Indeed, the First of Foot initially seemed more intent on cruising than bruising.

What they had not bargained for, in a tournament dominated by Fijians, was that even in the preliminary rounds the incoming tackles would be accurate, painful and, naturally, that little bit late.

The final against the Infantry

Training Centre (ITC) Catterick proved equally testing. The trainees were utterly unimpressed by the presence of international players and the fierceness of the close-quarter battle suggested that the "niggle" may have had a touch of history.

Tackled out of their stride early on, the Scots' cultured flamboyance ebbed, their power on the flanks became isolated and the counter-attacks from deep almost dried up.

Nudge and counter-nudge bordering on synchronised obstruction went unpunished and it required a superb individual try by LCpl Bul Bulumakau to settle the champions down.

Almost by stealth the pre-tournament favourites gradually imposed their patterns of play on the scratch side who fought to the end of a very long day.

Only when the individual skills and match fitness of the Scots had subdued the raw courage of the ITC was star man Pte Emosi Naisarama released to strut his stuff.

With his help, the Royal Scots

eventually retained their title by a 26-19 points margin, but there were moments when the improbable had almost seemed possible.

Deprived of the major forward presence of Pte Apo Satala and Pte Kite Rawalai, the eventual champions were grateful for the commitment of Pte Matthew Raikosa who was at the heart of every skirmish for possession – particularly when a third successive victory was far from certain.

◆ The women's final, AGC against RMCS, was as frenetic as it was evenly balanced.

With the game scoreless at half-time, a lapse in concentration just after the break by the Shrivenham defence proved to be decisive when Capt Kerri Munro took full advantage of the opening and drove her very weary troops over the college line.

One try always looked to be enough to secure the win, but the AGC put the result beyond all doubt with a try late on that took the final score to 10-0.

◆ 1 RRW won the plate competition after rather casually overcoming 25 Regt RLC 35-14.



En route to the silverware: Pte Matthew Raikosa receives the ball from Pte Kite Bavadra during his team's semi-final victory against 2 PWRR

Picture: Roger Thompson



Debutant: Gdsm Alfred Vakacokovanua (SG) in Barbarians' colours

Picture: Roger Thompson

Soldiers honour true hero

Army stars compete in memorial match

Report: Roger Thompson

SOME 96 years after being cut down by machine-gun fire at the Battle of Ypres, Edgar Mobbs is still remembered annually by his sport and his kind of rugby people.

Although the body of the former England and Northampton player was never recovered from the Flanders mud, his name still lives on, particularly in the minds of rugby players, both young and old, in the East Midlands.

Mobbs, along with countless of his contemporaries, volunteered to join the Army in 1914 but was rejected on the ground that at 32 he was too old for active service.

Undeterred, he gathered 700 friends together and formed his own battalion, which was formally titled the 7th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, but

later became better known as the "Sportsman's Battalion".

He went to France as a private soldier but was soon commissioned. After three years of heavy fighting, during which Mobbs showed outstanding gallantry and leadership, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order, was promoted to lieutenant colonel and put in command of the battalion he had formed.

Mobbs was killed shortly after that in 1917 while attempting to extricate some of his men pinned down by murderous crossfire at Ypres.

A memorial to the modest rugby star and the men who died alongside him stands at Abington Gardens in Northampton, but perhaps more fitting tributes are The Mobbs Fund, which provides financial support for junior rugby throughout the East Midlands, and the annual Mobbs Memorial Match between the East Midlands and the world-famous Barbarians.

This year's high-profile exhibition fixture was a kaleidoscope of fast, open rugby and Mobbs would certainly have

approved of the skills, tenacity and sportsmanship shown by both teams in defeat and victory.

With many internationals and premier-ship players in the Barbarians team the Midlands did very well to hold the score to 53-26.

Four Servicemen were selected by the Barbarians. CSgt Bob Armstrong (RM) had previously won his tie while the newcomers included Army skipper Cpl Mal Roberts (RLC), Cpl Andy Smith (RLC) and Gdsmn Alfred Vakacokovanua (SG).

As he proved to such devastating effect during this year's Inter-Services showdown at Twickenham, few can stop Smith at full throttle and he battered his way over the Midlands' line for a typical forward's try.

Alfred, previously capped by Fiji, relished the freedom allowed by the Babas mercurial style and was constantly involved in attacking from deep in his own half. Having stamped his mark on the game when the going was tough he signed off with a typical sevens try, gassing in from 40 metres.

TABLES

MASSEY TROPHY

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
R Signals	12	11	0	1	53	33
RLC	12	10	2	0	29	32
Infantry	12	9	1	2	32	28
REME	12	8	2	2	32	26
RA	12	7	1	4	17	22
RE	12	7	1	4	17	22
AAC	12	4	2	6	-5	14
APTC	12	3	4	5	-9	13
AGC	12	3	2	7	-21	11
AMS	12	3	0	9	-43	9
CA Mus	12	2	1	9	-44	7
RAC	12	2	0	10	-32	6
Int Corps	12	0	2	10	-26	2

* Final standings

4 DIV SQUASH LEAGUE

	P	W	L	Pts
25 Trg Sp Regt	4	4	0	74
RMA Sandhurst	4	2	2	40
SEAE	4	1	3	31
3 CS Regt	2	1	1	25
1 RSME	2	1	1	22
Middle Wallop Station	2	0	2	3

* Final standings

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Leader of the pack: Great Britain's Capt Graeme Scott (RE) in action at the Sleddog World Championships in Germany Picture: Graeme Main

Scott continues to Winalot

GREAT Britain's lone representative at this year's Sleddog World Cup reaffirmed his status as top dog on home soil by winning a record fourth successive title at the United Kingdom championships in Newcastle.

Capt Graeme Scott (RE), who made sporting history in Todtmoos, Germany in February when he became the first British competitor to race a United Kingdom-based

team at a World championships, took first place in each of the two-, three- and six-dog races.

In the six-dog event Scott opted for international experience, selecting five of his World Cup stars (Huckle, Jenny, Zappa, Flik and Finch) and former British champion Blue to pull his wheeled rig, and completed the ten-mile dirt course 2min 57sec ahead of the second-placed team.

As well as revelling in a triumphant return to the domestic scene, Scott is also celebrating the arrival of ten new additions to his squad.

"My lead dogs Jenny and Huckle have just had puppies, nine males and a bitch," explained Scott. "So if everything continues to go to plan I should have a welcome selection problem by the time the next Winter Olympics comes round."

IN OFF THE POST ...

Whingeing civilians? Touché

HACKLES were raised and deep breaths were taken after reading Cpl Legge's letter ("Less sport? It's just not cricket", June).

As someone who has competed against the Services for the Civil Service cricket team over a number of years, I concede that the amount of time off that Service personnel receive for sporting purposes turns us civvies green with envy. Compare the meagre three games played by the CS cricket team to the Services fixture lists and you'll see why.

However, my gripe with Cpl Legge is that by stereotyping his civilian colleagues as whingers he falls into exactly the same category. Yes, we have different working practices, soldiers are on duty 24 hours a

day, seven days a week, while we get paid to do a nine-to-five job, but Cpl Legge should remember that, just like the Army, the MoD has shrunk somewhat in recent years.

There are now fewer bodies doing more work and the old image of the civvy working day is becoming increasingly inaccurate. Nowadays, when a member of a working team goes off on leave, or to play sport, the other members of that team (usually under the cosh themselves) are still expected to pick up some of the slack.

Consequently the time that we civvies get to play sport is now coming under severe pressure. The days of a two-and-a-half-day round trip for an away fixture are

long gone and have been replaced by a single night away or a slog back on the motorway straight after a game.

Consider also the increasing difficulty in fielding worthy teams in many sports, at all levels of competition, because managers can ill afford to release staff. This, together with the lack of recruitment, means that there are fewer good young players to replace us old lags and that the standard of CS and departmental sport is on the decline.

So come on Cpl Legge, times are a-changin' but you still have a pretty good deal. Who knows, one day you might even start beating us civvies at some sports. — Ian Moore, Main Building, London.

SHORTS

Air Force grounded

FOR the third successive year the Army (Cyprus) rugby team beat their Royal Air Force counterparts in the annual Inter-Services showdown at RAF Akrotiri.

Despite scoring three tries the airmen struggled to contain the Army, who, sporting a strong Fijian contingent, cruised to a 48-21 victory.

Coaching for coaches

THE Army Football Association is running a series of UEFA-accredited coaching courses for Army personnel this year.

Course dates include: Level one – August 26-29 and November 10-13; Level three – October 20-31.

For further information contact Steve Stone on 01252 347962 or mil 94222 2962.

Welch's Welsh wonders

ROYAL Welch Fusilier recruitment officer Sgt Paul Campbell is taking a well earned break this summer having helped the North Wales Rugby Union team to secure back-to-back victories in the Welsh Counties Championship for the first time in the club's history.

Campbell vice-captained the team who defeated hot-favourites Monmouthshire 27-12 in the competition's final at Wrexham FC's Racecourse Ground.

Australian workout

AS *Soldier* went to press the PowerSport-sponsored Army Physical Training Corps rugby team were en route to Australia for their first overseas tour in more than a decade.

During their 15-day visit Down Under, the British squad will go head-to-head with the Australian tri-Service team and also take on Australian Infantry and Armoured Division sides.

Barbados bound batsmen

THERE are still a limited number of places available on the AGC's Close Brothers Military Services and PAX Personal Accident Insurance-sponsored cricket tour to Barbados later this year.

Anyone interested should contact Maj David Barrington on mil 9621 89374 at the earliest opportunity.

Young guns wanted

DETERMINED to build on the success of winning the South West Counties Championship last season, Army U21 football coach WO2 Josh Giddins is on the hunt for new players.

Trials for the 2003/2004 squad will be held at Denison Barracks, Hermitage on September 1-5, and those interested in attending should notify their unit football officers.

Magpies steal the limelight

British soldiers help football to find its feet in Afghanistan

THOUSANDS of football supporters crowded on to the crumbling terraces of Kabul's Olympic Stadium to watch a British Forces select side take on the Afghan National Army team.

With the teams wearing strips donated by Nottingham Forest and Newcastle United, the exhibition match, which was organised to kick-off Afghanistan's new national league competition, designed to assist in the re-establishment of competitive football in the war-torn country, proved a fast-paced encounter despite being played beneath a blazing sun.

The British team, who wore the red of Forest and consisted of soldiers from the Kabul Patrols Company (2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglians) and members of the many regiments and corps that make up the British Forces National Support Element in Kabul, enjoyed much of the possession in the first half and were unlucky to go in at half-time a goal down.

However, the home side, wearing the distinctive black-and-white stripes of Newcastle, turned on the style after the break, scoring a further three unanswered goals, the penultimate of which was a spectacular overhead kick.



Taking on the Toon Army: From left, SSgt Daz Scott (RLC), Cpl Chris Baird (R Anglian) and LCpl Shane Armitage (RLC) in Nottingham Forest colours

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

ANGLING: Inter-corps coarse championships – 1, RLC 19pts (WO1 Pete Forman, WO1 Ian Tyrrell, SSgt Dave Hunter, SSgt Boris Kilner, Sgt Steve Witherick, Cpl Titch Richardson, Cpl Gaz Butler); 2, R Signals 21pts; 3, REME 23pts; 4, RE 28pts; 5, RA 28pts; 6, Infantry 35pts; 7, AAC 36pts; 8, AGC 37pts.

CRICKET: Army/Combined Services results – Wiltshire (162-7) beat Army U25 (104 all out) by 58 runs; Army U25 (213 all out) beat RMAS (209-7) by four runs; Army U25 (173-7) beat Isle of Wight CC (172 all out) by three wickets; Kent (154-2) beat Army (150 all out) by eight wickets; Middlesex 2nd XI (323-5) beat Army (223-4) by 100 runs; Hampshire 2nd XI (364-4) beat Army (129 all out) by 235 runs; Army (246-9 dec) beat Free Foresters (176 all out) by 70 runs; Army (207-9) beat Stock Exchange (204-9) by one wicket.

AGC CC results – AGC (194-7) beat RMAS (147 all out) by 47 runs; AGC (149-6) beat AMS (146 all out) by four wickets.

FOOTBALL: Pricewaterhouse Cooper League – Int Corps 0 R Signals 10; REME 0 RLC 18; R Signals 7 RLC 4; RA 0* AGC 3; RA 0* RLC 3. * match conceded.

Massey Trophy – AGC 9 AMS 3; Int Corps 2 AAC 2; AGC 0 R Signals 5; AGC 6 Int Corps 4; RA 3 REME 3; R Signals 4 RE 0; R Signals 7 RA 0; REME 6 RE 1; R Signals 3 REME 0; RA 0 RE 3.

Territorial Army 2002/2003 Challenge Cup final – B Coy The Rangers 2 Liverpool UOTC 1.

Territorial Army tour of British Army (Germany) – Guttersloh area 0 TA 3 (TA scorers: Rgr Steve Annett (2) and OCdt Paul Gordon); Rhinedahlen Garrison 1 TA 3 (TA scorers: Rgr Annett (2) and Rgr David Tennant).

SHOOTING: Army Service pistol championships, individual competition (Pistol XXX Cup) – 1, Pte Carson (4 R Irish) 533pts; 2, WO2 Nigel Hodgson (QLR) 529pts; 3, LCpl Willy Kennedy (3 R Irish) 523pts.

Revolver Challenge Cup winner – Pte Carson.

Team event (Southern Command Cup) – 1, 4 R Irish; 2, LCV permanent staff; 3, 3 R Irish.

SWIMMING: 4/5 Div championships. Major units – 1, RMAS 80pts; 2, 11 Sig Regt 79pts; 3, SEAE 67pts; 4, 21 Sig Regt 56pts; 5, 3 RSME 41pts; 6, 1 R Anglian 34pts; 7, ATR Pirbright 25pts.

Minor units – 1, 10 Sig Regt 28pts; 2, ATR Lichfield 27pts; 3, 4 GS Med Regt 9pts. **Women's** – 1, RMAS 57pts; 2, 21 Sig Regt 33pts; 3, 11 Sig Regt 24pts; 4, 70 AC Wksp 23pts; 5, SEAE 23pts; 6, 4 GS Med Regt 21pts.

WATER POLO: Southern area championships, 4 Div – 1, SEAE; 2, 3 RSME; 3, 1 R Anglian. 5 Div – 1, 11 Sig Regt; 2, 21 Sig Regt; 3, 30 Sig Regt. **Final** – SEAE beat 11 Sig Regt.

WINDSURFING: Inter-Services competition, course racing – 1, Sgt Doc White (Army); 2, CPO Johnny Walker (Royal Navy); 3, Flt Lt Simon Kent (Royal Air Force); 4, Capt Allan Cross (Army).

Master blaster – 1, Capt Cross; 2, Flt Lt Kent; 3, Sgt White; 4, CPO Walker.

Slalom – 1, Flt Lt Kent; 2, Capt Cross; 3, CCWEA Dave Strudwick (Royal Navy); 4, Maj Gareth Baker (Army).

Long distance – 1, CPO Walker; 2, Sgt White; 3, Flt Lt Kent; 4, Maj Dave Hinsley (Army).

Overall winner – Flt Lt Kent. **Inter-corps championships** – 1, RE; 2, AAC; 3, RLC; 4, REME.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to July...

ANGLING: 5-6 – AAF Group 8 match (Bassingbourne, Royston).

ATHLETICS: 3-4 – Army individual decathlon, heptathlon and 10,000 m championships (Tidworth); 6 – Army triathlon championships (Bournemouth); 9 – Army championships (TBC); 14-18 – Army Triathlon Association novice training camp (Azimghur Barracks, Colerne); 16 – Inter-Services championships (Tidworth); 23 – Inter-Services triathlon championships (Sherborne Castle).

CANOEING: 12-13 – Army sprint and marathon racing championships (Monmouth).

CRICKET: 1 – Army U25 v Royal Signals (Aldershot); 3-6 – U25 Inter-Services festival (Portsmouth); 9 – RMAS v Army women (RMAS), Club cricket conference (Basingstoke), AGC v AMS (TBC); 10 – Combined Services v ECB U19 XI (Vine Lane); 13 – Army women v RAF women (Aldershot); 14 – Army v MCC YC (Vine Lane); 15 – Army v Civil Service CC (Aldershot); 16 – Combined Services v Australian Crusaders (Aldershot); 17 – AGC v Infantry (TBC); 21 – Combined Services U25 XI v Air India XI (Portsmouth); 22 – AGC v REME (TBC); 23 – Bath CC v Army (Bath); 24 – Dorset Select XI v Army (Blandford); 27 – Wootton Bassett v Army women (Wootton Bassett); 28 – Yorkshire Academy v Army (New Rover Ground, Leeds); 29 – Derbyshire 2nd XI v Army (Derby); 31 – AGC v RAC (TBC).

EQUESTRIAN: 2-4 – Royal Tournament show jumping (Melton Mowbray); 6 – Dressage competition, preliminary round (Warminster Saddle Club).

GOLF: 2-3 – Inter-unit championships (Army GC, Aldershot); 7 – Army women v Tynley Park (Tynley Park GC); 29 – Army women v NAPGC ladies (Aldershot GC).

MOTORCYCLING: 11-13 – British Army championships (East Yorkshire).

POLO: 12 – Rundle Cup (Tidworth).

RUGBY LEAGUE: 9 – Lawson Cup semi-finals (TBC).

TUG OF WAR: 12 – Army, Territorial Army and Army Cadet Force championships (Thorney Island, Emsworth); 16 – Inter-Services championships (Tidworth).

WINDSURFING: 7-11 – Army championships (Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy).

WINTER SPORTS: 5-6 – Alpine Challenge (Allgäu, Bavaria).

CONTACT US

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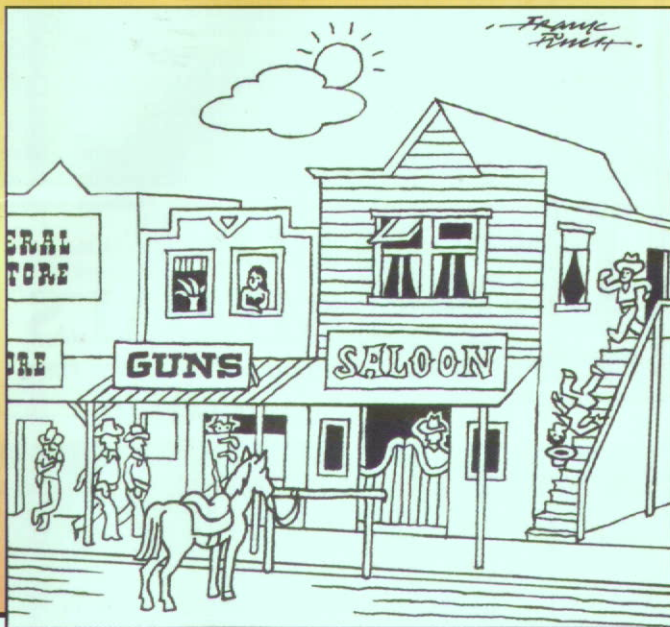
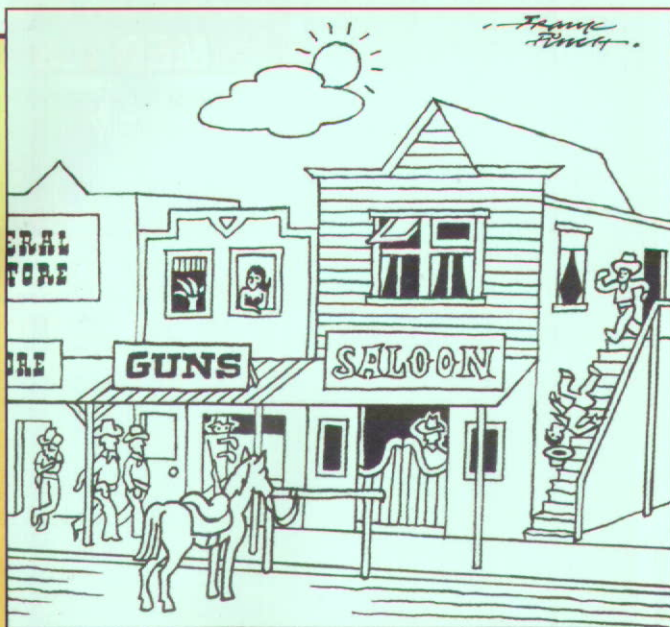
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The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the September issue.

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May issue (No 738): First correct entry drawn at random was from Cpl P Lawson-Brown, of 24 Liaison HQ, HQ USAREUR and &7A, Campbell Barracks, BFPO 115, who wins £100. Runners-up Maj R Mudford, of Shrewsbury, and G Budgen, 24 Trg Sp Sqn RE, Kitchener Barracks, Chatham, each win a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: high-jumper's head, vest, left sock and both shoes; second runner's trailing leg; eighth runner's arm; flagpoles; corner of building; high-jump pole.



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Write a caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in October 1950. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by July 30.



THERE was a huge entry for the May competition, left, but we picked as the best of many quirky entries: "Rupert found it necessary to hire bodyguards after being assaulted in Nutwood" from WO2 Taylor, 58 Bty, 12 Regt RA. We also liked "No, I am not speaking to you until you apologise for shouting at me" from Capt Bryan Smith, 202 (Midlands) Fd Hosp (V) and "I said I was sorry" from G Budgen, 24 Trg Sp Sqn RE, Chatham. Cpl Bate of 659 Sqn, 4



Regt AAC offered: "Leave the keys in the ignition, you said. It's the middle of Salisbury Plain, you said. It's not as if anyone's going to steal the CO's car, you said..."

Sgt J L Smith, Defence NBC

Centre, Winterbourne Gunner, suggested the enigmatic: "It's good to see men outstanding in their field" but we weren't sure about "You seem distant since I came out, Ted" from Sgt Cooper of 22 Fd Hosp in Aldershot.

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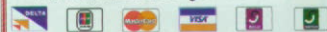
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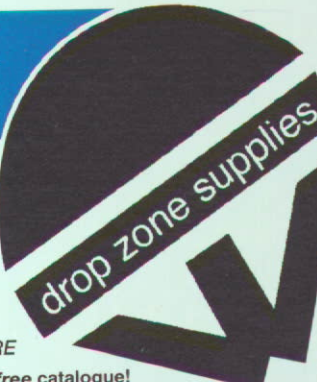
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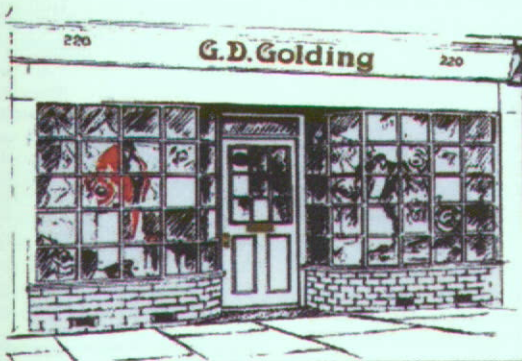
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Hayley, (22), 4'11", single blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys travel, nights in and out, pubs and clubs. Ex-holiday rep, TA, very supportive and outgoing. Seeking male soldiers, 20-30. Will reply to all letters received. P364

Paula, (41), 5'3", short blonde hair, happy, healthy, easy-going, GSOH, tactile, romantic and straight talking. Widowed for 15 years and has two grown up children. Enjoys keep fit, entertaining friends and exercising her two dogs. Seeking single male pen pals, any age group. P368

Carole, (47), 5'4", dark hair with medium build. Enjoys music, cinema, theatre, eating out and reading. Divorced with two teenage children living in Essex. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P369

Linda, (48), 5'3", brunette with brown eyes. Enjoys meeting people. Working part time at a fire brigade/first aid. Seeking pen pals taller than 5'7", preferably non-smokers with good personality, late 30s early 40s. P370

Sharon, (39), 5'4", fair hair and green eyes. Enjoys cinema, amateur dramatics, holidays, music, watching all sports, church, Elvis and having fun. Divorced with one child. Seeking pen pals, 35+. P371

Rachel, (30), 5'5", curvy with dark hair. Enjoys cinema, cooking, eating out, rugby union, the coast and reading. Seeking genuine pen pals with GSOH, 28-40. P372

Nicola, (23), 5'3", medium build blonde with brown eyes. Enjoys pubs, clubs, football and cinema. Seeking male pen pals, 20-35. P373

Jennifer, 5'7" teacher. Enjoys reading, walking, gardening, theatre and places of historical interest. Seeking friendly, honest pen pals with integrity, any age group. P374

Helen, (44), 5'1", short brown hair and brown eyes. Caring with GSOH but shy. Enjoys sport especially football & rugby, the gym, walking, cooking, eating out, videos, cinema and travel. Seeking pen pals with similar interests, 35-45. P375

Bex, (21), 5'3", longish blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys travelling, going out with friends, pubs, clubs, music, dancing, meeting new people and generally having a good time. Lives in Lincolnshire and works as a nursery nurse, loves driving in her car. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P376

Belinda, (22), 5'4", slim with dark strawberry blonde hair and blue/green eyes. Enjoys meeting new people, writing letters, cinema, eating out, shopping, swimming, pets and travel. Seeking female pen pals of similar age, photo appreciated 20+. P377

Judith, (52), 5'5", auburn hair and blue eyes. Enjoys walking, travelling, cinema, theatre, computing, reading, gardening, eating out and cooking. Admin Assistant, kind, cheerful personality and loves receiving letters. Seeking pen pals, 38-60. P378

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Barbara, (36), 5'2", blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys swimming, gym, pubs and clubs. Seeking pen pals, 40-50. P380

Jill, (44), 5'3", dark brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys days out in the country, walking, visiting nice places, keep fit, cinema and meals out. Seeking single male pen pals with a caring nature and GSOH, 36-46. P381

Georgina, (45), 5'6", nurse with long dark hair. Enjoys shooting, riding, walking, concerts, writing, reading and studying. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P383

Cathy, (34), 5'2", slim brunette. Enjoys medieval history, Leicester Tigers, Neighbours, Bryan Adams, Question of Sport and Lord of the Rings. Seeking pen pals in the Army who enjoy rugby union and must have a GSOH, 32-45. P385

Elise, (40 ish), 5'5", slim divorced blonde. Enjoys cinema, eating in or out, holidays, walking, music and pubs. Seeking tall single/divorced officer/soldier pen pals, 40-50. Photo appreciated. P386

Pen Pal Replies

To reply to a pen pal, write a letter and send it to this address:
**Soldier Magazine, Ordnance Road,
Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU**

* The box number must be clearly written in the top left corner of all your replies.
* Replies should consist only of letter and photograph if requested.
* Replies received more than three months after the cover date, large, heavy or poorly addressed envelopes will not be forwarded.

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ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY RESULTS

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10 May 2003

1st (365 runs, £6,400): CSgt AM Gunn, Army Foundation College, Harrogate; 2nd (352 runs, £3,200): Cpl SE Phillip, 2 PWRR, Tern Hill; 3rd (344 runs, £2,100): Maj JF Turner, 1 Staffords, Tidworth; 4th (341 runs, £1,333.33): Maj HIM Clark, 1 A and SH, Belfast; 4th (341 runs, £1,333.33): Cpl JDP Nelson, Royal Hospital Haslar, Gosport; 4th (341 runs, £1,333.33): Pte C Sedgwick, 7 Tpt Regt RLC, Bielefeld; 7th (337 runs, £700): SSgt GB Walton, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE, Chivenor; 8th (331 runs, £500): Cpl BA O'Sullivan, 1 CS Med Regt, Munster; 9th (330 runs, £166.67): Capt DO Blackburn, 7 Para RHA, Aldershot; 9th (330 runs, £166.67): Bdr MC Hardman, 3 RHA, Hohne; 9th (330 runs, £166.67): Cpl PS Wakeman, CSSU HQ, RAF Akrotiri

17 May 2003

1st (574 runs, £3,900): Sgt RG Alligan, 13 Air Asslt Sp Regt, Colchester; 1st (574 runs, £3,900): SSgt SP Lynham, 9 Sup Regt RLC, Chippenham; 1st (574

runs, £3,900): Cpl T McGill, 1 GS Regt RLC, Gutersloh; 4th (568 runs, £1,333.33): Pte PN Blakelock, 7 Coy Coldm Gds, London; 4th (568 runs, £1,333.33): LCpl AW Greenaway, SEME, Bordon; 4th (568 runs, £1,333.33): Cpl DI Price, 22 Engr Regt, Andover; 7th (563 runs, £700): Capt BC McMaster, 1 Hldrs, Edinburgh; 8th (557 runs, £333.33): WO2 DA Caldwell, 666 Sqn AAC (V), Bulford; 8th (557 runs, £333.33): SSgt A Kaye, 40 Regt RA, Topcliffe; 8th (557 runs, £333.33): Pte BJ Parkinson, 3 Para RHA, Aldershot

24 May 2003

1st (425 runs, £6,400): WO2 RI Whereat, 4 GS Med Regt, Aldershot; 2nd (397 runs, £3,200): Capt A Bremner, SEAE, Arborfield; 3rd (389 runs, £2,100): LCpl JS Montgomery, 1 RGBW, Hounslow; 4th (386 runs, £1,700): SSgt R Larkin, 3 CS Regt RLC, Abingdon; 5th (381 runs, £1,300): Pte M Vakatawa, 1 GH, Ballykelly; 6th (380 runs, £1,000): SSgt S Hinds, 1 Bn REME, Osnabruck; 7th (378 runs, £700): Cpl TH Reynolds, 2 RGJ, Warmin-

ster; 8th (377 runs, £500): WO2 RH Fishwick, HQ 1 (UK) Arm Div, Herford; 9th (376 runs, £300): Capt KF Dermody, 9 Sup Regt RLC, Chippenham; 10th (375 runs, £200): SSgt PJ Johnston, 22 Regt RA, Kirton in Lindsey

31 May 2003

1st (306 runs, £6,400): Pte L Homer, Army Foundation College, Harrogate; 2nd (295 runs, £3,200): WO1 DA Capner, 1 Kings, Catterick; 3rd (291 runs, £2,100): Capt EA Lindsay, 115 Pro Coy RMP, Osnabruck; 4th (290 runs, £1,700): LCpl MJ Price, 28 Engr Regt, Hameln; 5th (286 runs, £1,300): Maj HFA Sugden, QDG, Catterick; 6th (284 runs, £1,000): Capt OM Dodd, 16 CS Med Regt, Colchester; 7th (279 runs, £700): LCpl DL Bevan, 20 Arm Bde Sig Sqn, Sennelager; 8th (278 runs, £500): Sgt SW Burman, HQ Land, Wilton; 9th (277 runs, £300): WO2 L Collingwood, Sp Bn HQ ARRC, Rheindahlen; 10th (276 runs, £200): Maj D Whitelegg, 151 Sp Regt RLC (V)

07 June 2003

1st (617 runs, £6,400): WO2 AG Hill, 23 Pnr Regt RLC, Bicester; 2nd (609 runs, £3,200): Cpl SJ Birks, SID REME (TFHE DET), Donnington; 3rd (608 runs, £2,100): WO2 PA Buckley, AGC Depot, Worthy Down; 4th (603 runs, £1,700): Capt RJE Forrest, BOWTAT, Bulford; 5th (602 runs, £1,300): Sgt MJ Arnold, 7 Para RHA, Aldershot; 6th (600 runs, £850): WO2 RA McConnell, 7 Regt AAC (V), Bulford; 6th (600 runs, £850): SSgt N Pelleymounter, 9 Sup Regt RLC, Chippenham; 8th (597 runs, £400): Cpl M Dudding, HQ Ashchurch Stn; 8th (597 runs, £400): Capt PR Wells, 17 Port & Mar Regt, Marchwood; 10th (591 runs, £100): Sgt IRR Campbell, 30 Signal Regt, Bramcote; 10th (591 runs, £100): Maj AK Townsend, 5 Trg Regt RLC, Grantham

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MEM Penpals. Send a SAE for more details to: MEM Penpals (Z), PO Box 11281, Birmingham, B43 5WU.

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NOTICES

Charity Commission
REFERENCE: 283327

CHARITY: The Commander 42 (North West) Brigade Trust Fund
The 42 (North West) Brigade Recreation Fund
42 (North West) Brigade Sports Fund

The Charity Commission has made a Scheme to amend the trust of these charities.

A copy can be seen for the next month at: SPS Branch, HQ 42 (NW) Bde, Fulwood Barracks, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs PR2 8AA

Or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference or visiting our website at <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>

Charity Commission
CHY - 1161B

REFERENCE: EN/318707/RED

CHARITIES: The Buffs Cottage Homes (including the Knox Memorial Home) - 266298
The Douglas Haig Memorial Homes - 207318

A Scheme is a legal document made by the Charity Commission. A Scheme has been made for these Charities, which has transferred the property of the Buffs Cottage Homes to the Douglas Haig Memorial Homes.

A copy of the Scheme can be seen for the next month at the Buffs Cottage Homes, Rumfields Road, Broadstairs, Kent or at Regimental Headquarters, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent

Or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Armed Forces Charities, The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference or visiting our website at <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>

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REUNIONS

25 Regiment RA 1947-84: Reunion at Larkhill, July 5-6. Contact Len Haddow, 4 The Rise, Hempstead, Gillingham ME7 3SF, tel/fax 01634 388156.

Northamptonshire Regiment: Annual reunion of the Northants Regimental Association and Leicestershire branch of Royal Anglian Association, July 12-13. Dinner, reception tickets from TA Centre, Clare Street, Northampton NN1 3JQ, tel 01604 635412.

127 (Dragon) Battery: Reunion weekend, Mansergh Barracks, Gütersloh, July 18-20, to mark relocation of the battery from 26 Regt RA to 19 Regt RA at Larkhill. Contact Capt Tom Luker on 0049 5241 84 2256 or e-mail dragons127battery@hotmail.com

600 Signal Tp, past and present, Corsham: Tenth annual reunion and barbecue to be held Aug 30. Details from Mary Scott on 01225 814327 or 600signaltroop@iclwebkit.co.uk

Royal Welch Fusiliers Comrades' Association: 79th annual reunion, Sept 6-7, Hightown Barracks, Wrexham. Call 01978 316189.

Royal Anglian Regt Assn: Regimental day to be held at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford on Sept 14. Details from RHQ 01284 752394 or e-mail rhq_ranglian@keme.co.uk

36 Regiment RA: Reunion on Sept 26-27 at Marlborough Hotel, Felixstowe. Open to ex-36 RA members of all arms. E-mail Keith Holder-ness at 36@keithraa.freemove.co.uk or visit <http://members.tripod.com/krh30/36reg/>

63 Squadron RLC: Centenary parade, open day, Sept 20, Roman Barracks, Colchester. Ring Capt Derek Hendry on 01206 78063.

Beverley Boys 1950-55, 6 (B) TR Royal Signals: Reunion Oct 3-4. Details from Tony Hull 01202 770261 or Mick Teague 01670 3666.

5 Armd Fd Amb, Oxford Bks, Munster, and 5 Fd Amb: Reunion at the Post House Hotel, Chester on Oct 4. Details from Axel Foley on 07801443799 or muppet787@hotmail.com or Deeks Blackburn on 014229 5379 or 07813 250330.

RHA Association: 83rd reunion dinner, AGM and annual church service for past and present members of any RHA unit at the Victory Services Club and St Johns Wood, Oct 4-5. If you have not received details by Sept, contact Maj (Retd) Whiteway, HQ Dulmen Station, BFPO 44; Mike Carter on 01225 708223; or e-mail dinnersec@rhaassn.fsnet.co.uk

Inf Boys/JLdrs Bn 1950s-70s: Ninth reunion for boys/J Ldrs Harrogate, Tuxford, Plymouth,

Oswestry, Shorncliffe, Oct 11, Royal Rifle Volunteers Training Centre, Milton Keynes. Contact C McGrogan, 15 Lambie Street, Whitburn, W Lothian EH47 0HH; 01501 744555/741215.

662 Squadron AAC: 60th anniversary; Oct 11, Wattisham Airfield. Ex-members, families welcome. Details: Anniversary Secretary, 662 Sqn AAC, Wattisham Airfield, Ipswich IP7 7RA or e-mail anniversary662@yahoo.co.uk

RMP Cyprus veterans: Reunion on Oct 18. Call Tony Bowdler on 01905 775174 or Brian Lovett on 01142 392984 if you are interested.

12 Regt RA: Reunion for all officers past and present on Oct 18 at Woolwich. Contact 2nd Lt Matt Ives, 12 Regt RA, Dempsey Bks, BFPO 16 or e-mail mives17180@hotmail.com

8 Regt RCT/RLC: Reunion at JJB Stadium, Wigan on Oct 25. More information from J Aspinall on jimmyasp@hotmail.com.

SNCO recovery mechanics: Reunion dinner in WO's and Sgts' Mess, SEME Bordon, Nov 1. Ring WO1(ASM) Mackay on 01420 485526.

7 Armd Wksp Coy, Grapple 1: Reunion dinner for those deployed in Bosnia Nov 1992-May 1993 at Arborfield, Nov 1-2. Ring SSgt Griffiths/SSgt Jobes on 01420 485610.

SEARCHLINE

Ex-REME fitter Cpl Andrew Duncan, sought by old penpal from early 1970s. E-mail annepegi@hotmail.com

Ex-Sgt Bob (Foxy) Fowler, of 42 Svy Regt RE, Longparish, nr Andover in 1971 was a pal of then LCpl Bob Morgan, who wishes to contact him. Write to 13 St Paul's Street, Clitheroe, Lancs BB7 2LS or phone 01200 426337.

Ex-53 Fd Sqn RE (Airfields) Pete Zapasnic and Mick Gosling at Waterbeach from 1972-75 are asked to contact Ian Power on 01745 334 108 or ipwr7@aol.com

Army Medical Services website can be found at www.armymedic.info/community

Infantry Demonstration Battalion (IDB), Battlesbury Barracks, Warminster, Archie

Reid seeks those serving there from 1979-82. E-mail forus@blueyonder.co.uk

Ex-Airborne Medical Association for past and present, serving with or attached. Contact Maj (Retd) Bob Wickens, 01228 560990.

Ex-Fusilier Ian (Gl Joe) Usher 1975-93 (1 RRF) seeks contact with old mates from BAOR/BFG, USA, Canada, FI, Jordan, NI, Cyprus and Battlesbury Bks. Write to 96 Crescent Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9RA.

Tony Bowdler ex-RMP 1954-63 seeks old friends from 458 Squad, Woking, Malaya, France and Cyprus. Telephone 01905 775174 or e-mail TonyB@elaineb.freemove.co.uk

WRAC Association Dacorum and District Branch open to **QMAAC, ATS or WRAC.**

Meetings first Wednesdays. Details of UK groups: General Secretary, WRAC Assn, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester SO21 2RG.

War and Army service details of late Burma veteran and Chindit **Maj Kenneth Arnold Simpson RAMC** sought by cousin E Wilson, 143 Harbord Street, London SW6 6PN.

Cpl Terry (Scouse) Bundy, ex-Military Works Force Chilwell (1990), wife Helen and family sought by friends Lee, Kerstin and Rebecca Turner. Lee_Turner@blueyonder.co.uk

News of **Ron Barker,** South Croydon, **ex-Royal Scots Greys, Barce, Libya 1952-3,** and 22528852 **Norman (Norrie) Bunnett,** Peckham sought by old comrades c/o A Agnew, 5 Brooklyn Villas, Ceylon Street, Hull HU9 5RH or tel 01482 783430.

ASSISTANCE TO AUTHORS

VIEWS on the impact of the Iraq war invited for a confidential nationwide survey of attitudes to be published in the autumn. Has the war changed your outlook? Are you more or less materialistic or family orientated? Are you thinking more about spiritual matters? Are you confident of the future?

Churchgoers replying to a survey after September 11 remained confident because Bible prophecy promises Christ will return to stop humanity from destroying itself. If you belong to a church when did you first hear these prophecies and from whom? If you are not a church member and this teaching is new to you, does it encourage you? Does it change your view on Christianity? Should churches give greater prominence to prophecy to provide reassurance in times of instability? Views to Rev J Willands, Church of England

Vicarage, Clayhill Road, Leigh, Surrey RH2 8PD, marking envelope "Iraq Survey". For more details enclose sae with 55p stamp.

KOREAN War training 1945-53 and combat experience 1950-53 being researched by military historian at Leeds University. Korean War veterans, training personnel asked to call James H R Goulty on 01661 853247 or write to him at Wylam Wood, Wylam, Northumberland NE41 8HZ.

RASC airborne dispatchers sought by author for book in memory of the RAF's contribution to Arnhem campaign, Sept 1944. Contact Alan W Cooper, Lancaster, Cotswold Gardens, Longlevens, Glos GL2 0DR, tel 01452 523479 or e-mail coopdams30@tesco.net

SOLDIER COMPETITIONS

Devil May Cry (May) winners: Main prize goes to Cpl Lisa Waugh, BFPO 140; runners-up: S Hogg, BFPO 80; Bdr Cooney, 3 RHA, BFPO 64. Answer: Dante.

MASH season one (May) Winners: K Arkley, Glais, Swansea; A E Lewington, Swindon, Wilts; WO2 Steve Davies, Aldershot; Lt Col R Turford, BFPO 53; B L Kent, Truro, Cornwall. Answer: Loretta Swit.

Resident Evil Zero (May) Winners: D Guest, Stanway, Colchester; Cpl Ferris, Salisbury, Wilts; LCpl J L Piper, BFPO 805. Answer: a) Rebecca Chambers; b) Billy.



Picture: Steve Dock

Man on a mission: Sgt Phill Minns, above, is preparing to run the Thames path from Oxford to Greenwich ... the hard way. Serving with 3 CS Regiment RLC at Dalton Barracks in Abingdon, Phill plans to carry on his back everything he needs to complete the 120-mile trip in just two days – water, food and a tent.

He is going to be raising money for charity and can be contacted at the unit welfare office.

Tailor-made for success

FD Marshal Lord Vincent was among the guests at a reception to celebrate the 40th birthday of bespoke military tailors G D Golding of St Albans.

The founder, Geoffrey Golding, who is dyslexic, left school with no qualifications at the age of 15 and at 19 started his tailoring business despite difficulties with reading and writing. Two years ago Golding's was awarded a Royal



Good turn-out: Fd Marshal Vincent, left, and Geoffrey Golding

Warrant by the Queen for services to the Royal Family.

The bespoke military and civilian tailors have long been among *Soldier's* most loyal advertisers.

Stage, screen and radio personality Nicholas Parsons, himself dyslexic, was a celebrity guest at the celebration, which included a photographic record of military uniforms in current use.

The event raised more than £2,000 for the Hertfordshire Dyslexia Association.



Fast start: Car number 84 on the start line of the first ASCAR race of the season at Rockingham, Northants, drew the eyes of more than 40,000 spectators for two reasons. It achieved the fastest times while practising and its camouflage livery stood out in the pack.

Sponsored by the Territorial Army for a new recruiting drive, the car led for much of the first race before a poor pit-stop pushed driver Ben Collins back to

fourth. He was second in the next race.

The military theme was extended away from the track, with the boy band Busted being flown in by Sea King search-and-rescue helicopters of 22 Squadron RAF to play two short concerts, while RAF Wittering provided a static display of the Rapier anti-aircraft missile system and Royal Logistic Corps personnel built a tower so youngsters could have a go at climbing.

Useful numbers

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

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 433456

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

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www.blesma.org.uk

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Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society

(Combat Stress) 01372 841600;

www.combatstress.com

Consumer Credit Counselling Service Free

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Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

www.gulfveteransassociation.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575

Mutual Support (Forces Multiple Sclerosis support group) 01666 824709

National Gulf Veterans and Families

Association Office (0900-1700) 01482

808730; 24-hour helpline on 01482 833812;

www.ngvfa.com

Regular Forces Employment Association

0207 321 2011; www.rfea.org.uk

Royal British Legion's Legionline 0845

7725 725; www.britishlegion.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment

Centre 01622 717202/718484; www.rbli.co.uk

ESHRA Ex-Service Homes Referral Agency

020 7839 4466 www.eshra.com or

eshra@britishlegion.org.uk

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021;

www.st-dunstons.org.uk

SAMA 82 (South Atlantic Medal Association)

for Falklands conflict veterans 01495 227577

e-mail: densama@aol.com

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783;

www.ssafo.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory

Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Agency (includes War Pensions

Agency) 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044

1253 866043 (from overseas);

www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA

Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272;

from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

WRVS General enquiries 02920 739906;

www.wrvs.org.uk



DATES

JULY

14-19: Musical Nights at the Royal Arsenal. Tel 020 8317 8687 (www.musicalnights.com)
8-13: 69th annual exhibition by Armed Forces Art Society, The Mall Galleries, The Mall, London. See www.afas.org.uk

18-20: International air tattoo, RAF Fairford (www.airtattoo.com)

AUGUST

1-23: Edinburgh Tattoo (tattoo office 0130 225 4783).

SEPTEMBER

26-2: Military kit, displays, Horse Guards Parade, 1000-1700, free.

28: Aldershot Militaria Society and The Military History Society annual exhibition and fair, The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey.

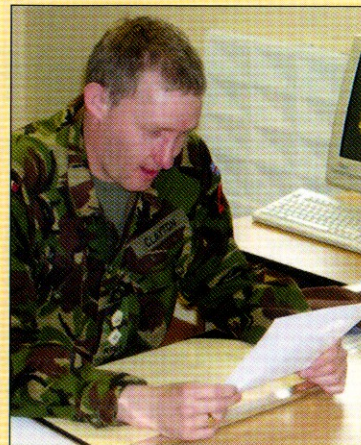
* IT'S just as well **Lt Gen Richard Dannatt** can take a joke. When he unveiled a portrait of himself commissioned to mark his retirement as Colonel of The Green Howards it was to reveal a Picasso-like image, left, unrecognisable to his

friends. The general, right, was relieved when artist John Blakey removed the "Picasso" to reveal the real thing. The dinner, at which guests included **Field Marshal Lord Inge**, was held in Aske Hall, near Richmond, North Yorkshire, last used to house recruits to the Green Howards in the 1940s.



* NO surprise that **102 Battalion REME (V)**, at Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham, stays in the news. The unit has won the Commander 15 (NE) Brigade PR Cup and the Fairclough PR award for the north of England – the first time both have gone to the same winner.

Maj Eric Ingram collected the first trophy from **Brig David Shaw**, Cdr 15 Bde. The competition takes in press, TV and radio coverage as well as unit newsletters, corporate imaging and the internet.



ACTING "Lt Col" **Eldon Clayton** looks suitably magisterial as he takes on the onerous burden of commanding The King's Royal Hussars, who returned to Tidworth last month after a tour in Dungannon, Northern Ireland.

Eldon, who you would be hard-pressed to know was actually a lance corporal, "bought" the CO's job for a day to help raise money for the **Army Benevolent Fund**.

The real seat of power was laid bare when the commanding officer's job went for £160 while the RSM's was thought to be worth a princely £280.

Cpl Joanne Wilkinson was the successful bidder for the latter and carried off the RSM's walk-round of the camp with terrifying aplomb.

Canadian colonel

PRINCE Andrew called on soldiers of The Queen's York Rangers during a private visit to Canada. He watched them carry out armoured reconnaissance training at the Canadian Forces base of Borden.

The Duke of York is Colonel-in-Chief of the regiment, which can trace its roots back to 1755.

Cadets shoe it in for Iraq

ARMY cadets from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have raised nearly £1,200 so they can send shoe boxes packed with school equipment to Iraq. The idea for the appeal came from Capt Monica Clutson AGC (ETS), in Basra with HQ 7th Armoured Brigade.

The cadets filled the boxes with items such as exercise books, pens, pencils and rulers.

MEDICS, both Regular and Territorial Army, deployed in the Gulf found the **Army Medical Services website** invaluable in keeping in touch with family and friends. They could even chat over the site. It can be found at www.armymedic.info/community

Your mag goes down a treat from Slovenia to Slovakia

THEY really do read *Soldier* in Slovenia... and here's the proof. Language teachers from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine taking part in an English project sponsored

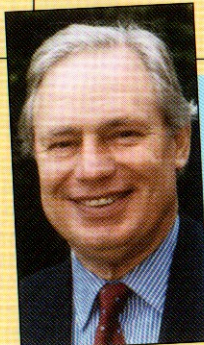
by the MoD and Foreign and Commonwealth Office are pictured, left, in the British Council offices in Slovenia with copies of your favourite magazine.

The Peacekeeping English Project (PEP) runs in 24 countries from Central

Europe to Central Asia. PEP manager Terence Bradley, at the back of the group and wearing a tie, tells us the group finds *Soldier* "essential in generating ideas and in knowing that we are including topics and themes which are really relevant".

Life-savers wanted... at the double

IF you know someone who has saved a life in the past year you can nominate them for national recognition... if you are quick. Forms for the Daily Express Life Savers Awards, backed by Vodafone, are available from www.vodafone.co.uk/lifesavers or by ringing the Life Savers office on 0870 902 3333, but nominations close in early July.



Wessex change-over

BRIG Bruce Jackman, left, one of the South West's best-known military personalities, has retired after 11 years as chief executive and secretary of the Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadets Association. His last military post was Commander 43 Brigade in Exeter. His successor is **Brig Tony Dalby-Welsh**, until recently Director of the Royal Logistic Corps.

Walking on military history

ENGLISH Heritage are offering military history buffs – and anyone who wants to learn about our past – the chance to combine a little gentle exercise with their "fix" of facts. Its guided battlefield hikes are led by Julian Humphrys, historian, lecturer and former head of public relations at the National Army Museum.

Coming up are walks of the battle of **Roundway Down** (eight miles/four hours) in Wiltshire on July 12; **Flodden** (11 miles/six hours) in Northumberland on August 4; **Maldon** (four miles/two hours) in Essex on August 30; and **Hastings** (five miles) on October 12.

The hikes cost £12, which includes a free pocket-size colour pack with laminated cards and maps. To book, call 0870 333 1183.

You polish... I'll brush

IF we don't smarten up this dummy he'll never pass inspection. Former National Servicemen, from left, **Lt Richard Vaughan RAPC**, **Brig Ken Timbers RA** and **2nd Lt Mac McCullagh RTR** get to grips with a model soldier in the National Army Museum's "730 Days Until Demob" exhibition, which marks the 40th anniversary of the last National Serviceman to leave the Army.

That man was Richard Vaughan, who hung up his uniform and returned to civvy street on May 16, 1963.

During the 16 years that it lasted, young men from all backgrounds and social classes plunged into a new world, sometimes bored rigid by the monotony of barrack life in Britain, sometimes transported into a far-off and exotic eastern location, and for some the desperate life-and-death realities of six major conflicts, including Korea, Malaya and Borneo.

The exhibition in the NAM in Chelsea recalls a time some described as the worst years of their lives, some as the best. In all, 1.3 million youngsters endured basic training, a degree of ritual humiliation and, if they had not already discovered them, bad language, alcohol and sex. Most were barely 20 years old and none of them ever forgot the experience.

The first soldier killed in Korea was a National Serviceman, one of 395 "730-day" soldiers to die on active service.



Music with a bang

IF you like your music served up with frills, look out for the Royal Artillery's six-day, riverside spectacular at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich from July 14 to 19.

The gunners are teaming up with Greenwich Council to take the style and panache of the West End to South-East London, featuring a cast of 700, fireworks, motorbike stunts,

gunfire, song, dance and music, not least from the Royal Artillery Orchestra. The organisers are promising the best fireworks display since the Golden Jubilee.

Although the gates open at 1800, all-day entertainment at Woolwich is available courtesy of Firepower, the Royal Artillery's interactive museum, and HM Bark *Endeavour*, a replica of Captain Cook's ship.

Tickets from the box office on 020 8317 8687; Ticketmaster on 0870 160 160 2861; or on-line at www.musicalnights.com



Nice to meet you: **LCpl Carl Walker's mum** sent us this picture of her boy meeting **US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld**, left, at Basra airport.

Carl was serving with Colchester-based 216 Signal Squadron, part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, at the time. The Defense Secretary called on British troops in the area to thank them for their help in liberating Iraq.

Pedal powered to Paris

IF you fancy cycling to Paris in the autumn, ring **Rebecca Pride** on 020 7973 7255 or e-mail her at rpride@britishlegion.org.uk. She is a co-organiser of the Royal British Legion's fund-raising Pedal-to-Paris charity bike ride from September 4 to 7.

The 440km route starts at Greenwich Park in London and ends at the Arc de Triomphe. The entry fee is £350 and participants are expected to raise at least £450 in sponsorship.

Previous Pedals-to-Paris have raised more than £1.7 million for the Legion.

Surreys given Bushell VC

A Victoria Cross won during the First World War is to be displayed in the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum at West Clandon. Won by **Lt Col Christopher Bushell**, commanding the 7th Queen's, it had been bequeathed to the museum on the death of Col Bushell's daughter, Elizabeth MacLehose.

Her children agreed that the full set of his medals, including a DSO, should accompany it. Letters written to his wife from the trenches were also handed over. Lt Col Bushell VC was killed by a sniper on August 8, 1918.

Legends of the regiments and corps

48 Museum of Army Chaplaincy



George V pins the VC on the Rev Theodore Hardy at Chateau Frohen-le-Grand, Lucheux on August 9, 1918.

(Detail from a painting by Terence Cuneo)

Parson who won the VC, MC and DSO

THE Rev Theodore Bayley Hardy's medals, including his VC, are treasured artefacts in the Museum of Army Chaplaincy at Amport, near Andover.

T B Harvey was 51 when he joined the Royal Army Chaplains' Department on June 23, 1915. A widower with two children, and described as "a country parson of the best type", he was sent to join the British Expeditionary Party, attached to the Lincolnshire Regiment.

His first award was the DCO, awarded when he "went to the aid of a man lying wounded in no-man's-land under heavy fire". The man was stuck in mud and no effort could get him out, so Hardy stayed with him until he died.

CONSPICUOUS BRAVERY

In October 1917 he won the MC for repeatedly helping stretchersmen under fire during an attack. His Victoria Cross, for "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on many occasions", was gazetted on July 11, 1918.

On October 10, with the Lincolnshire and Somersets fighting hard south of Cambrai near the Selle, he crossed the river in darkness. "It's only me, boys," he said, before telling them he had to go on. Minutes later machine-gun fire was heard. Hardy, shot through the thigh, was evacuated to Rouen, where he died on October 18, two days before his 55th birthday and three weeks before the end of the war.

The museum at Amport House, Amport, Andover, Hants SP11 8BG (01264 773144 ext 4248) is open weekdays 0900-1700 by appointment. Entry is free.

www.armymuseums.org.uk

Curators: If you wish to feature your museum in this column, contact the Editor as soon as possible

Switched on . . .



SHOCKING ROULETTE ▲

GUARANTEED to sort the men from the boys. Up to four players sit around the board and each stick a finger in the hole provided. The start button is pressed, the lights flash and the random countdown starts. When the sound stops, the person in the unlucky seat takes a jolt of electricity right up the digit. The more you sweat the worse it gets.

① £15, from www.gadgetshop.com (0800 7838343).

TOWEL DOWN ▼

PRESENTING the V-Taper Shaper gym towel (VTS) – a new piece of kit for a cracking workout.

This specially tailored towel makes a robust, comfortable, adjustable and reconfigurable exercise aid that enables a full complement of self-resisted strength, mobility and endurance-enhancing exercises that can be performed almost anywhere.

① £17.99, from www.v-tapershaper.com (01672 520550).



TIMELY PURCHASE ▲

WEIGHING just 65g, this wrist-top computer watch from Suunto can tell you where you are, what direction you're going in, what the weather's likely to do and even what time it is in two countries at once.

Packed into the Observer Sport are a chronometer, altimeter, barometer, electronic compass, as well as a massive logbook. The watch is water resistant to 100m and the battery, which is easily changed, lasts around 12 months.

① £279, from www.suunto.com (01294 315306).

Game on . . .

VIETCONG, PC

WHO better to share their thoughts on a first-person shooter based on the Vietnam War than someone who experienced the conflict at close quarters?

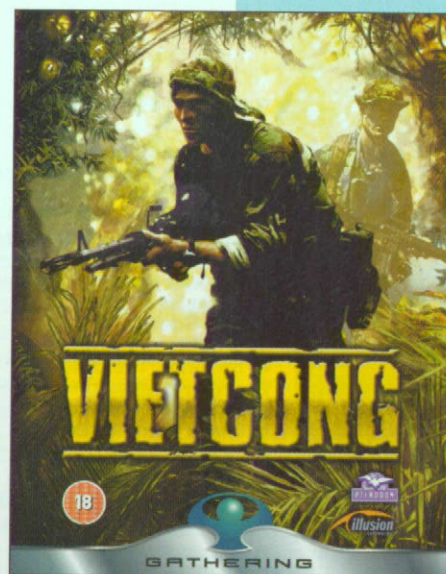
Vietcong's historical consultant Capt Frederick "Rick" Harvey completed two tours of duty in Vietnam with the US Army, earning the coveted Combat Infantryman's Badge as well as the Silver Star, a Bronze Star, and three awards of the Purple Heart.

He served in Vietnam as a platoon leader with the Airborne Infantry, as an executive officer and commanding officer of Special Forces, and, during his last tour, as a company commander with the 1st Infantry Division. He was medevaced from Vietnam through Japan in February 1969 after sustaining serious wounds during a skirmish in the "Iron Triangle" area of operations.

Soldier asked Capt Harvey for his views on *Vietcong*, a game in which players assume the role of an élite soldier in command of US Special Forces units . . .

How does *Vietcong* compare to the real thing?

The tactical aspects of the game are very true to reality, but thank God you can die more than once and carry on playing. In Vietnam you only got one go, however, we had an expression that went "I got it today around the edges". In my case I was hit on



seven different occasions during engagements.

I think if I were to change the game at all it would be to make it harder to "die", so that when you are dead that's it – you are out of the session. Doing that would leave the "clearing up" to the survivors and motivate the dead man to improve his skills next time he plays.

Do you think the game recreates the Jungle atmosphere accurately?

The scenes are very well done to the point of making you aware of the slight advantages you can derive from using ground cover intelligently. In fact, I would have appreciated playing this a few times before going to Vietnam.

This is very true to form. Sometimes, the difference between getting hit or not is knowing how to use the small ground cover variables that exist in the scenes.

Vietcong can have up to 64 gamers playing at once via LAN or the internet. How good is the game's multi-player mode?

You can see national characters coming out in the multi-player gameplay. I have noticed that there are differences in the effectiveness of players from different countries.

The Germans, for example, are very good snipers. Americans are very aggressive and score points quickly. And the Brits, of course, are so methodical, and usually "get it right".

◆ COURTESY of Take-Two Interactive Software, *Soldier* has five prize bundles containing a copy of *Vietcong* for the PC and a T-shirt, up for grabs.

For your chance to win, simply tell us in which year the last US combat troops left Vietnam.

Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by July 31.

HULK, ALL FORMATS

OUT NOW

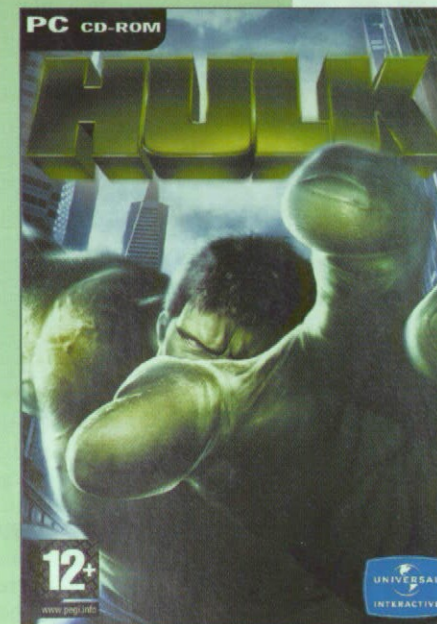
WITH a new storyline distinct to the game and set after the events of the film, *Hulk* follows the plight of troubled scientist Bruce Banner and his enraged alter ego, the Hulk, as they battle against enemies straight from the pages of a Marvel comic.

The game allows players to master two different gameplay styles unique to Bruce Banner and the Hulk. As Banner, gamers must employ the powers of logic and stealth while struggling to contain the monster inside of him to successfully complete missions.

In stark contrast, as the Hulk, players must power their way through 25 massive, highly-detailed and immersive environments, directly inspired by the film and exclusive to the game.

They will face five intense boss battles, smash up to ten enemies at once and destroy foes with more than 45 devastating attacks.

While the player controls the incredible power and rage of the Hulk, objects react to contact as they would in the real world, displaying behaviours consistent with the effects of mass, matter and gravity. For



example, cars bounce off walls and immediately show body damage, glass shatters and broken pipes roll. Virtually any object on the screen can be manipulated, destroyed or used as a weapon.

VERDICT: Incredible . . . a good movie spin-off. 8/10

Win . . . Win . . . Win

SOLDIER has teamed up with Vivendi Universal Games to offer a prize that will turn you green with anger if you miss out.

For your chance to win one of five copies of *Hulk* for the PC or one of five copies for the Xbox, simply answer the following question:

Which actor plays the parts of both scientist Bruce Banner and the superhuman Hulk in this summer's blockbuster movie *The Hulk*?



Send your answers, along with details of which format (PC or Xbox) you require, on a postcard to *Hulk* competition, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

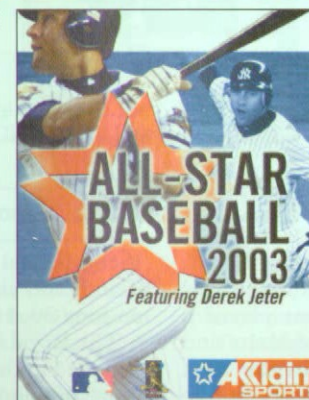
The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by July 31. Usual rules apply.

ALL STAR BASEBALL, PS2

OUT NOW

COMBINING the perfect blend of simulation-style hardball for the baseball fanatic with the pick-up and play ease for the casual sports gamer, Acclaim Sports' *All-Star Baseball 2003* promises to hit a home-run in the gaming charts this summer.

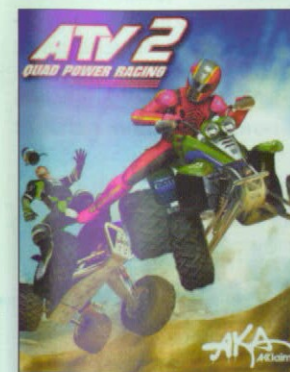
Endorsed by four-times World Series Champion shortstop Derek Jeter, the game features all 30 Major League teams and more than 900 players, as well as authentic stadiums, rosters and uniforms, and detailed in-game commentary.



VERDICT: Hard-hitting action. 8/10

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2, PS2

OUT NOW



VERDICT: Four-wheeled fun. 7/10

FEATURING 15 massive tracks in five different globe-spanning environments, this multi-player title puts gamers in the driving seats of powerful off-road quad bikes.

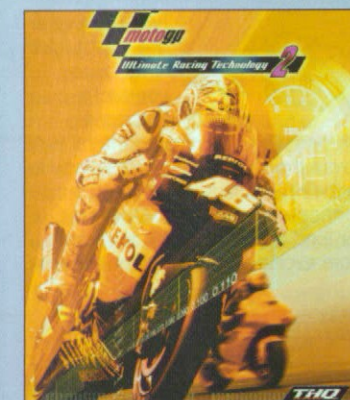
The game's fast, edge-of-your-seat arcade gameplay is enhanced by the outrageous tricks you can pull both in the air and on the ground, and the way that you can literally fight your way to the finish line. A perfect anecdote to all the overly-serious racing simulators on the market.

MOTO GP: URT 2, XBOX

OUT NOW

DEVELOPED by Climax, *MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Technology 2* offers Xbox and Xbox Live gamers eight rubber-burning racing modes which include stunt, grand prix, time trial, tag and multi-player.

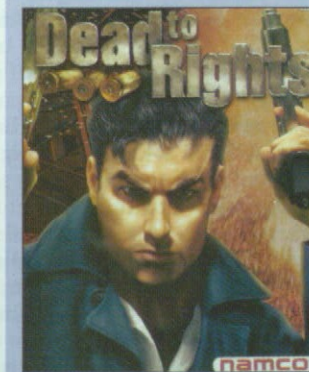
All this is parked alongside 16 real-world tracks, all of the 500cc bikes and riders from the 2002 MotoGP series, an intuitive and easy-to-use arcade-style control system, customisable bikes and the option for budding team managers to design their very own personalised bike livery.



VERDICT: Laps ahead of the pack. 9/10

DEAD TO RIGHTS, XBOX

OUT NOW



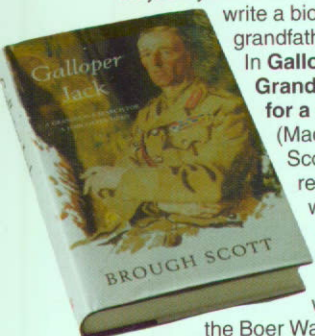
VERDICT: Criminal not to try it. 7/10

WITH a well scripted movie-style storyline, this intense action-thriller from Namco puts gamers in the shoes of a straight-talking inner-city cop, Jack Slate, who becomes entrapped in a labyrinth of crime and corruption.

Players must progress through *Dead to Rights'* chapters by taking out hostile threats with the vast array of weaponry available to them, solving challenging puzzles and mini-games, which include arm-wrestling and bench-pressing, and by defeating sinister end-of-level bosses.

Racing presenter backs a biographical winner

BROUGH Scott is best known as a TV horse-racing presenter. But this ex-jockey's lifetime ambition was to write a biography of his grandfather, Jack Seely.



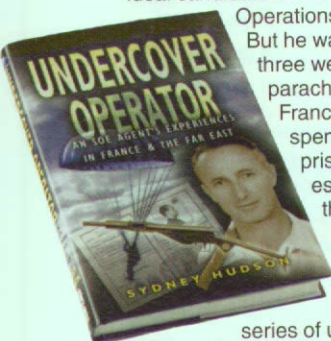
In **Galloper Jack, a Grandson's Search for a Forgotten Hero** (Macmillan, £18.99),

Scott narrates a remarkable story with style and wit. Seely saved the crew of a wrecked ship, won the DSO in

the Boer War (while being elected an MP in his absence), and led the famous Canadian Cavalry charge on the Western Front in 1918. But misfortune and misunderstanding dogged his political life.

Undercover missions in France and Thailand

LINGUISTIC ability marked out Royal Fusiliers officer Sydney Hudson as an ideal candidate for the Special



Operations Executive.

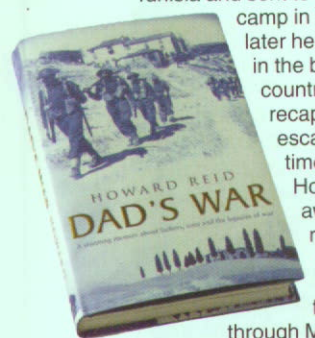
But he was betrayed three weeks after parachuting into Vichy France in 1942 and spent 15 months in prison before escaping on foot through Spain.

Two years later he was back in France to conduct a

series of undercover missions with a female agent. In 1945 he was dropped into East Thailand to run their guerrilla resistance to the Japanese. **Undercover Operator** (Pen and Sword, £19.95) tells the whole exciting story in his own words.

Retracing the steps of a heroic father

IN 1943, Black Watch officer Ian Reid was captured by the Germans in Tunisia and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Italy. Five months



later he escaped, hiding in the beautiful Italian countryside until his recapture. He was to escape five more times. Now his son Howard Reid, the award-winning filmmaker, writer and anthropologist has re-traced his father's footsteps

through Modena, Florence, Chianti, Siena and Orvieto to Rome. The result is **Dad's War** (Bantam, £16.99) – part travelogue, part wartime adventure story, part examination of father-son relationships.

Guns' role in Malta story

One consolation during George Cross Island's carnage and suffering

Fortress Malta: An Island Under Siege, 1940-1943 by James Holland (Orion, £20).

Review: Brian Jewell

TODAY, the name Malta suggests carefree holidays in Mediterranean sunshine, but from 1940 to 1942 the island sustained an aerial bombardment heavier than that endured by London during the Blitz. The enormous strategic importance of Malta to the Allies at that time meant that it had to be defended at all costs.

This book describes the island's ordeal from attack by the Axis powers through the experiences of a number of Servicemen, mainly Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

At the same time, however, author James Holland outlines the involvement of the British Army, who since pre-war days had kept a small presence there at a time when "a tiny island in the Mediterranean was not a priority".

C Company of the 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment played a prominent part in the defence of Malta and Frank Rixon, a young soldier in the West Kents, was building defence posts at the Marsa Race Track, a possible site for enemy invasion, when the sirens sounded on June 11, 1940 for the first raid by Italian bombers.

Only 34 anti-aircraft guns were available to protect Malta's three airfields, the harbour and 200 miles of coastline, but all that had arrived so far in the shape of reinforcements were "145 bicycles, 400 tons of sandbags and a detachment of the Middle East Pigeon Section with 15 soldiers, 200 pigeons and eight rabbits".

In addition to the West Kents were the 2nd Devons, the 1st Dorsets and the 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers. They were joined by the 8th Battalion, The Manchester Regiment, but even so this amounted to about 4,000 men only.

The King's Own Malta Regiment consisted of locally-based territorials, one company

of which was made up of Boy Scouts. The primary purpose of these infantry battalions was to build defence posts and make the island as secure from invasion as possible.

By the end of July, 1941, the number of anti-aircraft guns and gunners had increased. There were now 94 heavy and 96 light anti-aircraft guns. The newly-arrived 32nd Light Ack-Ack Regiment included LBdr Ken Griffiths, whose story, like that of Frank Rixon, carries the narrative along.

"There was only one small consolation amid the carnage and suffering," says the author. "The gunners were doing well." A crew-member from a Junkers 88 interviewed on German radio reported that "Malta is one huge battery of anti-aircraft guns."

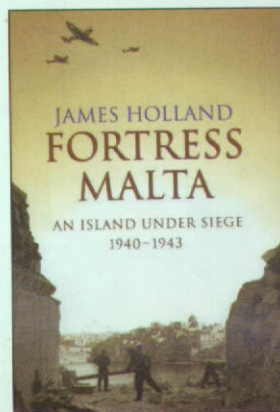
It was in response to the determination and fortitude shown at this time by the people of Malta and the Services that the island was awarded the George Cross on April 17, 1942.

The last phase of Malta's heroic involvement in the Second World War was its transformation into the nerve-centre for Operation Husky, the invasion of Europe. Eisenhower, Montgomery, Gen Clark, Gen Alexander and Air

Vice-Marshal Park all had offices on the island, and even the King arrived for a visit on June 20, 1943.

The Royal West Kents, however, were not included in the invasion plans and after three years of filling-in bomb craters under the worst of the raids, Frank Rixon was posted to Egypt with the rest of his colleagues. Now, as the Allies prepared to invade Sicily, Malta's triumph was complete.

It is no surprise that James Holland's thoroughly researched and very readable account of the Malta story has attracted the attention of Miramax Films (makers of *The English Patient*) who have bought the film rights to the book.



Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>



Riddles of the sands

War on Saddam: The Complete Story of the Iraq Campaign 2003 (*The Daily Telegraph*/Constable, paperback, £12.99).

Review: Chris Horrocks

ARMY photographer WO2 Giles Penfound's symbolic picture reproduced above is one of more than 200 striking images in this handsomely produced book.

It shows a soldier of No 1 Coy, 1st Battalion, Irish Guards enjoying a tea break after a successful dawn raid on a large complex on the outskirts of Basra.

The Irish Guards attacked and cleared the base after coming under fire from small-arms mortars and SAM missile systems fired from Iraqi positions at a British Lynx helicopter.

While the book makes the most of the best images available from Op Telic (more of that later), this is not solely an impressive visual record. There are first-hand reports from the field, an intriguing article on the intelligence issues and cameos of the key players. But how "complete" is it?

In his introductory analysis, *Telegraph* Defence Editor Sir John Keegan asks why Iraq's forces were not deployed logically. Why was there so little defensive preparation

by the high command, he asks, and why were key bridges not demolished on the approach of coalition forces?

"The explanation of the failure to mount an adequate defence may lie in the palpable absence of any effort of national leadership by Saddam Hussein himself or his closest associates," he writes. "The war was completely one-sided."

To compound the mystery, he adds, even now there is no physical proof of Saddam's demise, nor any news of his fate in the aftermath of the action.

And what about the "media war"? Kim Fletcher reminds us that despite the wall-to-wall coverage, whole areas of the conflict went completely unseen.

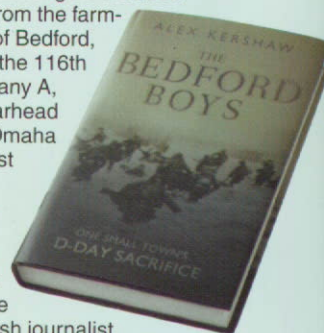
"How many Iraqis died?" he asks. "Who knows? It is a question that the media were unable to answer and, while there were photographs and video footage of Iraqi corpses available, most newspapers declined to show them."

"At no time in this conflict did we see the kind of searing images that were published in 1991, after American planes attacked Iraqi forces retreating from Kuwait."

"Did events like this not happen this time? Or is it simply that no one was there to record them?"

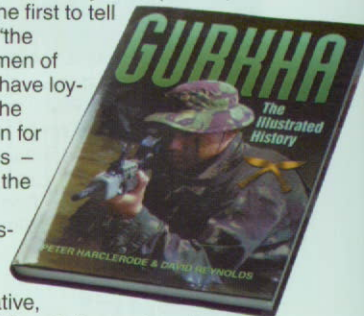
Tragic story of 34 young men from Virginia

WHEN the British troopship *Empire Javelin* crossed the Channel on D-Day, 1944 her passengers included 34 young men from the farming community of Bedford, Virginia, part of the 116th Infantry's Company A, selected to spearhead the assault on Omaha Beach. In the first minutes of that action, 19 of the Bedford boys were killed and later in the campaign three more were to die. British journalist Alex Kershaw has interviewed survivors and relatives to tell the story of **The Bedford Boys: One American Town's Ultimate D-Day Sacrifice** (Simon & Schuster, £14.99).



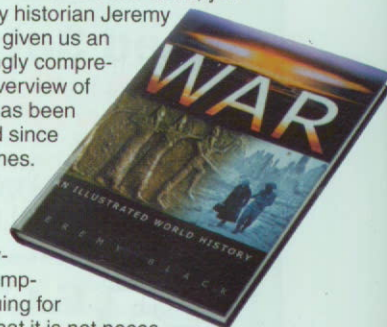
Fine history of the Brigade of Gurkhas

GURKHA: The Illustrated History by former Gurkha officer Peter Harclerode and David Reynolds (Sutton, £25) is not the first to tell the story of "the doughty hillmen of Nepal" who have loyally served the British Crown for two centuries – nor will it be the last. This volume is distinguished by its solid, factual narrative, the quality of its printing and production and the fact that many of its 200 or so excellent photographs are previously unpublished. It also includes an account of the brigade's tough recruitment and selection procedures.



Best-equipped forces not always the winners

FOR a 224-page book to be titled **War: An Illustrated World History** might seem an ambitious claim, yet the military historian Jeremy Black has given us an astonishingly comprehensive overview of how war has been conducted since ancient times. He is not afraid to overturn commonly-held assumptions, arguing for example that it is not necessarily the best-equipped forces who prevail, citing other factors such as the willingness of nations to suffer losses, the organisation of battlefield troops and the often irregular nature of conflict. Published by Sutton, £25.





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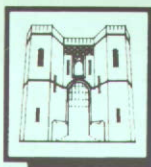
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Your top ten

PRINCE Consort's Library in Aldershot has been asking visitors to nominate their favourite books. The top ten are:

Stalingrad by Antony Beevor; **Two Sides of Hell**: The bloodiest battle of the Falklands from both sides, by Vince Bramley; **Barbarossa**: The Russian-German conflict, 1941-45, by Alan Clark; **Alan Brooke's War Diaries 1939-1945**, by Alex Danchev; **Bomber**: Events relating to the last flight of an RAF bomber over Germany, by Len Deighton; **Knight's Cross**: A life of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, by David Fraser; **Redcoat**: The British soldier in the age of horse and musket, by Richard Holmes; **Green-Eyed Boys**: 3 Para and the Battle for Mount Longdon, by Christian Jennings and Adrian Weale; **The First World War** by John Keegan; **A Bridge Too Far** by Cornelius Ryan.

So which is the best of the best? You have until the end of the summer to vote for your favourite from this list. All are available from the Army Library Service. Send your vote to the Prince Consort Library, tel 01252 349381 (x4381); fax 01252 349382 (ext 4382); e-mail pcl@dstl.gov.uk

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The War in Korea: The Battle Decides All by Brig M G Harvey. Personal viewpoint of the war which ended 50 years ago this month, by one who fought with the Glosters at the Imjin River. (Raby Books, £17.50.)

Complete War Walks by Richard Holmes. Sub-titled "British Battles from Hastings to Normandy", this contains the author's *War Walks* and *War Walks 2* in one 450-page paperback. (BBC Worldwide, £14.99.)

Marching with Sharpe by B J Bluth. Detailed depiction of the unforgiving realities of everyday life for Wellington's soldiers, illustrated by re-enactment groups and with a foreword by Sharpe creator Bernard Cornwell. (Collins paperback, £14.99.)

Notes on the Battle of Waterloo by Gen Sir James Shaw Kennedy. Latest in the Spellmount Library of Military History, a re-publication of observations written 140 years ago. (£24.95.)

Decisive Battles by John Colvin. More than 20 key encounters, from Salamis (480 BC) to Kursk (1943). (Headline, £20.)

Echoes From a War by Graham Watson. The separation and hardship of war told in more than 200 good-humoured and affectionate letters exchanged between a soldier and his sister. (The Book Guild, £16.95.)

England Versus Scotland: the Great British Battles by Rupert Matthews. Most have heard of Bannockburn, Flodden, Culloden and Prestonpans, but some may not be familiar with Nachtansmere, Brunanburh, Neville's Cross and Newburn Ford. All, and more, are covered in this informative book. (Pen and Sword, £19.95.)

Eisenhower, Allied Supreme Commander by Carlo d'Este. The retired US Army officer and author of the acclaimed *Patton* turns his attention to the Allied D-Day commander who became President of the USA. (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £25.)

Tanks Across the Desert edited by George Forty. The war diary of Jake Wardrop, a tank sergeant with 5 RTR in north Africa and Italy, who was killed in action in Europe just days before the end of the Second World War. (Sutton, £17.99.)

Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle by Peter Fleming and Michael Wood. The battle in question took place at Nibley Green in 1476 and this handsomely produced paperback ensures it will be forgotten no longer. (Tempus, £16.99.)

A Game of Soldiers by Hugh Grant. Diary of a National Serviceman in The Parachute Regiment, 1957-60 (Serendipity, paperback, £9.99.)

Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear by Richard Connaughton. Major revision, following new research, of the work first published in 1988 and described by the Staff College, Camberley, as the definitive history of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-5. (Cassell, £20.)

The Military 100 by Lt Col Michael Lee Lanning, US Army, Ret. A ranking of the most influential leaders of all time, from George Washington (No 1) to Allenby (No 100), with Cromwell, Wellington, Marlborough, Alanbrooke, Montgomery, Edward 1 and Roberts (plus Saddam Hussein) somewhere in between. (Citadel, paperback, £13.99.)

The Lighter Side of War by Don Alexander. Amusingly told story of "Britain's Bilko", R W (Butch) Reid of Sheffield – "soldier, first-class mechanic, entrepreneur, likeable rogue and Desert Rat". (Available from the author, 475 Eccleshall Road, Sheffield S11 8PP, £7.95 plus £1.25 p&p.)

Commando by Peter Harclerode and David Reynolds. Large-format paperback edition of the illustrated history of Britain's Green Berets from Dieppe to Afghanistan, first published in 2001. (Sutton, £14.99.)

Death For Desertion by Leonard Sellers. Controversial story of the First World War court martial and execution of Sub Lieut Edwin Dyatt (Pen and Sword, paperback, £12.95.)

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SOLDIER to soldier

Zoners' triumph

WELL, they are to get it at last . . . and we couldn't be more delighted for them.

Suez Canal Zone veterans who contacted us after learning that their campaign for official recognition had finally succeeded expressed relief tinged with sadness.

To a man they spoke of their regret that for so many of their colleagues involved in that operation half a century ago last month's approval for the award of the "Canal Zone" clasp had come too late.

Soldier's part in their fight was not forgotten in their moment of triumph. Former Lancashire Fusilier Len Oliver wrote from Colchester: "I must thank *Soldier* for keeping with us. We were only eight or nine at first, brought together through the magazine. The leading light was definitely the late Col Pip Newton and the medal should be dedicated to him."



Suez Veterans Association campaign coordinator Cyril Blackburn told us: "After so many years of campaigning it is really great news and I want to thank you for the space you have given in *Soldier* for our letters. It has most certainly encouraged the veterans to continue the campaign as they were able to read letters from other veterans."

Although we are proud to have played a tiny part in their affairs, all the congratulations must go to the diminishing band of Canal Zoners who did what good British soldiers do best . . . they never gave up.



MILITARY recruiters everywhere will be thanking their lucky stars that Prince Harry is to seek a place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The announcement is hugely significant to the British Army.

Already a young icon and a magnet for media attention, his decision to pursue a career as a professional soldier will ensure that their job of "selling" the Army is a little bit easier.

Hats off to our young soldiers

The Chief of the Defence Staff asked us to give this letter, addressed to him, a wider audience

Dear General Sir
Michael Walker

THE Committee and members of our association greatly admire the young Service personnel of today. Over the last few years they have served our country magnificently.

Whenever our country needs men and women of courage and stamina it is the members of our Armed Forces who the Government calls upon.

During the foot-and-mouth epidemic, it was they who had the most unpleasant task of culling the livestock of our infected farms, a task none of us would relish.

During the recent firemen's strike, once again they were called upon to provide a vital service for our country. Using outdated equipment, they carried out their duties with determination and

resilience. Many of the public do not realise that the majority of those men and women were on less pay than the firemen they had replaced.

In Afghanistan, our forces played a vital role in support of the US.

During the recent war in Iraq it was they who were given the very important task of securing the southern city of Basra. In that battle they demonstrated why they are the finest troops in the world.

They also showed that not only are they the greatest warriors, but the supreme peacekeepers.

Other countries may have larger Armed Forces than ours, but undoubtedly ours are the best in the world. This is why the US always call upon us first when they want men and women of courage who they can rely on 100 per cent.

Whenever you get the opportunity, please tell them that we who have now been put out to pasture admire them and respect them. — **Paul Cubitt, Chairman, Gosport Branch of the Submariners Association.**

Debt of gratitude to TA

AS my regiment's tour of duty on Operation Telic draws to a close I wish to put on record my deep gratitude to the Territorial Army personnel who have served with my unit.

Due to operational commitments elsewhere in the world my regiment required considerable reinforcement to bring it up to full war establishment. To this end I received some 222 Reserve and Territorial Army soldiers out of an all-up strength of 814.

In other words, more than 27 per cent of my regiment, providing the focus for all supply support to the force deployed in Kuwait and Iraq, were soldiers drawn from the Territorial Army.

When one considers that these soldiers came from a wide range of units and different cap badges, that they had little notice of their deployment and that many had never worked in the supply area

before, their performance is all the more remarkable.

Resilient, resourceful and extremely adaptable are the words that come to mind when describing the TA soldiers I have had the honour of commanding. No matter what the operation has thrown at them they have risen to the challenge with enthusiasm, verve and a great sense of humour.

I am quite clear that my regiment could not have successfully completed its mission without their vital support. They have added another glorious chapter to the TA's proud history and each of them can return home knowing they have played a key role in a successful operation to make the world a safer place.

To them all I say thank you and best wishes for the future. — **Lt Col Rory Maxwell RLC, 6 Regiment Group, Operation Telic.**

Turn over for five pages of your letters

Sue Bonney is on holiday. Home truths will return in August



What happened to essential Telic kit we were promised?

I AM a company quartermaster sergeant with an infantry unit in Iraq on Op Telic and am writing about equipment we were promised, some of it essential, which we did not get.

Before leaving Germany we received an admin instruction which highlighted the kit we would receive as part of a task issue. This included for each man two sets of desert combats, desert boots, combat body armour and chest plates, T-shirts and hot weather socks, among other items.

After being deployed for eight weeks, out of an infantry company of 164 men we still have only one set of desert combats a man, most of them unserviceable. The men are wearing a mixture of desert and

Prize letter

Combat 95. I am still waiting for 79 pairs of desert boots and 50 desert hats. We have still had no socks or T-shirts.

The issue of body armour and plates was slow, with personnel being sent into battle without plates as not enough had been received. The issue of ammunition and weapons was also slow. We received our RGS (rifle grenade general service) ammunition the day after we attacked Basra (six weeks after arriving in-theatre).

After the battle we unexpectedly received 40mm underslung grenade launchers but still await the ammunition for them. We also got laser light modules and night-vision monoculars after the

battle. I am writing to highlight these problems because we had been promised that, when needed, necessary kit would be issued. Our shortages did not affect our achieving the mission but from a morale point of view it doesn't help front-line troops to see people serving in the EFI shop wearing kit they have had to do without.

I laughed to myself while writing out 1033s [equipment issue form] under the sound of gunfire in Basra. Colleagues in other battle-groups were in the same boat – peacetime accounting in war.

Hopefully we borrowers can get it right next time, in about ten years from now? – **CSjt S Baillie, D Company, 1 LI.**

(This letter was posted in Iraq on April 23)



Brig J S Kerr, ACOS J1/J4 PJHQ

replies: It is worrying to hear about any example of important equipment not getting through to those that

needed it and in this instance we got it wrong and for that I apologise. I would also like to invite CSjt Baillie to visit PJHQ where I can discuss each issue he has raised in detail.

Having seen it at first hand, CSjt Baillie will know the scale of the deployment to the Gulf – the same number of people and amounts of equipment deployed as the first Gulf conflict,

but in less than half the time. While we must look carefully to see what went wrong, we should not detract from what has been achieved.

There will be a number of important issues to examine now the main phase of combat operations is over. For example, the balance we strike between holding large stocks and the extent that we can rely on contracts to deliver surge requirements. We also need to look at how we keep better track of materiel when it arrives in-theatre. The bottom line is

that while the right amount of kit arrived in the Gulf, the size and speed of the deployment meant that it did not always reach the front line as quickly as it might have.

I encourage all personnel, including CSjt Baillie, to contribute through the chain of command to the "lessons" process which is under way, the results of which we intend to make public. I would agree that we must not shy away from a thorough analysis of performance, and fix those things that went wrong as well as recognise the successes.

Unfair that Terriers have to stay in Iraq

WHAT are the regulations concerning the posting and transfer of compulsorily mobilised Territorial Army personnel within theatre on Op Telic?

I ask because many TA personnel have been told that they have to stay in-theatre for a full six months despite the fact that the units they were posted to are returning to the UK.

For example, soldiers from 254 Field Ambulance (V) were posted to 5 GS Medical Regiment on mobilisation. Most

have now been told that they are to remain in-theatre with 1 CS Med Regt when 5 GS returns to the UK. Meanwhile, many Regulars from 1 CS are also seen to be returning to the UK and hostilities have ceased.

There is a lot of confusion about this and a sense of unfairness. Most TA personnel have willingly given up much to support the Regular Army on Telic. They now have a responsibility to their civilian employer to get back to work as

soon as they can. There is a perception that the Territorial Army is being kept behind to allow more Regulars to re-deploy.

I hope this isn't true but if this issue isn't clarified, I suspect many employers and employees will find it difficult to support future TA mobilisations. – **Maj R Mackenzie, 254 Fd Amb, Op Telic.**

● "Iraq task not as important as my UK job" – see Page 74.



Army Medical Department replies:

When the Defence Secretary made the announcement on January 6 that Section 54 of the Reserve Forces Act 96 (RFA 96) was to be invoked, TA personnel who were mobilised were liable for service for a period of 12 months in three years.

The SofS did not set a specific time limit for the deployment as it could not be anticipated how the operation would progress. However, the general guidance was that tour timings would follow those of their Regular counterparts (normally six months).

It is anticipated that most of the TA Army Medical Services (AMS) will only have to serve four months in Iraq and will return this

month to a period of post-tour leave.

There are no regulations specific to the posting or transfer of mobilised personnel within a theatre of operations. During Telic the requirement for levels of medical support have been reduced due to the reduction in the population at risk (as the force has been demobilised) and the level of threat.

Consequently certain units were demobilised, among them 5 GS Medical Regiment. A decision was made at PJHQ that if there was still a requirement for a specific skill in-theatre to fill gaps in other units establishments (possibly generated by injury, illness or compassionate reasons) then the individual would be transferred to

that post and not demobilised early.

In light of the swift resolution of the conflict and the anticipated requirement to maintain a long-term presence in Iraq, a decision was made to return those elements of the Medical Services to the UK that would be needed to return to Iraq in the near future to give them a break before returning on Op Telic 2.

A large proportion of the AMS is made up of units of the TA, which played an essential role in providing medical support to the deployed force. It would be a sad indictment if these successes were marred by any misunderstanding of the key role they play in the Army's ability to maintain a successful level of medical support at this scale of effort.

PISCATOR

"No, no, no
... not again"



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Stagging on is waste of our pioneer skills

I AM a Territorial Army reservist, serving with 101 Pioneer Squadron, mobilised to assist 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC on Op Telic.

Our squadron is one of the few formed units mobilised for the conflict. We are a specialist unit, serving a minimum of 19 days a year and utilising our civilian trade

That was our bridge

THE general service bridge (GSB) at Rumaylah, featured in *Soldier* (May) was built by personnel from 64 HQ Squadron RE, 28 Engineer Regiment, who were aided in the decking and kerbing by sappers from 23 Engineer Regiment. – **Spr Jamie Stafford (on behalf of the whole team), BFPO 645.**

skills. We include bricklayers, electricians, plasterers, drivers and railway workers.

From March 19 until the time of writing (early May), our primary task has been guard duties. Apart from the odd dunnage or wiring task, everyone has been stagging on, manning VCPs and guarding logistic bases and camp gates. Although an important task it is clear our incredibly wide range of skills is being wasted. We are capable of completely changing a place such as Umm Qasr: we could, literally, start rebuilding it.

This abuse of our skills as soldiers and as a TA squadron has a detrimental effect. Morale is low and the will to work is falling. In the longer term Territorial Army pioneers will cease to exist as a military tool. In our eyes, this is military madness, with commanders ignoring the abilities of many good people. – **Name and unit supplied, Op Telic.**

Is the plan to replace Regulars?

FURTHER to the letter in *Soldier* (April) from a medic aggrieved that TA personnel were replacing Regulars on Op Telic, I can inform him that 500 other Regulars with 33 Field Hospital were treated worse than that in what I believe to be an Army Medical Services scandal.

This unit deployed at the end of January. The field hospital was built in difficult conditions and reinforced by almost the entire Regular AMS, becoming the best-equipped fully-staffed ever to deploy. It was the only field hospital not boosted by hundreds of reservists.

Then came the political decision: we were to be replaced (two days before the war started) by the TA. What would our role be? To sit in a transit camp next door and do nothing for four weeks while the dead and injured were cared for by our TA colleagues (many of them unhappy at being called up).

Why bother to do several years training and put up with the stresses of military life just to be replaced by civilians? Is the plan to replace Regular medics with TA?

For the 500 of us with 33 Field Hospital, this has to be the worst of all the recent disappointments in AMS. – **Name and address supplied.**



Army Medical Department replies:

The answer to the question posed is an emphatic no. The Territorial Army plays an essential role in the provision of medical support to the deployed force, but there is not and never has been any intention to replace Regular AMS with those from the TA.

The capability of the Regular AMS to deploy at short notice, to provide the adaptable and flexible response to a wide variety of threats in environments which range from the desert to the frozen mountains of Afghanistan, is impossible to replace. However, at scales of effort outside the harmony guidelines set by Defence Planning Assumptions, the TA will be used to support operations when the lead-in times are coherent with the readiness states at which the TA is held.

In this particular case 33 Field Hospital was held as a force reserve to be projected into Iraq had the need arisen (ie had the threat of chemical or biological weapons been realised). Their expertise in swiftly building and operating a field hospital would have been essential.

A contingency plan had to be in place and 33 Fd Hosp was considered to be the most capable of undertaking that task.

● Sorry, lads. Fog of war and all that. – Editor

Mobilisation has cost me a bomb

I AM a Territorial Army soldier deployed on Op Telic. I passed my medical at Chilwell and trained at Beckingham, unaware of our future task. We believed our duties would be to fill rear parties and only at the last minute were we sent to Kuwait.

My boyfriend, who is also in the TA and was desperate to go to the Gulf, was not mobilised. Why they did not take willing volunteers when there were people mobilised who did not wish to be is beyond me.

Another query I have regards pay. Although I have the rank of craftsman in the TA, this doesn't mean I earn a meagre wage in my civilian job. I was appalled to discover that, even with the Reservist's Standard Award, I would be losing the equivalent of about £7,000 a year in salary.

I applied for the Reservist's Hardship Award, but what they don't tell you is that you have to have large debts to be a successful claimant.

I am careful with my finances and a regular saver – I am also here against my



wishes and end up out of pocket. And I still have to pay council tax at home.

So why am I still here? Aren't we considered augmentees? We are here as extras, with not a lot to do, losing money, missing home, just because of a six-month contract.

Take it down to three months, return us to normality and save people money. – **Cfn Bev Ward, HQ LAD, A2 1 RRF Battle-Group, Op Telic.**

MoD has recognised these anomalies and is urgently reviewing the present arrangements, contained in SI 309, governing these awards.

Any changes will require a change to the law and will therefore have to go through Parliament.

Directorate SPS(A) replies: The selection of personnel for mobilisation is based on the jobs that HQ Land Command decide they need to fill.

Selection is carried out based on who is best able and qualified to do those jobs. In your case, you were one of the chosen people who were deemed to be vital to the success of the operation and unfortunately your boyfriend was not.

Many TA personnel earn a lot more in their civilian jobs than they do when in service; your TA pay would have made you aware of this differential. The rules governing the Reservist's Standard Award (RSA) and the Reservist's Hardship Award (RHA) are enshrined in Statutory Instrument 309 and the rate of RSA for each rank-based band is also stated there.

Entitlement to RHA is based on proof of expenditure and an award is usually made when a person's net income is assessed as not meeting the level of expenditure accepted by the adjudication officer, thereby causing hardship.

You will be aware that everybody's circumstances are unique, although they may be similar, and experience has shown that not everyone receives an amount equating to their civilian income.

Research into your case reveals that you decided not to pursue a claim for RHA, and accepted your RSA rank-band ceiling. The

Iraq task not as important as my UK job

WHY are reservists and TA still in Iraq when the regiment I am serving with has sent soldiers out of theatre to go back to recruiting offices and on courses, leaving reservists and TA who in most cases no longer have jobs to do?

We feel this is unfair because our civvy careers are suffering to allow Regular soldiers to pursue their careers.

We have been told by the regiment that we signed a six-month contract (which nobody remembers) and that is why the MoD is not releasing us. I feel my job with the Immigration Service is more important than sitting in Iraq where there is no real need for me. – **LSgt I Woodward (reservist) Op Telic.**

HQ Land replies: Your service carries with it a liability for call-out. Under the Reserve Forces Act 96, the Secretary of State can authorise the call-out of TA and Regular reservists for 12 months in any three years.

On mobilisation, when the length of the operation was unknown, guidance was given that reservists would expect a six-month tour with associated leave calculated on demobilisation.

Individuals are being returned from units for many reasons, including career management. Reservists are being recovered from theatre as their employment becomes less vital to the continuing operation.

It is intended reservists should return to the UK for demobilisation at the same time as units recover or as soon as is practicable if their trades cannot be employed. They will remain in-theatre if their trades are vital.

Just six days to call-up left me rather short of options

I AM a TA medic who was called up with six days' notice. While I have no objection to my call-up, I have concerns about the way it has been handled.

Not being told where I was going until the last minute meant I was unable to buy or acquire suitable extra kit. Add in misinformation about what my role

would be, my kit requirements not being made clear and being encouraged to take my mobile phone, which was then taken off me on arrival even though I was behind the front line.

I was also assigned to a role for which I had no previous experience. – **Name and unit supplied, Op Telic.**

Integrated Mobilisation Cell replies: The deployment of Op Telic was a demanding time for the Army and both its Regular and TA reservists.

As you may recall from the press coverage at the time the situation was very fluid for a number of months. The Army was continually adapting its operational requirements to meet that fluidity. These changes inevitably

impacted on those reservists who were being called up and the role for which they were being mobilised. Wherever possible, 21 days' warning were given, but changing operational demands occasionally meant that this warning was greatly reduced.

Wherever possible, reservists were allocated to units where they were best placed to employ their skills.

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, July 1978: The bicentenary of the The Queen's Own Highlanders nearly passed unnoticed in Armagh because the regiment put peace-keeping duties before celebrating. Meanwhile, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are marking their 300th anniversary.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, July 1953: Badajoz, Bittoria, Nivelle, Toulouse... the Colours of the Infantry regiments are carried up Whitehall, above, as tens of thousands of Service personnel from many nations march through London's rainy streets in the great Coronation procession.

I had to pay to send a bluey to Canada

I AM in the Gulf and have been glad of the opportunity to send free blueys to my wife in Germany and my family in the UK. However, when I sent a bluey to my wife's family in Canada it was returned marked "stamp required".

As long as we are in uniform and serving our country it shouldn't matter where families are – blueys should be free. – Pte Kirkwood, BFPO 645.

Col Don Kent, Dep Chief Executive BFPO, replies: The starting point is that postal services to personnel deployed on operations are provided as part of the overall operational welfare package authorised by Service Personnel Policy and agreed with the Treasury. The guiding principle is that personnel and their families should pay for postage what they would pay if they were serving in UK.

It follows that an individual serving in the UK would pay the standard international postage to Canada to write to relatives living

in that country, just as the relatives would pay Canadian international postal charges to write back. This principle extends to personnel deployed and supported by the BFPO system.

When on ops, personnel also receive an extra concessionary service of Forces Free Air Letters (blueys). This service is restricted to correspondence with addresses served by the UK postal administrations, including the BFPO. Strictly, the blueys mentioned are not delivered to Germany, but to a BFPO number which happens to be in Germany.

When leave means leave – or does it?

I HAVE served for four years with a unit providing medical support for Spearhead and other units. With few exceptions we provide this support all year round.

I am required to be on the end of a phone within one hour and able to return to camp within six hours. My unit does its very best to rotate the responsibility between squadrons, but most personnel, particularly the specialists, are pooled and go where they are needed.

I enjoy this active posting but the knock-on effect on leave has become a real problem. How can our well-earned time off be classified as leave when it is subject to such restrictions?

Surely leave means leave. – Name and unit supplied.

PS4(A) replies: PS4(A) supports the view that leave means leave. Leave is an authorised absence from all duties. Once leave is authorised no constraints should be placed on an individual's ability to travel (less travel to countries to which Special Security Regulations Apply (CSSRA), as detailed within the Army Leave Manual).

The management of leave is the responsibility of the chain of command and commanders are given clear guidance that personnel should be afforded every reasonable opportunity to take their full annual leave allowance and that leave should only be denied for operational reasons. If a unit is unable to release a soldier from all duties due to its operational commitments any authorised stand-down from routine duties should not be deducted from a soldier's leave allowance.

PS4(A) would also like to clarify the position on Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL). POTL will be granted to all personnel on return from operations of four months duration or over. It should be taken as close to the date of return as is practicable; no later than one month after return and while personnel remain on the strength of the unit they deployed with. It can only be deferred for operational reasons, and then only if authorised by Land Command.

PS ...

PS ...

PS ...

Extra protection

I WRITE to correct a statement attributed to the CO of 202 Field Hospital ("Everything but the waiting list", May). He said he had the only collective protection unit (COLPRO) in-theatre. Other units, such as 16 CS Med Regt, had this type of equipment and were not in rear echelon areas. – Capt S J A McGhee QARANC, 181 Amb, 16 CS Med Regt.

Joint effort, Part 1

I DONT wish to steal 202's thunder, but 22 Fd Hosp provided the initial footprint in Kuwait with 25 beds, followed by 33 Fd Hosp, which built a 200-bed hospital. During this time 33 provided operational medical support to Op Telic until relieved by 202. Meanwhile, 34 Fd Hosp was providing medical support in Iraq. – Maj G N Heal, 203 (W) Fd Hosp.

Joint effort, Part 2

YOUR story on 202 stated that the field hospital "is run almost entirely by reservists from 202 Midland Field Hospital (V) in Birmingham". Only a few members of that unit are here. Making up the staff of 630 are TA soldiers from 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 212, 243, 256, and 306 Field Hospitals, the Scottish Transport Regiment, the Lowland and Highland Band and other units. – Name and unit supplied, Op Telic.

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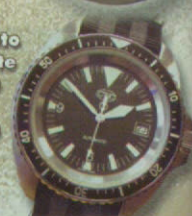
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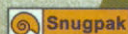


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So, why was Sgt Wesson docked £2,075?

AFTER reading the DSPS(A) response to the letter "They took £2,075 off my pay in one go" (*Soldier*, April) I felt compelled to write.

As an AGC (SPS) clerk employed within a regimental administration office (RAO) it angers me when I read in the magazine the responses to letters of complaint regarding the standard of service the MoD provides to Servicemen and women.

More often than not the soldier has every reason to complain about his or her treatment but the specific queries posed

within the letter are not being answered. Sgt Wesson asked why the system allowed such large debits to be deducted in the first instance.

He had already stated that his RAO had provided an excellent back-up service after the error in his calculation of pay.

So why did DSPS(A) reiterate that but fail to answer Sgt Wesson's question, which was why does the Army pay system allow for such large debits to be deducted in the first instance?

This would not happen on an officer's pay account. If a large debit was to occur

he would be notified via a standard letter from the Army Personnel Centre, informing him of the overpayment and inviting him to refund the amount at a standard monthly recovery rate. There is even the option to pay it back at a lesser rate than this standard.

As a soldier employed to administer other Servicemen, I sometimes feel embarrassed at the inadequacies of the pay system.

I know that I am not alone in this view.
— **SSgt J Procter AGC (SPS), Northern Ireland.**

Bless you, Blesma

WOULD you please give a mention to Blesma, which does a wonderful job in rehabilitating those unfortunate soldiers and ex-soldiers who have lost limbs.

I am serving with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and lost my lower leg in January last year. This February I attended a ski-bob rehabilitation event in Austria organised by Blesma.

I would like to say a big thank-you to all those who took the time to organise this enjoyable and memorable event. It was a great chance to share information on ways to improve life as a "legless squad-die". — **Cpl Philip J Watkins, 1 RRF, BFPO 23.**

● Happy to do so, again. A feature in the January issue on Blesma's world of adventure was accompanied by the Dickie cartoon, right. — Editor



Can I claim for travel?

I AM in a long-term relationship and living in my own home. I travel to work because it is cheaper for me to do so than to live-in while on shift.

There are conflicting views on whether I am entitled to travel expenses. Please clarify what the rules are and how they affect me. — **LCpl Hampton, Military Provost Guard Service, Edinburgh.**

PS10(A) replies: It does not matter if you are married or single with regard to receiving RILOR (Recompense in Lieu of Relocation), if you meet the necessary criteria. MPGS has the same entitlement as any other Regular soldier (see Provost Martial (Army) Instructions Volume 8, paragraph 46.166c). Each case has to be considered independently, because each set of circumstances is different. LCpl Hampton should speak to his RAO.

S-Type transfer leaves us short on pay front

THE Corps of Army Musicians encourages musicians on FTRS contracts to transfer to S-Type engagements. I have been told that this "encouragement" goes so far as to refuse to re-engage anyone on a Full-Time Reserve Service (FTRS) contract once the original 42 months have elapsed.

But problems occur when one signs up to an S-Type contract. Despite rules to the contrary, many people take a drop in their daily rate of pay.

I transferred to an S-Type last June and was paid £5 a day less than I had been on FTRS. My wife, who changed her contract to S-Type in February, has suffered a drop of nearly £18 a day. The first month she was not paid at all by Glasgow. Fortunately, the RAO made up the correct amount.

Last month Glasgow paid her at £35 a day minus the "overpayment" given her by the RAO, so she is nearly £800 down on her normal net salary. I have been

fighting my own case for nearly a year, and a friend of ours for six months.

We are told to "use the system", but it doesn't work. — **LCpl M P Crocker MRSC, AGC Band, Worthy Down.**

Directorate SPS(A) replies: This directorate is aware of the problems when an individual re-enlists into the Regular Army. A request has been submitted to change the programming of the mainframe to solve this problem. The SPS chain of command has been notified to ensure individuals are paid correctly.

The RAO at Worthy Down is correctly managing LCpl Crocker's account and to date he has been paid an additional £600. The RAO will continue this management process until corrective action has been taken.

It is hoped that this issue will be resolved soon for all re-enlistments.

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of your agenda... but please keep them as short as possible. The more space you take up, the less room there is for other letters, and we are anxious to use as many as we can. E-mails should

Briefly does it

include your name and location at the bottom (not necessarily for publication).

Anonymous contributions will be binned. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to amend for length, clarity or style.

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

Welcome to Asia

We asked Brunei-based soldiers to highlight the best and the worst aspects of service life in Asia's 'kingdom of unexpected treasures' and to list the home comforts they miss most

Sgt Paul Goodman REME, 7 Flt AAC

The best bit has got to be the travel opportunities. So far I've been to Australia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. It's so cheap over here, I can tax and insure my car for £45 and the petrol is 20p a litre.

The worst part is working out on the pan in the constant heat of 32 degrees and 90 percent humidity, not to mention the horrible beasts flying around. I miss going down the pub on a Sunday afternoon with my mates.



LCpl Tulchandra Pun, 1 RGR

The best bit is the jungle operation, being part of a fully acclimatised battalion and being trained to operate in any Asian country. This is the best place to train in a hot climate.

The worst bit is that you've got to go outside the country to take holidays and it would be better if I could have my wife and my two children with me.



LCpl Tracey McMullin AGC (SPS), assistant chief clerk Brunei Garrison

The heat is definitely the best bit. I love the opportunity to travel and experience different cultures. The facilities here are limited and there isn't much to do during the week except work... and PT.

I miss the freedom that I have back in the UK to go to cinema, bars and cafés. I also



miss my dog and a pint of lager.

Sgt Duggie Clifford REME, 7Flt AAC

Travel-wise, there is so much to do out here. The atmosphere is very good and there is a diversity of capbadges to work alongside.

I don't miss a thing about home and I'm in no rush to go back.



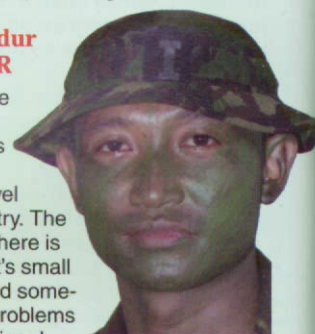
ATpr Brian Leonard AAC, 7Flt AAC

Airtroopers out here have the opportunity to train as aircrew and operate as winch operators. Flying over the rain forests is awesome, it's a dream job. The night life and

shopping is limited but there is a five-star hotel across the border in Miri which is really cheap. I miss my family and friends, beer and kebabs.

Cpl Hombahadur Gurung, 1 RGR

The Gurkha leave scheme is the best bit and gives us an allowance each year to travel outside the country. The accommodation here is not so good... it's small and cramped, and sometimes there are problems with air conditioning. I miss my family back home in Nepal.



LCpl Ann Louise Davis AAC, 7Flt AAC

It's a really good posting, an opportunity of a lifetime and I'd recommend it to anyone. It is quite quiet here so you've got to make the effort to get around and do things. I miss my friends at my old unit and my family.



Cpl Tim Whybrow AAC, 7Flt AAC

A posting here provides a great opportunity to travel and see this side of the world – and the weather definitely beats the UK. But the heat does get to you, there is no change in the temperature – and sometimes I actually miss being cold.

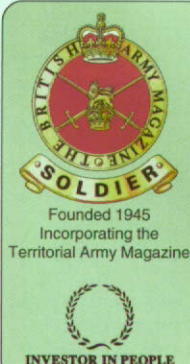


Capt Ed Rankin AGC (ETS), SO3 Visits

Working in Brunei Garrison is a challenging and demanding posting. I have the privilege of working alongside the Gurkhas and the reward of meeting people from different backgrounds. It's a wonderful opportunity to travel around South-East Asia and learn about different cultures. I miss the Yorkshire Dales.



Interviews: Andrea Frazer Pictures: Graeme Main



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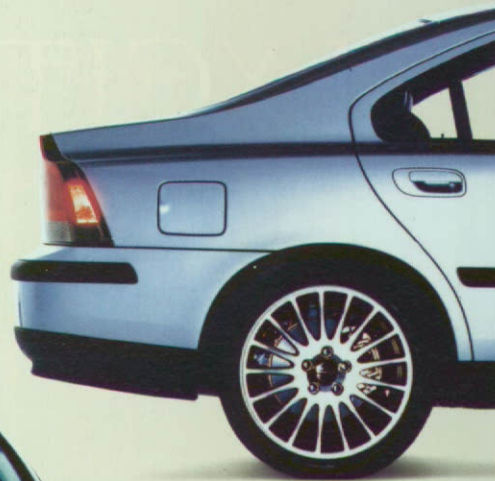
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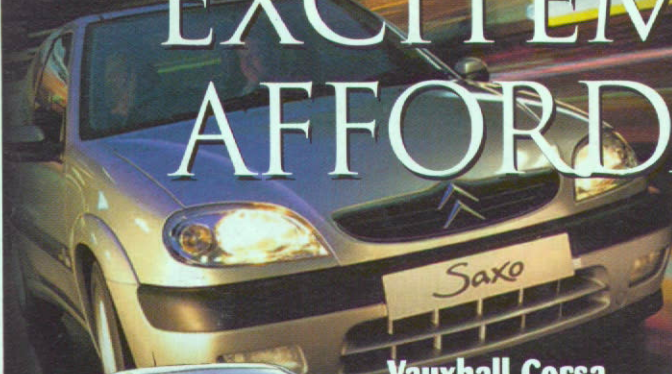


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