

SOLDIER

FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

MARCH 3 1997

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March 3, 1997 Vol 53/5

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Military pay rise to be staged – see story in Page 5 and AFPRB report details, Pages 8-9

Mine host: WO2 (QMSI) John Hare (left), an instructor at the Defence Explosive Ordnance Disposal School at Lodge Hill Camp in Kent, explains to a Croatian sapper the best angle for prodding in a suspected minefield.

Seven Croatians, all experienced in deactivating explosive devices, are being taught by British Army EOD experts how to plan the clearance of large-scale minefields in safety.

There are thought to be up to two million mines in Croatia.



Picture: Ian Proud

Troops avert human torch tragedy . . .

A MAN who tried to burn himself to death outside a British Army base in west Belfast later returned to thank the soldiers whose instant reaction to the situation unquestionably saved his life.

The civilian, in his late 20s, had doused himself with petrol and struck matches which ignited petrol on the ground.

But before the flames could catch hold on his clothes, troops on sangar duty with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment doused him with a fire extinguisher while colleagues radioed for an

ambulance and the RUC. The soldiers stayed with the man, believed to have suffered family bereavements, until the emergency services arrived on the scene.

Later, he reappeared at the main gate to Fort Whiterock security forces base and handed a box of chocolates to a sentry as a gesture of thanks to

the troops who had saved him.

LCpl John Kimble said: "Luckily, the soldier on the front gate was quick to tell us what was going on, so I ran out of the gate in an attempt to stop the man. I managed to get him to drop the matches and LCpl Andy Pether put out the flames with an Army extinguisher."

. . . and skiing soldiers save tourist

TWO soldiers on a skiing holiday in Andorra saved the life of a British tourist, thanks to their Army first aid training.

Sgt Julian Abbott, a signals instructor from Blandford, and Cpl Mark Ashton, from Aldershot-based 63 Airborne Close Support Squadron RLC, were at Pas de la Casa when the incident took place.

In deteriorating weather, a man in their party fell badly, fracturing ribs and his collar bone. When the soldiers reached him he was in considerable distress and struggling to breathe. They were told by his wife that he was asthmatic.

Sgt Abbott and Cpl Ashton concentrated on steadying the man's condition while a ski rep

with the group went for help. A mountain rescue team was soon on the spot.

With the injured man in safe hands, the soldiers escorted his distressed wife and daughter to the main resort and reassured them over a cup of tea.

A doctor later confirmed that the soldiers had taken the right actions in the situation.

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Soldier shot dead at Bessbrook VCP

LBDR Stephen Restorick, who had served with 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery for 4½ years, died when he was hit by a single round while manning a vehicle check-point in Bessbrook, Co Armagh on February 12.

Paying tribute to LBDR

Restorick, who was on a six-month tour in Northern Ireland, his commanding officer, Lt Col Matthew Sykes, said the regiment was saddened at his death.

"He was a thoroughly popular man. His easy-going nature and ready sense of humour

made him many friends in his battery and the regiment.

"His love of life ensured that he always made the best of whatever he was doing, wherever in the world he was," said Lt Col Sykes.

A civilian woman was also hurt in the incident.

You'll be better off, says pay review body

MEMBERS of the Armed Forces are to receive pay rises of between three and 3.4 per cent, while further increases in accommodation charges are to be introduced to bring them closer to the rents paid by civilians.

Variations will depend on rank and length of service.

Top salary awards – from major general upwards – recommended by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) and accepted by the Government range from 2.7 per cent to six per cent.

At all levels, the increases will be met in two stages, on April 1 and December 1. The first increase will be of 2 per cent, followed by the full award at the end of the year.

According to the Ministry of Defence, all Servicemen and women will be better off overall after rises in pay and charges are taken into account.

Most forms of additional pay – for example flying pay – are being uprated in line with the general increase in basic pay, and staged.

Revised married quarter charges set by the AFPRB take account of the disadvantages of living in quarters. The daily increase ranges from 2p to 92p for officers and 3p to 20p for

other ranks. Although the married quarters estate is now in private ownership, rent levels remain the responsibility of the independent pay body.

Garage rent goes up by £3 to £160 a year and water and

at the five-year point will be increased by £1,000 to £3,000 from April 1.

London pay has been succeeded by a London Supplement designed to improve retention and recruiting in the capital.

Although aimed at more junior ranks, it is to be paid to everyone up to one-star level working in inner London, Hounslow and Woolwich.

Arrangements are being made to ensure anyone receiving London pay will not be financially disadvantaged.

A "job specification" element in the pay of top commanders will mean those with greater responsibility being rewarded accordingly. A major general with an operational role will receive more than a major general in a desk job.

The X-factor, which recognises the special nature of soldiering, remains unchanged at 12 per cent after last year's half per cent increase.

WHAT THE AFPRB 1997 REPORT SAYS – TURN TO PAGES 8-9

sewerage charges for family quarters to £201. The water charge for occupants of single accommodation is to remain unchanged at £66 a year.

Daily increases to single accommodation charges range from zero to 16p for officers and zero to 10p for other ranks.

Daily food charge increases range from 7p for married unaccompanied personnel (£16.10 a week) to 10p for single soldiers (£21.91 a week). In line with the pay award, the increased charges will be phased in.

Committal bonuses payable

Some examples of the new Army salary:

	Dec 1, 96	April 1, 97	Dec 1, 97
Pte II Band 2 Scale B	£12,745.80	£13,129.05	£13,271.40
LCpl II Band 2 Scale B	£14,530.65	£14,965.00	£15,143.85
Cpl II Band 2 Scale B	£16,454.20	£16,946.95	£17,151.35
Sgt Band 5 Scale B	£19,293.90	£19,874.25	£20,071.35
2nd Lt	£14,063.45	£14,486.85	£14,629.20
Maj (on appt)	£30,054.10	£30,955.65	£31,269.55



A summary of Defence topics from Westminster

Peers told of medical 'disaster'

CONCERN over the ability of the Defence Medical Services to cope with commitments was voiced in the House of Lords. One former Chief of the Defence Staff spoke of a "disaster area".

Asking whether the provision of medical and nursing services for the Armed Forces was adequate now or in the event of war, Baroness Cox spoke on February 6 of "serious shortages".

For the Government, Lord Henley said the present provision was adequate. "We are, however, in the process of reviewing the Defence Medical Services to ensure they are properly manned and equipped to meet any necessary level of medical support for future operations."

He added: "I am aware that there are shortages in key areas, particularly among surgeons, anaesthetists and operating theatre nurses." Any shortfalls in the national contingency force would be made good by the use of reserves if required.

PAY AND CONDITIONS

By April 1 this year, the minister said, the Army shortfall of surgeons would be 13 against a requirement of 45.

He said the DMS review included pay, terms and conditions of service for all personnel.

Two former Chiefs of the Defence Staff spoke in the debate.

Fd Marshal Lord Carver described "serious concern" among senior officers about the capability to provide operational cover and about Defence Medical Services personnel "being treated as cheap labour" in military units of NHS hospitals.

Fd Marshal Lord Bramall said that "everything we have heard this afternoon on this question represents a disaster area in peace and war" and warned of "irreparable damage" to the medical and nursing services if action was not taken soon.



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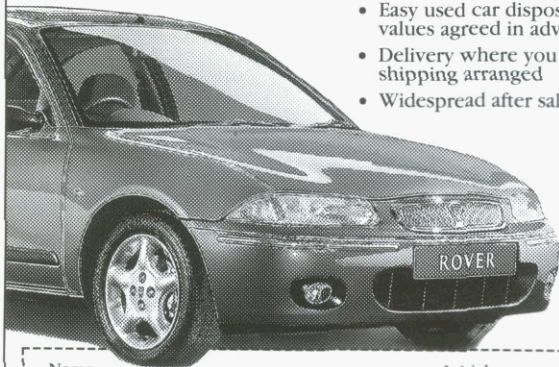


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Black Watch in Hong Kong

THE LAST British infantry battalion to serve in Hong Kong before the handover to China departed for the Colony at the beginning of February.

The 1st Battalion, The Black Watch deployed from its barracks at Fort George for an unaccompanied tour which will culminate in a parade on June 30, when the Union Flag is lowered for the last time and Hong Kong is handed back to the People's Republic.

Commanded by Lt Col Alasdair Loudon, the Black Watch relieved the 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment, which had spent five months upholding British sovereignty as the drawdown of the garrison gathered pace.

Terriers salute to 50 years

CELEBRATIONS to mark the 50th anniversary of the Territorial Army in Northern Ireland went off with a bang when 206 (Ulster) Battery, Royal Artillery (Volunteers) was given the honour of firing a 21-gun salute to commemorate the Queen's accession.

The ceremony, in front of Parliament Buildings at Stormont, also signalled the start of a year of celebrations and commemorations which will be observed by the 2,580 TA members in Northern Ireland.

In London, the 45th anniversary of the accession was greeted by royal salutes fired by The King's Troop and the Honourable Artillery Company.

ARRC commander

LT GEN Mike Jackson took command of NATO's Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) on February 18. He succeeded Gen Sir Michael Walker, who has been appointed C-in-C Land Command at Wilton.



Cold load: Soldiers from 3 Tank Transporter Squadron RLC drive a huge Scammell Commander vehicle on to the *Yuri Maskarov* for the unit's second deployment to Bosnia in a year, this time in support of the Stabilisation Force (SFOR). The move from their base at Antwerp Barracks, Sennelager,

to Emden port in heavy snow was a sharp reminder of the conditions they can expect in the Balkans.

During their previous tour in Bosnia the squadron covered more than one million kilometres and moved 80,000 tonnes of armour for the peace implementation force.

Services to share new staff college

A NEW tri-Service Staff College is to be built on a greenfield site within the perimeter of the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham in Oxfordshire.

The decision to construct a new, £500-million establishment for all three Services was announced by Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames in the Commons on February 4 and follows a careful examination of other options.

One plan rejected as too expensive was to concentrate training of future commanders of the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force at the

Army Staff College, Camberley.

A Serco/Laing consortium has won the contract to build the new college, seen as a permanent centre of military excellence. Academic support will be provided by Kings College, London.

No final decision has been made on the future use of Camberley, although it will remain in MoD ownership. Work is being done to identify a "fitting and appropriate" use for the historic buildings.

Mr Soames said the new college was a vital element in developing joint understanding between the Services.



What the papers have been saying

Cuts put bite on museums

SOME of Britain's Army museums will be forced to close under cuts planned by the MoD. A report commissioned by the Ministry described the museums as having "limited market appeal" and recommended entrance fees, a commercial approach which has angered soldiers who see the museums as custodians of their regiment's soul. — *Sunday Telegraph*

MoD has confirmed it carried out secret germ warfare tests in London and the South-East during the 1960s and 1970s. — *Guardian*

A search has begun for suitable young criminals to fill the MoD's "boot camp" in Colchester. — *Daily Telegraph*

The Japanese-led consortium that bought the Armed Forces' married quarters housing estate last year is already grossing millions of pounds from the deal. — *Times*

The first complete audit to be made of the nation's defences against the Nazi invasion of Britain is to be supported by a £250,000 Heritage Lottery Foundation grant. — *Guardian*

A defence contract that has cost taxpayers £50 million has been scrapped after delays and technical problems. The Vixen electronic warfare system failed to meet Army standards. — *Times*

A former Hampshire soldier plans to sue the MoD for up to £65,000 over a stress illness he claims was caused in Bosnia. — *The News, Portsmouth*

Saltwood Castle, the 12th century home of former Defence minister Alan Clark, has been used by the SAS to practise rescuing the royal family from hostage situations. — *Daily Express*

During a visit to Frimley Park Hospital military wing, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said there was still no military use for the old Cambridge Military Hospital in Aldershot. — *Aldershot News*

New price of separation

SEVERAL new allowances set out as recommendations in the AFPRB report are awaiting a decision from the Government before they can be implemented.

All hinge on the introduction of a Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) which would replace Separation Allowance (SEPAL), the rules of which are widely regarded as complex and discriminatory. The early replacement of SEPAL has long been a key priority of the pay review body.

LSSA is aimed at improving recruitment and retention and marks a significant change in the way separation is compensated.

It is based on a simple format that would compensate both married and single personnel who have a minimum of three years' service. At present, single Service personnel are not eligible for compensation for separation.

Three key elements of LSSA are:

- It would be payable for deployments away from a permanent duty station for periods of ten days or more, when unable to return home on a regular basis for Service reasons;
- It would be payable to both married and single personnel at the same rates;
- Rates of LSSA would be structured in three incremental tiers, with movement to the higher rates based on cumulative levels of separation.

LSSA would apply to all married personnel who joined the Services before October 1 this year, but single personnel would not be eligible until they had completed three years' qualifying service. Both married and single recruited on or after October 1 would have to accumulate three years' service to qualify.

One allowance affected is the MoD's proposal to introduce a Northern Ireland Resident Supplement (NIRS) from October 1, 1997 for troops living in the Province. The Royal Irish Regiment Home Service would be eligible.

As and when NIRS is phased in, Northern Ireland pay would be phased out for troops serving on roulement tours. Until that happens, NI pay is to be uprated to £4.40 a day from April 1.

South Georgia pay would also be phased out on the introduction of LSSA. In the interim it will go up to £4.40 a day.

One allowance which will change is London pay, which traditionally reflects the additional cost and wear and tear of living in the capital and is paid on top of lodging and travel allowances. On the recommendation of the review body it is to be replaced on April 1 by a London Supplement of £1,000.

The supplement applies to military personnel serving within a five-mile radius of

Charing Cross. Soldiers already receiving Inner or Outer London pay, and the Housing Addition, would have those allowances protected until they were posted away from the capital.

But the review body made two specific exceptions to the five-mile rule, with the result that regiments stationed at Hounslow and Greenwich will also receive the London Supplement.

The AFPRB looked at a Get-You-Home scheme designed by the MoD to help detached duty personnel return to their home base at weekends. It would be introduced at the same time as LSSA.

Meanwhile, the Separation Allowance rise will not be staged and will take effect from April 1. Rates for separation outside North West Europe for periods longer than six months are now £4 a day. The rate payable in Europe will be £3.10 a day.

Quarter charges were big issue

UNHAPPINESS over last year's larger-than-average increase in accommodation changes was reflected in the feedback noted by members of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body during contact with soldiers.

The 1997 report notes that many personnel focused on this issue.

Commenting on the Government's decision to stage the 1996 military pay award, the report says many personnel found it difficult to understand why it should have been implemented in two phases, and resented the effects.

"... decisions on whether to stage the main pay award in-year are the responsibility of Government. Our concern continues to be focused on the negative effects of in-year staging and the cost implications for those who retire within the staged period."



Aside from the staging issue and the "considerable reservations" to the MQ charges, the reaction to last year's pay award was favourable overall, says the report.

It points out that quarter charges paid by Service personnel were lagging significantly behind comparable civilian housing payments, even after an abatement had been applied to recognise the relative disadvantages of living in Service quarters.

AFPRB members are unhappy that much accommodation remains below Grade 2 standard, a concern shared by the MoD, says the report. It noted the target set to achieve Grade 1 status for all quarters by 2003, and the much-needed injection into the refurbishment programme of an additional £100 million from the sale of the estate to Annington Homes.

Other ranks work shorter hours

SO few people bothered to respond to the MoD's annual survey of hours worked that the AFPRB regarded it as unusable in its deliberations.

Only 20 per cent of the questionnaires issued were returned, a response which affected the validity of the exer-

cise. The pay body expressed the hope that the survey would be taken more seriously in future.

What was gleaned from the survey conflicted strongly with anecdotal evidence gathered by AFPRB members on their travels. It revealed that other

ranks' hours of work (averaged across all three Services) fell to 46.5 a week, the lowest figure since 1987-88.

Including officers, working hours averaged 47.7 a week. Except for the Royal Navy, hours increased significantly with rank.

March-out and the roller coaster effect blight home living

SEVERAL issues, including the poor standard of some quarters, were aired with increasing prominence when AFPRB members took part in Service discussion groups last year.

Central message that came across was that families experience problems with their accommodation that are unique to Service life.

"Taken individually," says the report, "many of the problems are minor, but the repetitive and cumulative effect leads to a perception of material disadvantage."

Top of the list were the poor standard of some quarters, the lack of choice and the bureaucracy of the management systems.

Issues that caused most frustration included:

- Alternate moves from better to poorer accommodation randomly through a career (dubbed "the roller coaster" effect) due to lack of choice;
- Security concerns and the limitations on installing burglar alarms at own cost and apparently being

asked to remove them on posting;

- The exacting cleaning procedure on leaving and the "march-out" system;
- Excessive fines for "wear and tear";
- Difficulties in getting routine maintenance work done;
- Inconvenient timing of redecoration and upgrading (no choice);
- Furniture that does not fit from house to house.

Many had put forward the argument that the balance of disadvantage to Service personnel had increased as a result of these difficulties.

The pay body is to ask the MoD to investigate the complaints with a view to improving the quality of life in Service accommodation.

Lack of choice, poor quality decorations and the inability to make changes, lack of security of tenure on leaving the Armed Forces and no right to buy are among the factors considered by the AFPRB when applying the housing abatement to MQ rental charges.

IN BRIEF

● The 1996 survey showed that nearly a quarter of Service personnel lost some annual leave. On average, the Army took 32.4 days of annual leave during the year. Personnel serving in Germany (24 per cent) were more likely to lose leave than those in Great Britain (21 per cent) or Northern Ireland (15 per cent).

● Duty hours (defined as total hours worked, on-call and meal breaks) for

all ranks in all three Services averaged 76½ hours compared with 70 for all other ranks in 1994-95.

● Service medical and dental officers' pay scales will be the subject of a supplementary report.

● Royal Irish Home Service rates of pay will be brought into line with the General Service soldier by removal of special rates of

pay for privates and lance corporals from April 1. Those already receiving higher rates will be granted "mark-time" rates.

● The pay body welcomed the creation of a project team to examine Pay As You Dine (PAYD), under which personnel would no longer pay a standard charge for meals regardless of how many they took. AFPRB found much support for PAYD on their visits to units.

Overstretch is still high on the agenda

DURING their visits to units, AFPRB members noticed an increasing concern – particularly among Servicemen and women most involved in military deployments – about overload.

Each Service had a different perception of the problem, but while many welcomed the professional challenge, they were also worried by the effect of increasing and sometimes repetitive periods of absence from their families.

Those not deployed complained that there were fewer left behind to cover the same level of commitments. "The situation was exacerbated by the continuing drive to civilianisation and contractorisation of support functions," the report observes.

Many personnel mentioned a lack of resources resulting in double and triple-hatting in jobs, and the effect of reduced promotion opportunities on pay expectations.

The authors of the report state: "Our perceptions on overstretch are unchanged: we believe there is a sig-

nificant mismatch between resources and commitments due to the shortfall in trained strength.

"This is having the indirect effect of raising the profile of pay in all three Services."

The report urges the Service Boards to look for further management solutions "because within the Services there are signs of a worrying increase in the numbers we encountered who felt considerably undervalued."

Review body members favour the early introduction of the simplified pay structure, outlined by the Bett Independent Review, that would cover all military ranks and be underpinned by improved systems of job evaluation and pay comparability.

"The introduction of performance or appraisal pay for the Services remains on the MoD's agenda, and we understand the Department hopes to come to a definitive view soon," notes the report. "We continue to favour an approach whereby skills and capabilities are rewarded, though not necessary by promotion."

How AFPRB decides

THE pay comparability exercise takes into account basic pay and additional payments, including bonuses and overtime. Adjustments are made subsequently to reflect benefits, including pensions.

For its 1997 report the AFPRB also looked at data on profit-related pay and second jobs, and took them into account. It noted for future reviews the Budget announcement to abolish tax relief on PRP.

Its latest review had shown that the pay body was achieving broadly comparable pay levels for nearly all ranks in its remit group. There was some evidence that ranks from lieutenant colonel to brigadier had continued to fall behind.

Responsibilities of the independent

review body have remained unchanged since the early 1970s. Chaired by Sir Gordon Hourston, the current review body consists of nine individuals, including leading figures from the worlds of business and the trade unions. The nine include one senior former Service officer.

Reviews go on as an almost continuous process, beginning in February and concluding in July and August. A report is sent to the Prime Minister in January and published in February, in time for the process to begin again.

● Review Body on Armed Forces Pay, 26th report 1997, published by The Stationery Office Ltd, price £8.

More Lifestyle – next pages

Don't throw experience down the drain

WHEN the Naafi lost its contract to supply food to the Forces, a shock wave went round the old hands. It seemed sad that an old friend had apparently been cast aside.

Personally, I felt something important had been lost. But the really significant fact was, for me, the message that MoD seemed to be sending to the rest of the world.

Taken with other changes to the way in which the Forces operate, the Ministry is making it clear that it is prepared to operate in the modern business environment – in which sentiment has no place. It is a clear signal to other agencies which support the Services that value for money is now the watchword.

While many might applaud this, there is a danger that the baby will go out with the bath water. I've seen it most recently in companies where long-serving men and women have been made redundant to save money. While this achieves the aim in the short term, a great wealth of experience is lost. The real test comes when there is a crisis.

It might be a cliché but, in tough situations, the cool calm of older, wiser heads pays dividends. On the other hand, long service doesn't necessarily indicate competence.

If the pursuit of value for money results in the Forces getting a better service, everyone should be behind the initiative. That means not complaining about change but supporting it wholeheartedly... and if it does go wrong it means being gallant in victory.

You cannot fail to have seen the arguments in the press and on TV which arose from recent research into working mothers and the performance of their children in schools. In the BFBS *Counterpoint* programme's regular education slot, we included it in our discussion of the month's news. It caught the imagination of all involved and opinions were sharply divided.

Whatever the reason, many Service spouses are not in full-time work. Would it not be an interesting area of study for someone who is undertaking research work, possibly for an

Open University degree, to look at working Service wives and their children, and non-working spouses?

This kind of research is fraught with difficulty, of course. It would take time to get the official backing needed. It might be that it would have to be done in conjunction with one of the big agencies – such as SSAFA Forces Help – and it would need planning to protect privacy and meet the needs of security. But I do think it would be worth doing.

If the research indicated that Service spouses who stayed with their children at home actually helped to improve their academic attainment, it might make up for the lack of choice in the matter.

Should you be planning this kind of research, do let me

know. It would be interesting to follow the progress of the work and the programme might be a good way to elicit some case histories.

Finally, two requests for help. I've had an increasing number of letters and calls at BFBS on the subject of pen-pals. Some are straightforward requests for me to find a Service person to write to. These I pass on to publications that can help.

The other kind of letter comes from young women who have had a penfriend, usually in a place of danger, who mysteriously stops writing to them. They ask me to find out if the person in question is all right. I can't, of course, and I try to write something sympathetic in reply.

We're planning an in-depth look at the world of pen-pals for the *Counterpoint* programme, so if you have a story to tell do let me know. All letters will be treated in the strictest confidence and read only by me.

The other feature we're planning is on homeless ex-Service people said to be living on the streets. I'd like to know what is being done to help them. I know many people organise events to help and, if you're one of them, do write and tell me about it.

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

Clearer view on surplus families accommodation and the single soldier

CLARIFICATION on the allocation of temporarily surplus Service Families Accommodation (SFA) to single Army personnel – laid down recently in DCI Gen 350/96 – has been given by the Directorate of Personal Services (Army).

Allocation of any Service properties to Service personnel covered by the DCI refers only to those who would otherwise be entitled to SFA or eligible for surplus SFA, the DPS (A) stresses.

It does not refer to single Army personnel in MARISTAT 5 category, since this is contrary to Army policy.

The MoD's Upavon-based PS4 (A) branch has outlined the relevant amended paragraphs to the Tri-Service Housing Regulations – currently being updated – which the DHE has to work to in the allocation of the families accommodation.

According to Maj Don McLaren,

desk officer responsible for housing policy within the directorate, the only circumstances when a single Army person may live in Service Families Accommodation are when there are insufficient alternatives in a particular area.

Then, consideration may exceptionally be given by the local commander to request the DHE to misappropriate family quarters for single Army personnel.

However, according to the regulations, before a decision is taken by commanding officers, "consideration must be given to the integrity of Army estates and other factors."

If approval is granted, single personnel (who will continue to pay normal single accommodation charges) must abide by the appropriate single mess rules and acknowledge that co-habitation is not permitted.

PS4 (A) Branch also explains

the situation for Army personnel in MARISTAT 3 (those having been married and agreed to provide financial care for a child) and MARISTAT 4 (the same, but having been ordered to do so by court order) categories.

Those of them for whom single accommodation is available, but who request to occupy a SFA, may exceptionally be considered for allocation of a surplus SFA – subject to authority being granted by the local commander.

This is so that they can exercise their partial parental responsibilities.

Again, the commander's decision must include consideration of the integrity of Army estates and other factors.

Single personnel occupying surplus SFA under these circumstances, the branch explains, will be liable to pay for the accommodation at the entitled rate for those in MARISTAT categories 1 and 2 – married accompanied (not divorced or separated), and having full care and responsibility for a dependant respectively.

Local commanders must ensure that a written undertaking is provided by the soldier, acknowledging that co-habitation will not occur.

FAMILY POLICY

"We have had to issue this clarification because it was obviously not clear which entitlements existed," said Maj McLaren.

"I should emphasise that it is not a change to what is laid down on entitlement. It is a clarification of existing housing policy, which is structured to support the Army accompanied service policy – to accommodate families wherever possible at their duty station."

Existing policy on entitled single Army personnel occupying SFA remains unchanged, says DPS(A).

This covers lieutenant colonels or above serving in appointments designated by the MoD as being in command; RSMs of major Army units; Service chaplains; Army welfare workers; and pregnant single Service women from three months before the expected date of confinement up to the date of birth – when they become MARISTAT category 2.

Further information: contact Directorate of Personal Services (Army) – PS4 (A) on Upavon Mil (734) 5958.



Enlister and sister... Joining the Army on the same day at the Armed Forces Careers Office in Cambridge were brother and sister Christopher and Louise Phillips, pictured with Pte Scott Woolett, AGC (SPS), currently attached to the office on the "Satisfied Soldier" scheme.

With Christopher joining The Royal Anglian Regiment – starting basic training at ATR Bassingbourn on February 24 – and Louise opting for the Adjutant General's Corps, with the same intake date at ATR Winchester, their parents could be faced with a dilemma come the respective passing-out parades scheduled for May...

Wanted: persons with fibre

A NUMBER of government-assisted places are available on twice-monthly training courses currently being run by Cablenet Training Services Ltd, who have been asked to recruit 150 people for an international telecommunications company based in the United Kingdom.

Cost of the four-week courses – which cover fibre optics and data-

comms – and accommodation is covered by resettlement and accommodation allowances.

Students who attain the required standard will be given full-time employment.

For further details on the courses, run from the National Training Centre in Bury St Edmunds, telephone Angus Fraser on 0171 581-1805.



Big moment: Lady Tor Walker (right), President HIVE Worldwide, unveils the organisation's new logo at a ceremony at JHQ Rheindahlen. With her are Sue Hatton, manager HIVE Support Team (left), and Leslie Findlay, manager HIVE UK

DEBUT FOR NEW IMAGE

New deal announced for war pensioners

RANK differences in war disablement gratuities are to be scrapped from April 7, Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley announced.

Revealing a package of pension changes, he said that the new rates will be based on those previously appropriate to an Army major or equivalent.

The lower rate of clothing allowance is also to be abolished, with all payments being made at the equivalent of the current higher rate.

"I intend to introduce minimum disablement gateways for new claims to certain supplementary allowances which may be paid with the basic war disablement pension," Mr Lilley said in reply to a parliamentary question.

For war pensioners' mobility supplement and the allowance for lower standard of occupation, the threshold will be set at 40 per cent. For unemployment supplement, the threshold will be at 60 per cent.

New awards of the allowance for lower standard of occupation and unemployment supplement will be restricted to those aged under 65 at the date of the claim.

Existing recipients of these allowances will not be affected by the proposed changes.

Also, said Mr Lilley, first payment for all awards of pension and allowances will be made from the first day of entitlement, rather than at present where some are made

from that day and others from the start of the first pay week following.

Among other changes to be implemented from April 7 are the award of a war widow's pension where the late husband was in receipt of unemployment supplement, and was assessed as at least 80 per cent disabled due to service at the time of his death. Payment for funeral expenses will be made in the same circumstances.

EQUAL BENEFITS

In addition, war widows who live with another man will be entitled to the same benefits as those who remain – becoming eligible for a war widow's pension on the death of the man with whom they live.

At present, entitlement to a war widow's pension ceases as soon as a widowed woman sets up home with someone else.

Changes are also to be introduced by the War Pensions Agency (WPA) to the administration of claims to war widows' and war disablement pensions, said Peter Lilley.

"The agency will cease issuing reminders to return claim forms, but will keep our procedures under review to ensure that no potential pensioner is left in doubt about the

Franchise mags offer

BEING launched at this year's National Franchise Exhibition (NEC, October 3-5) is the *Business Franchise Directory 1997*, a guide (RRP £20) to choosing, buying and setting up a franchise, which lists all available franchises within the United Kingdom.

The official journal of the British Franchise Association, *Business Franchise Magazine*, has two offers for enterprising Soldier readers.

First five to order an annual subscription to their publication – at a reduced rate of £20 – will receive a *Business Franchise Directory* free. (Later subscribers can buy the directory for £15).

Subscriptions or directories can be ordered by telephoning 01858 435329, quoting Business Franchise – SOL 02/97.

And the first ten *Soldier* readers who contact publishing executive Tracy Bebbington by post at Business Franchise, 20 Ashbourne Road, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1LW will receive complimentary tickets to the exhibition when they are issued later this year.

importance of returning claim forms promptly."

Additionally, the WPA will cease the issue of four-yearly continuation notices in cases which attract a long-term interim assessment.

"Pensioners will still be clearly told to let the War Pensions Agency know if their condition changes, and that it is possible to review circumstances," Mr Lilley pointed out.

● The Royal British Legion has obtained the agreement of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, to adjustments to war pension administrative arrangements to speed up appeal hearings and reduce current delays of up to two years.

Drugs guide for parents

Copies of the booklet *A Parent's Guide To Drugs and Solvents* are now available for order by units.

They may be obtained by writing to The Drugs Project, Health Education Authority, c/o Solo communications, Sandwich, Kent or by telephone on 0800 776600.

It is expected that Families Officers will distribute them to all families.

Canine camouflage

Making himself at home with guard dog **Hanson** in Split is LCpl **Stu Rowles**, Royal Army Veterinary Corps. The suitably-disguised kennel was made by LCpl **Steve Edgelar**, who says that, since Hanson and Freckles (Stu's nickname) sounds remarkably like the title of a famous story set in the woods, the dog's new residence is made of only the finest gingerbread...



Picture: CPOA (Phot) Chris North

Aussie accolade



Brig **Peter McGuinness**, Defence Adviser at the Australian High Commission in London, presents Maj **Jonathan Powell**, Royal Regiment of Wales, with a medal of commendation.

The medal, and accompanying certificate, were awarded in recognition of his efforts while posted on exchange to the Defence Intelligence Organisation, Australian Department of Defence, in Canberra.

Coincidentally, the two men's paths have crossed before — in 1980, when they were both posted to the Commonwealth Monitoring Force HQ in the then Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, on Operation AGILA.

Travelling twosome

For the past six years, Sgt **Gary Elliston** has been running the Royal Corps of Signals road show, visiting cadet forces, schools and shows the length and breadth of the country to publicise the corps.

Recently, however, even though it was only for one month, he was "chuffed" to be joined by his son, Sig **Christopher Elliston**, who serves with 11 Signal Regiment at Blandford.

Currently undergoing trade training as a Telecommunications Officer (Telegraph), the visits to the cadet forces brought back pleasant memories for Christopher — himself a former Cadet RSM and Lord Lieutenant's Cadet with the Cleveland ACF.

Greeting the chief

The Princess Royal is met by Lt Col **Dougie Rowlinson**, Commanding Officer of 15 Signal Regiment, as she stops off to meet soldiers from the regiment during a visit to Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn, in her capacity as Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals.



CHOCOLATE SOLDIER!

Delight all round as WO2 **Stu Pemberton**, of 208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital (V), hands chocolate bars to local children during a month-long trek across the mountainous countryside of Nepal he undertook with 13 other members of the unit.

A meeting with a Kumari princess, a flight by helicopter to Katmandu airport and treks to the summits of two peaks — assisted by invaluable Sherpas — are among unforgettable memories, he says.



PEOPLE

Burning bright to help the tiger

Pictured with fierce four-legged specimen and the animal's trainer is Cpl **Simon Claxton** (rear), one of six members of 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment ("The Tigers"), who raised money for Tusk Force, a charity which helps endangered wild species.

Total amassed by the efforts of Simon, Ptes **Steve Sweetland** and **Richard Moss**, LCpl **Dave Best** and Cpts **Adam Rout** and **Hugh Andree** from their efforts in the New York Marathon was £9,000.

Steve — running in his first marathon — was the fastest in the team, finishing in 3hr 24 min 18 sec.



Picture: Media Ops, HQ Land Command

A first for the Army

Caught in mid-address is Brig **Richard Holmes**, appointed last month as the first tri-Service Director of Reserve Forces and Cadets.

Triple cap-badged – and proud of it!

IT WAS with a deep sense of dismay that I read David Marriott's letter. ACF personnel wear the badge of their affiliated unit and are, without exception, proud to do so. They do not, however, wear the headgear of "elite units".

Further, any ACF member who was to wear a trade or qualification badge to which he or she was not entitled would find themselves corrected in very short order.

During my 16 years' service with the ACF, I have worn the cap badges of the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and The Duke of Wellington's Regiment and I consider it a great honour to be associated with each of these distinguished units.

I further believe that I, and others like me, have earned this honour through our ongoing work with the young people of this country.

It has always been my experience that most Regular and TA soldiers are proud to be associated with their affiliated cadets. This feeling is even greater among the ex-Service organisations, who are among some of our strongest supporters.

If we are good enough for the men and women who experienced "total war", surely we must be good enough for Mr Marriott. – **Under Officer John M Potts, Royal Artillery (ACF), Bradford, Yorks.**

Spare time

MANY, if not most, adult instruc-

CADETS AND THEIR BADGES

WHEN David G Marriott, of Birkenhead, wrote about the wearing of regimental cap badges by the Army Cadet Force in our February 3 issue he provoked one of the strongest reactions of recent years to a *Soldier* reader's letter.

The first replies, published in the February 17 edition, covered most of the points ACF representatives have raised but here are extracts from subsequent letters.

tors in the ACF have seen Regular or TA service.

Honourably-gained parachute wings are not uncommon and even SAS wings are not unknown.

Promotion in the ACF is not given lightly; ACF officers have passed the Regular or Territorial Commissions Board. For most adult instructors, the achievement of "high rank" follows many years of giving most of their spare time to the benefit of the ACF.

If your correspondent feels that the ACF is failing to live up to the standards that he, as an ex-Regular, feels it should maintain, might I suggest that he offers the local cadets the benefit of his experience. Perhaps he too will be able to sew on his old badges. – **Capt D A Walker ACF (and Maj RE, Retd), Bedford.**

Strong bonds

I AM SURE all ex-ACF cadets like myself take exception to David G Marriott's remarks.

I wore the badge of the Middlesex Regiment as a cadet for a number of years before the Second World War, as well as

during and after as a Regular soldier.

Presumably Mr Marriott has never served in the ACF so can have no knowledge of the strong bond and co-operation that the Regular and TA battalions have with their badged cadets.

An Old Boys Association of ex-Middlesex Regiment Cadets exists to prove just how much the badge meant to us. – **Edward A G Croucher, Diss, Norfolk.**

Entitled to wear them

"ELITE" regimental badges are worn by cadet units with the permission of the Ministry of Defence and the regiments concerned.

Wings are worn by some of the adult staff because they are entitled to wear them. They have either served as Regular or TA soldiers and done the required courses.

If Mr Marriott feels they are incorrectly worn, I suggest he takes up the matter with the OC concerned or the local TAVRA. – **Capt A V Hart, OC 202 Acton Cadet Detachment Royal Engineers, Middlesex and NW London ACF, Acton.**

Well trained

THERE are few Adult Instructors in the ACF who have not served in the Regular Army and I refute the point about "elevation" to high ranks with no military experience.

Officers and Adult Instructors from sergeants to WOs are trained well at the ACF's own Staff Training College at Frimley Park. – **M F Johns (ex-SMI), Tonbridge, Kent.**

Ranks are earned

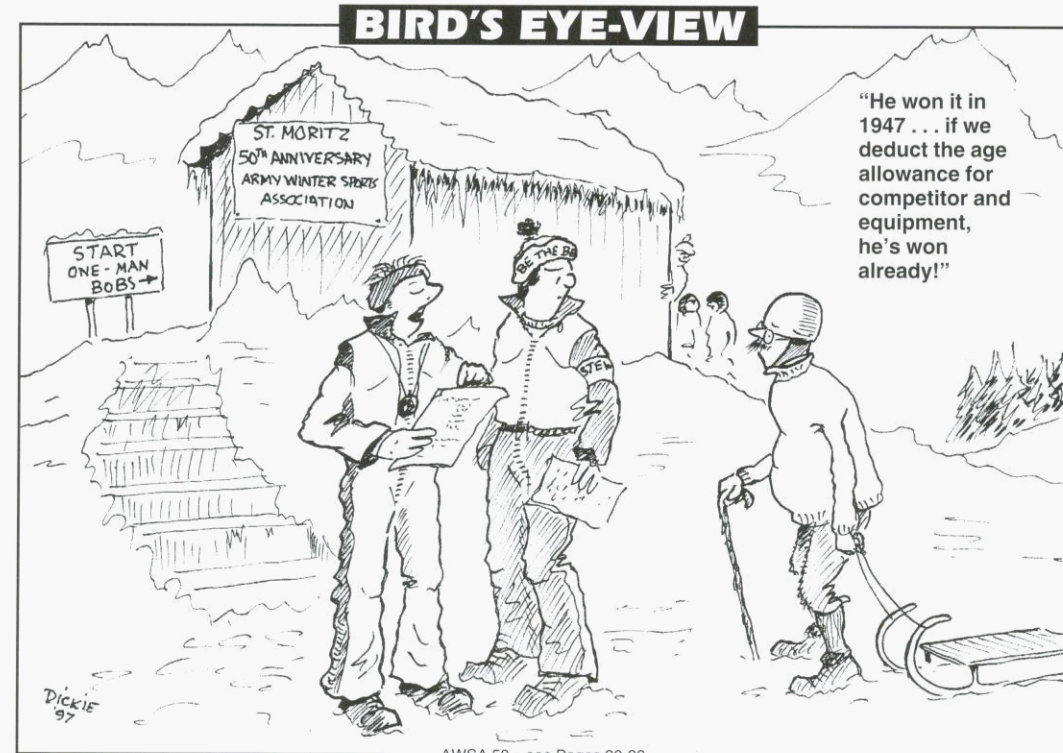
MR MARRIOTT'S letter defies belief. However, as I suspected, it demonstrates that the average Regular and Territorial soldier has absolutely no understanding of the aims, objectives and operational methodology of the ACF.

The ACF is the Army's youth organisation and as such mirrors its diverse regimental and "tribal" structure. Cadets are proud to be associated with a regiment or corps and those to which cadet units are badged often seek to foster this culture.

The RGJ and PWRR are renowned for their generous hospitality in hosting their "junior" counterparts.

ACF cadet NCOs, adult instructors and officers earn the rank they wear. Training is both demanding and taxing.

I have seen ACF adults and officers initiate, execute and manage training that is on a par, if not better, than that of some Regular and Territorial units. – **Steve Crump, Rugby, Warwicks.**



AWSA 50 – see Pages 20-23

Wake up, Fred . . .

THE FINE special feature on Army bugling (Jan 20) triggered fond memories of Hong Kong in 1954-55.

Particularly so by the mention of "artful dodgers", whose calls were in reality sounded by hidden colleagues, to cover their inadequacies; also those who preferred to stay under

cover on wet nights. My particular recollection is of an ex-RA Boys Battery trumpeter who, following his early wake-up shake from a patrolling sentry, would promptly fall sound asleep once more.

Eventually, after many objects had been thrown at him, he would leap up, throw open the window by his bed,

kneel on his pillow, sound a near-perfect *Reveille*, close the window and return to his slumbers, without detection by the Battery Sergeant Major.

No names, no pack drill, no libel writs, but Fred, if you still subscribe to *Soldier*, please write in to confirm the foregoing. – **Jim Jacobs, Fareham, Hants.**

Girls in the band

AS a National Serviceman I served as a bandsman with an Irish infantry battalion from 1953 to 1956.

We were mollycoddled to a certain extent. There were no drills or guard duties and when we travelled as a band it was in luxury coaches, whereas the squaddies went by truck.

Sometimes this got up their noses and they would refer to us as "the girls in the band" to wind us up. I always replied by saying: "Well, I can do your job at a push but you couldn't do mine."

With the recent news that

Soldier welcomes letters for publication from all readers, whatever their status. Letters must be brief, typed or written clearly and include the correspondent's name and address in block capitals, not necessarily for publication. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to edit for length, clarity or style.

Rank bad taste

I AGREE with J I Frapwell (Letters, Feb 3). We have always been class-conscious in this country about the award of decorations and medals. The division of awards of the CBE, OBE, MBE and BEM is based on rank.

Army medical records are much simpler. In my day an officer and a gentleman would suffer from haemorrhoids but other ranks just had piles. – **Edward Kelly (ex-RE), Dover, Kent.**

the first female has been appointed to an infantry band (Royal Irish Regiment) perhaps in a few years' time the lads will have got it right. – **David Magill, Greenock, Renfrewshire.**

ON READING your feature on the Army School of Recruiting (Feb 3) I recall hearing about a recruiting officer who discouraged a potential soldier from joining the Royal Artillery.

The budding soldier's surname was Rear and the recruiting officer told him: "Whatever you do, don't join the Royal Artillery. You'll be given the prefix 'Gunner!'" – **Charles Meacher, Keighley, W Yorks.**

'Disgusted' at Korea trip cost

HAVING read of pilgrimages to Korea for "veterans of a forgotten war" I fancied a nostalgic return but on investigating found the cost to be £1,500 excluding spending money.

I felt this was a disgusting way to treat veterans.

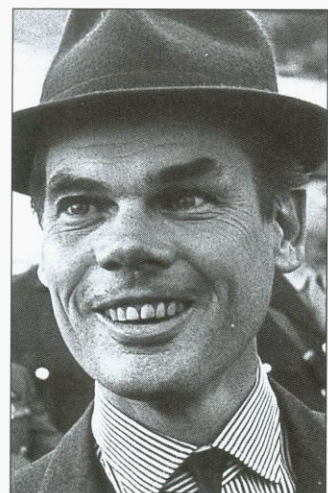
Why can't the government

Tribute to 'Mad Mitch'

I READ your excellent magazine from cover to cover and particularly like articles on the Army of the past and anniversary features, such as the one on the Suez invasion (Oct 28).

There was, however, no mention in *Soldier* of Lt Col Colin "Mad Mitch" Mitchell's death in 1996.

I realise that you are not in the obituaries business but I think that as one of the high-profile post-war figures (Crater, Aden) he has deserved his place in the annals of the British Army. – **S F Buckley (ex-TA), Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.**



"Civvy" homecoming: Lt-Col Colin Mitchell, commanding officer of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, arrives home in November 1967. His battalion had withdrawn from the Crater district of Aden the previous day.

Apart from his Mention in Despatches during the Aden crisis, Col Mitchell had also given distinguished service in Italy (1944), Palestine, Korea, Cyprus and Borneo.

He later became an MP, a member of the UNHCR Mission to Cambodia, and chairman of the Halo Trust.



Boldly going . . . Army cadets wearing a variety of cap badges on a confidence-building exercise in the woods



If you're over five you can save £30

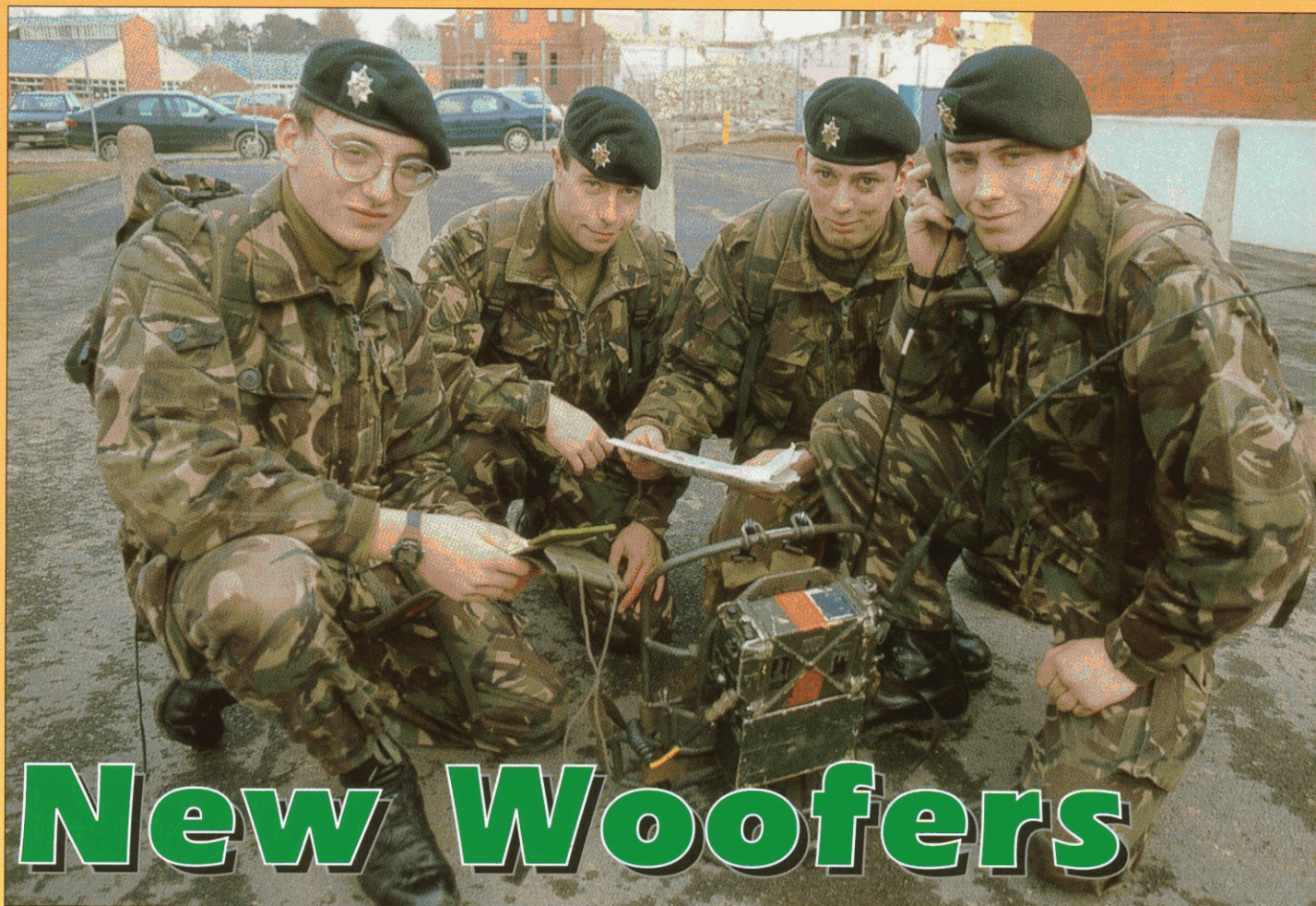
As a member of Britain's armed forces BT think you deserve every opportunity to keep in touch with friends and relations.

So if BT can connect 6 or more service personnel, at the same location, each individual customer gets £30 off the normal connection charge.

It's good to talk so get in touch with BT on **0800 400471** and a telephone can be installed for just £69 plus vat.

*This offer is exclusive to service personnel in service accommodation.
Following installation of your telephone normal rental and call charges then apply.
Offer subject to normal BT terms and conditions.*





New Woofers learn the ropes

WITH Army recruiting on its way to reaching this year's target, it comes as no surprise to learn that the 1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment is well up to strength.

It has been reinforced by a batch of more than 40 new recruits fresh from their initial military training at Army Training Regiment Lichfield.

The young soldiers are currently undergoing an intensive course of continuation training at Lucknow Barracks, Tidworth, where the battalion, commanded by Lt Col Patrick Mercer, is based.

As they are put through their paces, their individual knowledge of military skills is scrutinised by instructors, so that the best can be posted to D Fire Support Company which requires good quality infantry soldiers to learn mortaring, anti-tank and reconnaissance techniques.

The regiment converted to its current armoured infantry role in 1995, becoming the first infantry battalion in the United Kingdom to convert to Warrior. In the same year, 1 WFR received new Colours from the Princess Royal during celebrations to mark the regiment's 25th anniversary and its founding regiments' tercentenaries.

Being able to hit the target accurately is a key requirement for any infantryman and 1 WFR's soldiers are masters of the art. The unit won the British Army's prestigious Tickle Award for shooting more



Despite the restricted view through his respirator eyepieces, Pte Andrew Newham takes careful aim on the target during his annual personal weapon test on Bulford Ranges. Cpl Iain Robertson (left) looks on

Top picture – Ptes Neil Kilsby, Paul Newton, David Cowley and Simon Gough get to grips with a PRC 351 radio set during a spell of continuation training

than ten years in a row. The regiment has not long completed a six-month tour of duty with NATO's peace implementation force (IFOR).

Main task for the Woofers, who were based around Mrkonjic Grad, Gornji

Ribnik and Sipovo, was to ensure the peace plan measures were put into effect.

WFR troops also found themselves involved in an operation to win the hearts and minds of local people by helping to rebuild the shattered infrastructure of the country.

"Our soldiers helped to complete 70 projects sponsored by the Overseas Development Administration," said Major Nigel Smith. "These included renovation work on hospitals, schools and clinics at a cost of £1 million."

One of their most successful projects involved a school in the central Bosnian town of Krupa which had been badly damaged in the fighting. Rebuilt with British aid, it still needed to be re-equipped.

In an operation co-ordinated by Mr Peter Hogben of the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regimental Association, the soldiers launched an appeal in the regiment's own recruiting area for desks, blackboards and stationery.

Local firms and education authorities collected the materials and delivered them to the school, which was able to re-open its doors to pupils.

Now firmly re-established in its Tidworth base, the regiment is about to enter another period of upheaval. In December, the ageing Victorian blocks in Lucknow Barracks in which its soldiers are accommodated are to be torn down and replaced with modern buildings.



"See . . . that's what happens when you make off-the-cuff remarks to the budget manager!"



"Are you sure you're right for the Infantry?"

Chuckle with Chip



"Colonel . . . I wondered if this was a good time to discuss those changes to my Confidential Report?"



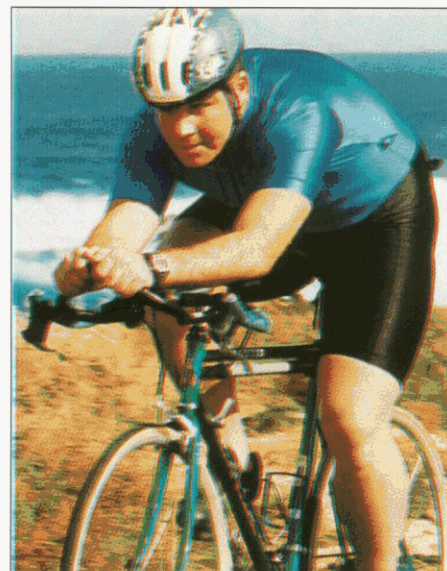
"In the Cavalry we find that if a chap understands hunting he can usually understand tactics as well"

The modern officer relies increasingly on the computer as a main means of communication . . .





Pte Toby Hart, the eventual winner of the Service competition, with Europe's oldest active triathlete, Maj Patrick Barnes (81), late of the King's Own African Rifles and the Border Regiment. Right: Cpl Scott McMenamin (1 RTR) on the 40km cycle ride around the island



Charity wins as units join in running battle

BRITISH soldiers who volunteered for a gruelling bout of plunging, panting and pedalling have put smiles on the faces of people suffering from epilepsy.

Eighteen soldiers raised the sponsorship cash for a tough triathlon in Lanzarote, and one group even collected enough to sponsor a young sportswoman.

Hard work and generosity by individual and unit sponsors swelled the coffers of the David Lewis Centre for Epilepsy, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, by about £20,000 and the Army Benevolent Fund collected a handsome £250 from each entrant.

The ball started rolling when ex-paratrooper Arthur Surch of the David Lewis Centre contacted the Army and asked for help in raising cash; a story appeared in *Soldier* and responses flowed in. Soldiers of the Territorial Army's 3rd Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment took the project to heart . . . not only did the Chester-based



Pte Toby Hart (3 Cheshire) powers his way through the 1.5km swim

unit raise money to send four soldiers to the triathlon, they also drummed up enough to allow a triathlete suffering from epilepsy to join them.

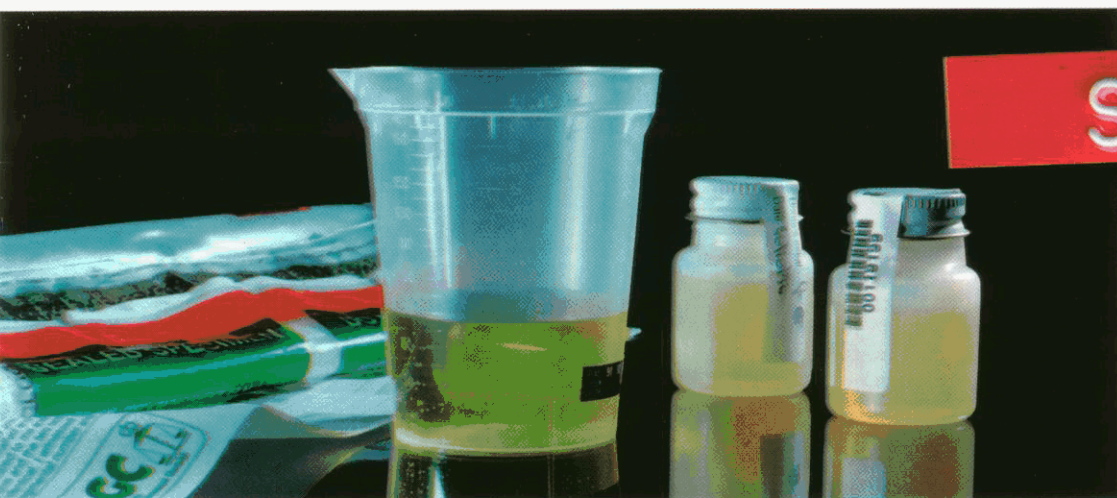
Lauren McFie (22), a student from Croydon, was nominated by the David Lewis Centre to be the soldiers' guest in the Canary Islands. She is reading psychology and anthropology at Swansea College,

University of Wales. It was a real boost for Lauren to train among top athletes in Lanzarote, now something of a magnet for winter training.

During a trip to the David Lewis Centre she dropped in on the lads of the Cheshire Regiment and was put through her paces by the sergeant major.

Also in Lanzarote was Britain's oldest triathlete, 81-year-old former major Patrick Barnes, from Osterley, Middlesex, who served with The Border Regiment and later The King's Own African Rifles.

Others taking part in the swim-cycle-run event were soldiers from 5 Regiment RA, Catterick; 1st Battalion, The Royal Tank Regiment; the North East-based 4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (V); 33 Signal Regiment, Liverpool; The Royal Irish Regiment; Birmingham-based 101 Battalion, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (Volunteers); and an RAF chef.



SPEED

TRAP



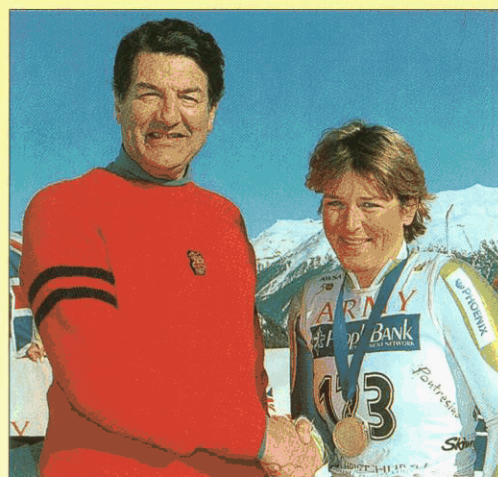
MOD PS2(A)

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Telephone: Military 734 5947



Left – Tpr Terry Ahrens (QRL) on the biathlon range. Terry, who lost the use of his left arm in an accident, is aiming for a place in the next Paralympics

Below – Capt Emma Watson-Mack receives a congratulatory handshake from Gen Sir John Wilsey after winning the women's Super G slalom



Women's skeleton winner LCpl Sarah Smith in action. She beat many of the male competitors



Above – An Army biathlete finds the going tough

Left – SSgt Jude Shenton finished second in the Super G despite having to wear a leg-brace because of a training injury. But she won the downhill

Jude gets set to hit the heights

TOP woman skier SSgt Jude Shenton raced into the record books when she won the first Army women's downhill competition at St Moritz.

It was a special success for Shenton, who has been battling against injury and who has had to compete in a leg brace. An Army Physical Training Corps adventurous training instructor, she has decided this will be her last season of racing.

She intends to climb up mountains instead of skiing down them, and has her sights set on reaching the summit of Everest or K2. A semi-finalist in last year's TV Gladiators contest, she was also on course to win the Army women's Alpine championship for the fourth time during the Army Winter Sports Association's (AWSA) 50th anniversary meeting at the Swiss resort of St Moritz.

Commenting on her performance in the downhill, she said: "I am very pleased to have won, but a bit disappointed as my training times were much faster."

"But I am ecstatic to have won the first downhill race for women in the Army. It was felt we could not make the time, but now, obviously, they think we are good enough."

This is her seventh season skiing for the Army and her decision to retire coincides with a move to the Joint Services Adventurous Training Instructors' School in Wales.

Shenton also won the giant slalom and downhill and came second in the Super G, putting her firmly on course to win the overall championship.

There were thrills and spills of a different sort when military snowboarders took their place on the piste.

Snowboarding, which will make its debut as an Olympic event at Nagano, Japan, in 1998, is the fastest-growing winter sport. Even though it is not yet an official Army sport, the 20 competitors who took part hope it soon will be.

Capt Nigel Robinson (LD), who organised its military debut, said: "The racers

travel in excess of 40mph, which takes a high level of fitness and courage. It's a fast, fun sport which is very popular with young soldiers."

The fortnight-long competition marked the 50th anniversary meeting of the AWSA, formed by Fd Marshal Montgomery to boost the British Army's winter warfare capability and encourage fitness, self-confidence and commitment. The celebrations were launched at a ceremony in the resort's Champoiné Park arena, where more than 450 Service competitors, accompanied by a Swiss Alpine horn band,



Raising a laugh with their odd headgear before competing in the women's Super G slalom were Capts Lisa Giles and Emma Watson-Mack and SSgt Jude Shenton

took part in a torchlight parade.

Leading the cheers were Lord Glenforsa, who as Capt Robin Dixon, Gren Gds, won a gold medal at the 1964 Winter Olympics, and the Army's longest-serving

Olympian, biathlete Cpl Charles MacIvor (1 GS Regt), who declared the championships open.

Brig David Radcliffe, chairman of AWSA 50, told competitors it was appropriate that the association had returned to the town where it was formed.

Sgt Dave Belam (3 RHA), who won the 15km British and Inter-Services classical cross-country championship for the fifth year in succession, added to his gold medals by beating a talented field in the 10km pursuit. He was chased to the line by Olympic veteran Sgt Michael Dixon (35 Engr Regt), who started a minute behind him.

"It was hard out there, very hard," said Belam. "I was lucky he didn't catch me. A minute is quite a long time – about 300m – but he is such a strong skier."

The 164 competitors set off in sub-zero temperatures and many completed the race

"I think it is an excellent thing for the men to get away from barracks, bugles, parades and discipline, and up into the mountains. It develops quick-thinking and also a splendid team spirit. Skiing embodies all the characteristics which go to make a good soldier – courage, dash and decision." – Fd Marshal Montgomery, ASA AGM August 6, 1958

with the bottom half of their faces masked in ice.

Cross-country skiers are among the top 15 per cent of sportsmen and women in terms of endurance and their toughness was exemplified by Tpr Terry Ahrens (QRL) who lost the use of

his left arm in an accident four seasons ago. Terry, who is aiming for a place in the next Para-Olympics, said: "Because of my arm, balance can be a bit of a problem and having only one pole to lean on makes it more difficult, but I get round the course any way I can. I just love it."

Michael Dixon was expected to win most of the Nordic skiing events easily, but had to admit defeat. Although his team won the 4 x 10km cross-country relay, he had to give second best to a bout of influenza. He was advised to take things easily during the biathlon, in which he finished third, to make sure he was fully recovered

for the forthcoming world championships.

"It's hard work at the best of times," he said, "but when you are not 100 per cent physically, it is agony."

On the Cresta run, Hldr Calum Anderson won the award for best novice and received his medal from the Duke of Kent. Anderson, the only other rank among the otherwise all-officer entry, had only two weeks training for the event.

The Cresta is a three-quarter-mile-long ice run along a steep gully with ten corners. Bdr Adrian Collins (ATR Pirbright) reached speeds in excess of 75mph to win the skeleton race ahead of rivals Cpl Steve Anson (1 Regt AAC) and Sgt Richard Rochester. LCpl Sarah Smith stunned the largely male field by finishing fourth overall and fastest women.

AWSA 50 director Lt Col Mark Goodson said he was delighted by the way the meeting had gone. "It made a fitting jubilee for the association and I am thrilled that the concept worked so well for all the athletes who have all enjoyed a memorable experience."

• More pictures overleaf

• AWSA 50 results – Page 42



LCpl Mark Gee (2 RTR) waxes his skis before the 15km classic race. He is a member of the British biathlon Olympic team



Above – SSgt Andy Brown (1 ADSR), a member of the Army Alpine team, takes a gate at speed during a slalom event



Above – On the podium are the medal winners in the Army 4 x 10km cross-country relay. Left to right are 1 GS Regt (2nd), 35 Engr Regt (1st), and 3 RHA (3rd)



Above – Capt Kirsty Pemberton-Piggott, SSgt Jude Shenton and Capt Emma Watson-Mack show off their medals from the grand slalom



Above – Capt Jamie Clarke (1 GS Regt) an Inter-Service competitor, prepares to start in the giant slalom team event

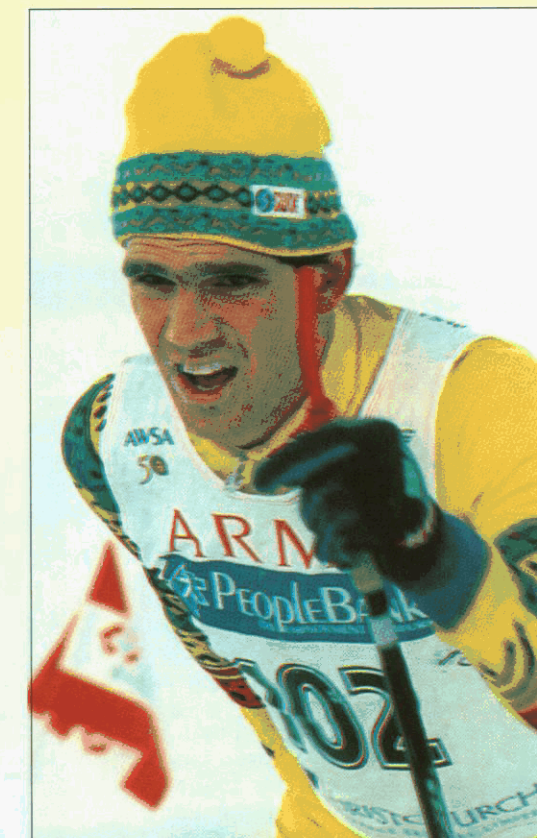
Above – Veteran Olympian Sgt Michael Dixon (35 Engr Regt) prepares to engage a target during the range phase of the 20km biathlon event



Right – Cpl Mark Wallace (REME) skis past the tumbling figure of Capt Guy Moverly during the snowboard parallel slalom. It is hoped the discipline will be officially recognised by the Army



Right – Gen Sir Charles Guthrie (second left) chats to SSgt Andy Brown, Capt Richard Determeyer and Capt Jamie Clarke, all members of the Army Alpine team



Capt Richard Sutherland (QRH) returned from Bosnia to compete at AWSA 50

Caring heart of the Midlands

CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE

ALTHOUGH Combat Stress, set up in 1919, received £850,000 in 1995 through donations left in legacies, a survey carried out last year predicts a bleak financial future as its traditional donor base dies out.

"Even though we are one of the most successful and well-established charities for our size, because of increased welfare commitments in the light of modern conflicts like Northern Ireland, the Falklands, the Gulf and now Bosnia, we already face a difficult future," says Colin Crawford, the society's Assistant Director (Fundraising).

Conducted among Combat Stress's 24,000 supporters, the survey identified that the donor base is ageing and support is consequently shrinking at a rate of one third every ten years.

"Above all, we face a difficulty of getting our fund-raising message through to a largely post-war public," Mr Crawford, a former major, points out.

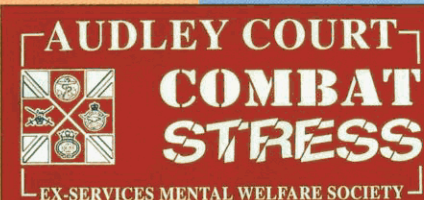
"By and large, the young, professional classes seem to be unaware of the sacrifices made by the wartime generation which have enabled younger people to live as comfortably as they do."

Only four per cent of the society's donors are in the 20-45 age range, the survey discovered.

A third of the respondents cited the reason for supporting Combat Stress as being because they were "returned ex-Servicemen, thankful not to have combat stress themselves".

As a result of the publicity generated by the national commemorations of the 50th anniversaries of VE, VJ and D-Day, the society's welfare case load increased by more than 25 per cent, while its fund-raising income remained the same.

"The survey demonstrates that the scale of our challenge is even bigger than we feared. We feel this snapshot into the financial health of a national charity would be much the same if repeated by a number of other similar organisations," says Mr Crawford.



LARRY Brown, a former lieutenant colonel in the Royal Corps of Transport, spends a fair proportion of his time in an unidentified lady's bedroom.

Before the writs start flying, it should be added that he did not know the lady in question – whose room was recently converted to serve as his office.

One of three Assistant Directors (Welfare) for Combat Stress, the ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, Larry is responsible for running Audley Court, the organisation's newly-opened third specialist treatment centre based in Newport, Shropshire.

Like its well-established counterparts in Ayrshire and Surrey, the centre will treat ex-Service personnel suffering mental injury as a result of their active duties.

The purchase from Shropshire County Council in January last year of the former Audley House – previously comprising sheltered accommodation for 39 senior ladies before it had to close – made practical and geographical sense, said Larry.

"Our two existing short-stay (three to four weeks) residential treatment centres were insufficient to meet a substantially increasing demand, which will be sustained for at least the next 20 or 30 years," he explained.

Roughly equidistant between Hollybush and Tyrwhitt Houses, Audley Court will

cater mainly for patients from the society's Manchester, Worcester and St Ives (Cambridgeshire) welfare offices, which together look after 45 per cent of the society's clients – the majority from the "densely-populated town conurbations of the central Midlands."

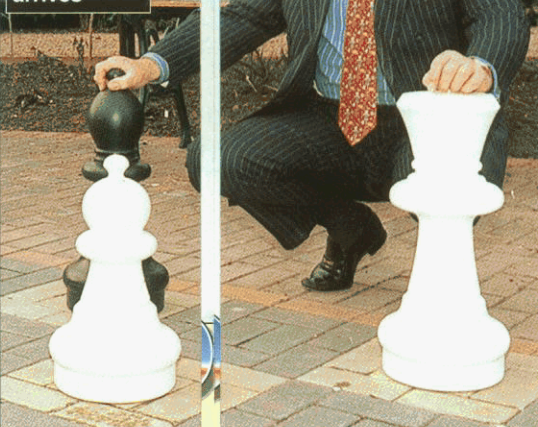
A great deal of vigorous planning and searching had preceded the centre's opening in November, Larry said.

"Once we had found the location, we spent £1m on the place, half of it financed from contingency reserves, refurbishing it from top to bottom.

"A new roof and windows were fitted, and the building was totally kitted out with fabrics and furnishings. Items such as crockery and two minibuses and a trailer were also purchased."

Televisions were provided by the Not Forgotten Association and Larry shrewdly snapped up various items of kit for the new establishment when the Cambridge Military Hospital closed last year. That is why the inventory

Controller of the board? Larry Brown, man responsible for running Audley Court, with some of the chess pieces to be used by clients on "Larry's Folly", his giant outdoor chess board, once the warmer weather arrives



for Audley Court probably includes three boxes of pyjamas bearing the initials CMH...

Divided into three, as yet unnamed, wings at ground level, the building contains 23 identical rooms, the middle wing being specifically for disabled clients.

"We are negotiating for a limited amount of twin rooms to be kitted out so that some clients can be accompanied by their spouses or carers," said Larry.

"Anyone staying here has got to feel comfortable. Each wing, for example, has a kitchenette, so that residents, particularly former Far East prisoners-of-war, who find it difficult to sleep, can make themselves a drink at night-time and have a chat with the staff." During their (average three-week) stay, apart from receiving specialist treatment, clients are interviewed by a consultant psychiatrist, who issues a report on their progress.

Outside, in two acres of grounds, a wild orchard which formerly ran rampant has

been transformed through the generosity of the Shropshire Horticultural Society, and landscaping has been carried out by a local husband-and-wife firm. "We are now part of the community," Larry said.

"With five nursing homes in Newport, we initially had to overcome the ethos that we were no different. We made a number of presentations to local organisations, and half the audiences were reduced to tears.

"Having heard contributions from Far East and Falklands veterans, they realised that Audley Court is not just another unit for the elderly and mentally infirm. The average regimental veteran could be their own husband or grandfather – some of whom have coped, some who haven't."



Above – Taking it easy: Audley Court residents outside the refurbished building with care assistant Margaret Jackson



Report: Phil Wilcox Pictures: Mike Weston

Left – One of the centre's many comfortable bedrooms: the environment aids therapy

At the time of *Soldier's* visit, 17 of the 27 clients, who ranged from an ex-cavalry officer to a Second World War commando and the centre's first female resident, a former RASC driver, had previously served in the Army.

"Apart from anything else, it's the change in environment that is the therapy," said Larry, taking a sip of coffee from his mug bearing the joke, if inappropriate, slogan Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary Warden.

"When our clients leave here, they feel the better for it. It is often a case of going temporarily from a tenement to Utopia – but, although relaxing, it is by no means a holiday."

Walking in the Wrekin and visits to the Ironbridge Museum and the Brierley Crystal and Staffordshire Pottery factories, set up by activities organiser Nicola Whitty, an ex-MoD policewoman married to a former signaller, will all help the Audley residents to adjust to their local communities on their return.

It seems highly unlikely, however, that there will be a repetition of an incident recorded in a history of the background of Audley Court.

Years ago, when there was a workhouse on the site, the books show that an inmate was fined 10oz of tobacco – for using obscene language to the staff...

● Combat Stress can be contacted on 0181-543 6333.



Clients enjoy lunch in the centre's dining room, which, says Larry Brown (right), has been deliberately designed to create a "farmhouse", non-institutionalised, atmosphere

MPs help clean-up campaign

FRIENDS of War Memorials, the organisation which started as a one-man "clean-up" campaign and is now backed by some of the highest in the land, has taken another step towards success.

At a meeting in the Palace of Westminster a steering committee was formed, headed by Winston Churchill MP, to seek charitable status and set up a headquarters.

Among those present were MPs Sir Donald Thompson, Sir John Cope, Sir James Molyneux and Lady Olga Maitland. Representatives from English Heritage, the Imperial War Museum, Civilian's Remembered, and ex-Service organisations including the Royal British Legion and RBL Scotland, also attended.

Mr Churchill said he hoped major ex-Service organisations such as the RBL would feel able to support FOWM by providing volunteers to help identify ailing memorials.

FOWM, founded by ex-Royal Marine Ian Davidson and first brought to national attention in *Soldier*, has received messages of support from the Queen Mother and Countess Mountbatten of Burma, who has become a patron.

□ *Kidderminster Branch of The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regimental Association wants to erect a memorial*

From *Army*, magazine of the Association of the US Army: During an operational test and evaluation in which it was compared with eight of the earlier AH-64 series, six prototype AH-64D versions of the Apache helicopter (the model with which the British Army will be equipped early in the next century) performed outstandingly well.

According to representatives from McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Systems, the D model Apache Longbow prototypes had "400 per cent greater lethality; 720 per cent higher survivability; greater situational awareness; and improved reliability, availability and maintainability".

The cockpit of all AH-64Ds produced for the UK will feature two new flat-panel multipurpose displays, which are at the heart of the Longbow Apache's pilot and co-pilot/gunner's fully-integrated

stone to the officers and men of the 7th Battalion, The Worcestershire Regiment in St Mary's Church, Kidderminster.

Friends and ex-members of the battalion who would like to attend the unveiling or donate money towards the memorial are asked to contact David Jones, c/o The Shrubbery TA Centre, Birmingham Road, Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 2BY.

Anglo-Oz VC link

THOUSANDS of miles separate Maidenhead, Berkshire, from Canberra, Australia but this has not been a problem for two medal experts researching a joint project.

The second edition of the *Victoria Cross Locator*, revised and updated, has been published by co-authors Dennis Pillinger and Anthony Staunton despite the fact that one is half a world away from the other.

Thought to be the first joint publication by committee members of the UK and Australian Military Historical Societies, the 58-page soft-cover book pinpoints where VCs are publicly held and lists all 1,351 by name, regiment and museum as well as giving historical details of public auctions and advertise-

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1947

WE'RE THE LUMBERJACKS! British troops are felling forests in Germany to provide timber supplies for builders in Britain. Every tree cut during Operation Woodpecker goes back to Britain - the long, 24ft logs for housing, the short, 6ft logs for pit-props in mines. Under Lt Col E A Gough, CRE, 29 Army Troops Engineers, more than 3,000 Infantrymen from units all over BAOR aim to produce 7,500 tons of timber a week.

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1972

ARGYLLS REBORN Almost a year to the day after reducing to company strength, the 1st Battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was reborn when a handful of killed soldiers paraded in driving sleet at Ritchie Camp, Kirknewton, near Edinburgh.

When the battalion was broken up last year 500 men were dispersed to other battalions of the Scottish Division. They will all return in the coming months and the battalion is expected to be more than 600-strong by mid-summer.

ments. The new edition was prompted by the large number of sales, bequests and loans in recent years and is also updated to reflect changes in the structure of the British Army.

It is available from Dennis Pillinger, Ringinglow, Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QR, price £7 (inc).

duct as OIC of a casualty clearing post. The awards were also the first under the new Australian honours system.

Anecdote taken from a letter to *Salut*, monthly magazine of the South African Defence Force: Unhappily the MP corporal boarded a plane to return to his unit from leave. A young woman also boarded, only to be told there were no more seats available. Seeing this as a wonderful opportunity to prolong his stay, the corporal offered her his seat, which was accepted with alacrity.

Immediately he sent off the following telegram to his officer commanding: "Regret cannot rejoin unit on time, have given berth to girl."

Within an hour came the reply: "Congratulations. Your next confinement will be in the guard room." - D F Nodada, Umtata.

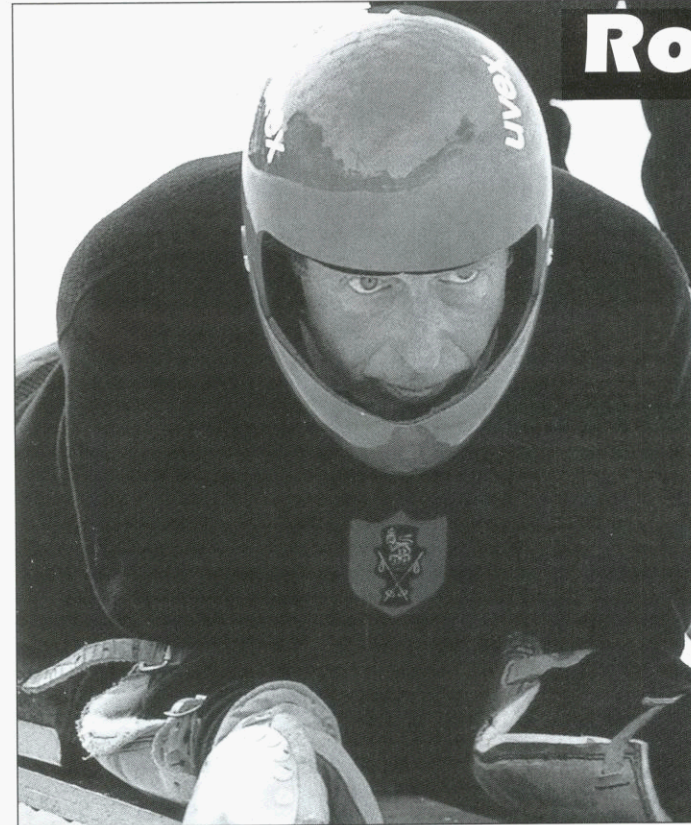


An occasional look at the journals of other armies

crew stations, which bring together a wide array of advanced avionics and weapon systems.

From *Army*, newspaper for Australian soldiers: Australia's first gallantry decorations since the Vietnam War have been awarded for distinguished service during the massacre of civilian refugees at Kibeho, Rwanda, in April 1995. One recipient, Maj Carol Vaughan-Evans, received the Gallantry Medal for her con-

Royal ride



THIRTY-TWO years after he last tried it, the Duke of Kent was persuaded by the Army to tackle the famous Cresta Run in St Moritz.

He was at the Swiss resort to support the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Army Winter Sports Association.

Watched by his sister, Princess Alexandra, the Duke listened carefully as Maj Rupert Wieloch, captain of the Army cresta team, gave him last-minute instructions.

As he set out, a message from the secretary, Lt Col Digby Willoughby, rang out over the tannoy: "A very careful ride, please, after all these years..."

He need not have worried. The Duke had obviously not lost his touch and completed two runs, recording times of 66.61sec and 68.76sec.

And the royal verdict: "I thoroughly enjoyed it."

● More on AWSA 50 elsewhere in this issue.

REUNIONS

Queen's Regimental Association annual reunion to be held on March 8 at Victory Services Club, London. Tickets from Secretary, RHQ PWRR, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY.

Coldstream Guards, No 4 Company (1950-55): Fifth reunion dinner in Birmingham on April 19. Contact Harry Westgarth, 49 Rokeby Park, Hull HU4 7QE (tel 01482 503649).

1st, 4th, 7th Royal Tank Regiments: Reunion to be held at the St John's Swallow Hotel, Solihull, on April 25-27. Details G J Bourne on 01752 880527 or R T Rathmell on 01752 893495.

Wartime (Woolwich and India) Boys' Battery RA: 30th reunion planned for April 25-27 at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill. Anyone not on address list should contact T C Holden, 3 Kilburn Street, Waterhedges, Oldham, Lancs OL1 4JF (tel 0161 633 8194).

138th (City of London) Field Regiment RA Association: Reunion on April 28 at Victory Services Club, London. Details: Frank Flack, 22 Camborne Way, Hounslow, Middx TW5 0PW (tel 0181 570-5267). News from members welcome.

Royal Engineers Association veterans weekend, June 13-15, Ripon, N Yorkshire. Details: Bill Rudd, Flat 1, Dengarth, 8 Springfield Avenue, Harrogate, N Yorks HG1 2HR (01423 536191).

Combined Ex-Services Association of Bridlington: Reunion

and conference at Bridlington, June 13-15. Contact Margaret Whittlesea, 6 Springfield Avenue, Bridlington YO15 3AA.

30 Signal Regiment (1982): Reunion for all ranks who served with 30 Regt during 1982 is to be held in Blandford on June 14. Details: Capt (Retd) Scotty Reynolds, SORLS, RHQ R Signals, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH (fax 01258 482147; tel 01258 482132).

3 RSME Regiment: Reunion for past training NCOs who served

within training regiments at Gibraltar Barracks planned for July 3-5. Contact WO1 (RSM) N J Burke RE, 3 RSME Regt, Gibraltar Barracks, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey GU17 9LP (tel Hawley Mill (726) 3271 or civil 01252 863271).

Hong Kong: To mark the handover to China, a tri-Service buffet-dinner reunion for anyone who served in Hong Kong in recent years is planned for July 5 at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Queen Street, Portsmouth. Cheques (£12 a head) payable to M L Rutley, 36 Albermarle Avenue,

SEARCHLINE

News sought of MT and despatch riders Jock Lythgoe, Frank Sheppard, Willy Knutt of **164 Railway Opr Coy RE 1939-46**, also LCpl Furmur, Cpl Tyrell and relations of RSM Green. Call Les on 01283 538322.

Eric Williams wishes to locate former members of **1st Burma Field Regiment of Artillery**, or anyone with knowledge of it. Unit formed in early 1946 from personnel of 136 Fd Regt RA who were instructors to the Burmese.

New branch of the **National Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Association** is opening in Lincoln. Associate membership open to spouses and widows/widowers. Civilians held captive during Japanese occupation also welcome. Details: J W Martland, 86 De Wint Avenue, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 7DZ. The association also has a new branch in Bristol which meets monthly.

Details from Jack Spackman, 34 Lydiard Croft, Hanham, Bristol BS15 3LT (tel 0117 9613121).

London Irish Rifles Regimental Association seeks ex-soldiers from the 3rd Battalion to swell its numbers. Write to A J Batchelor, Membership Secretary, London Irish Rifles Regt Assn, Duke of York's HQ, King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4SA.

Sqn Ldr J B Blanche is researching the history of the **Auxiliary Air Force/Royal Auxiliary Air Force** to coincide with its 75th anniversary in 2000. He wishes to hear from serving and retired members and families, and seeks anecdotal, photographic and other historic material. Contact him at No 2 (City of Edinburgh) Maritime Headquarters Unit, Royal Auxiliary Air Force, 25 Learmonth Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 1NZ.

Tom Cross seeks contact with

DATES

APRIL

26: British Model Soldier Society annual show, New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, Holborn, London.

JUNE

4-5: Floodlit Beating Retreat by Massed Bands of Household Division, Horse Guards. Tickets on 0171 839-5323.

14: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards (Major General's Review, May 31; Colonel's Review, June 7). Ticket applications, including sae, to HQ Household Division, Horse Guards, London SW1A 2AX by February 28.

JULY

15-27: Royal Tournament, Earls Court. Tickets: 0171 244-0244.

SEPTEMBER

6-7: Berwick Military Tattoo, The Barracks, Berwick-upon-Tweed. Proceeds to Service charities.

13-15: Military Survey 250th anniversary weekend, Hermitage.

OCTOBER

24: RBL Isle of Thanet Festival of Remembrance. Tickets: 01843 292882.

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

Elson, Gosport, Hants PO12 4HU by March 20. Details on 01705 501083.

RE Darland Association 1939-41: 17th reunion takes place on Sept 5 at King Charles Hotel, Gillingham. Details: Jim Winchester, 8 Durham Road, Luton LU2 0RB.

26 EFTS Guinea Fowl, Southern Rhodesia: 14th reunion weekend at the Falcon Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sept 26-28. Details: Chas Price, 200 Roundhills, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1UN.

anyone who served with or knew **Army Catering Corps** staff who served with **33 General Hospital, Kowloon, Hong Kong, early 1956**. Reverse calls to him on 01270 811130.

Bill Fort, 12 Beach Avenue, Barton-on-Sea, Hants BH25 7EJ would like to hear from anyone who can tell him about **boy-soldiering** in the period 1937-1940.

Patrick Chaplin is researching social history of **darts** and wishes to hear from ex-Servicemen and ex-PoWs who played the game in war and peace. Replies to 50 Norfolk Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 6AT (tel 01621 856040).

Katrine Kiertzner seeks information about her brother, **Henrik Kiertzner**, last known to be serving with **3 Sig Regt** eight years ago. Replies to Ivy Cottage, Old Fakenham Road, Sculthorpe, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 9NE.

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Telephone: Military 734 5947

Colourful tribute to the men in scarlet

CHELSEA PENSIONERS, in their distinctive scarlet coats, are among the most familiar and respected celebrities of London.

They have been so for more than 300 years, since King Charles II founded the Royal Hospital Chelsea "for the succour and relief of veterans broken by age and war".

His generosity – he personally contributed £7,000 which he could ill afford – was inspired by a similar institution founded by Louis XIV in Paris.

Since the Chelsea establishment opened in the reign of William and Mary in 1692 it has been home to 25,000 In-Pensioners, all veterans of the Regular Army.

Now the Hospital, its In-Pensioners and the campaigns in which they have fought, from Blenheim onwards (although the oldest resident of all, 112-year-old William Hiseland, had fought at Edgehill in 1642) are celebrated in *The Chelsea Pensioners*, a colourful and readable book produced to help Hospital funds. Some of the illustrations are reproduced here.

The book's 88 lavishly-illustrated, large-format pages tell the whole fascinating story – of Wren's buildings; of the men who have inhabited them across the centuries, their uniforms, traditions and daily lives; and of the battles waged at home and abroad.

The Hospital itself was a victim of both world wars, with structural damage and loss of life, and is no stranger to other kinds of battles – particularly over financial deprivation and calls for its closure in past eras.

In his foreword, Gen Sir Brian Kenny, Governor of the Hospital, writes: "What is so remarkable is that the concept of the Long Wards, with each In-Pensioner having his own small room, has stood the test of time and remains today very much as it was some 300 years ago."

"During this time, the Royal Hospital has been a home to some 25,000 In-Pensioners who took part in the many campaigns covered in the book."

"Today there are nearly 400 In-Pensioners who enjoy a much greater degree of comfort and more welfare facilities than their predecessors. They have all given

great service to their country and very much deserve the happy and caring home provided for them in the Royal Hospital."

Sir Brian thanks the many benefactors who have contributed to the production: each page has been sponsored by industry and the book is a real bargain at £10.

For once it is easy to agree with the "hype" on a dust-jacket: "This is a remarkable book – because it reflects a remarkable institution. There are others with an unbroken three centuries of purpose, but none of them are so much at the heart of national life as the British Army, which can justifiably claim to have put the greatness in Great Britain."

"... This is a dateless record, to be kept and treasured, and makes an especially fine gift. And its purchase is not only a tribute to a splendid organisation, but of very real financial benefit to it." – CH



Front cover of the book. When the back cover is opened out the reader sees a panoramic picture of Chelsea Pensioners on parade

The Chelsea Pensioners, published by Seagulls SA, Guernsey, is available from the Souvenir Shop, Royal Hospital Chelsea, London SW3 4SR. It costs £10 (plus p&p first-class post £2.30, second-class £1.80), cheques payable to the Royal Hospital Chelsea.



Age and beauty: Two In-Pensioners form a proud escort for Elaine Paige, who opened the Help the Aged Cottage Garden, sponsored by *Hello!* magazine at the Chelsea Flower Show in 1995



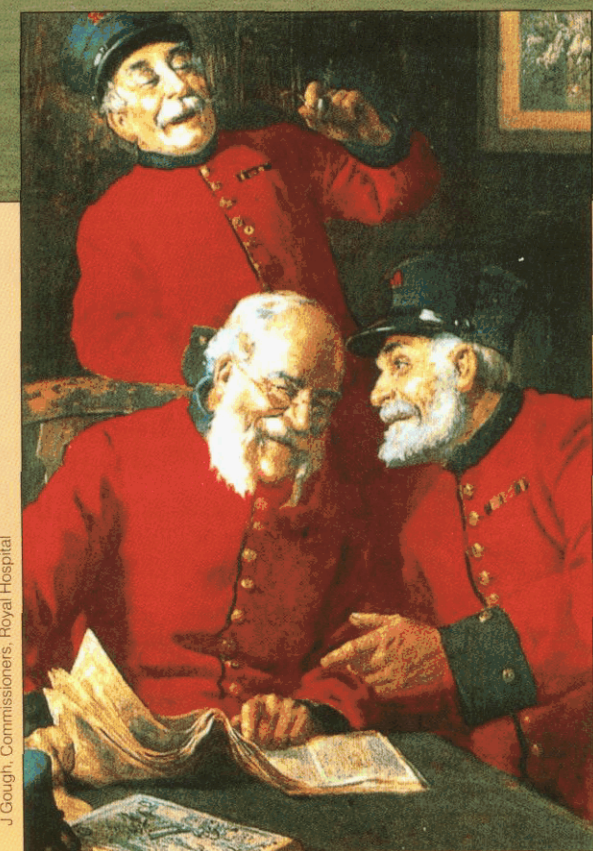
Soldier Magazine picture



Painted in appropriately pugnacious pose by George Alsop in 1730, the oldest In-Pensioner of all, William Hiseland, died aged 112 in 1732, having served the Crown for nearly 80 years. He took part in the Battle of Edgehill in 1642 and the Flanders campaigns under Marlborough before being admitted to the Royal Hospital in 1713. One of nearly 140 colour plates in the book, many depicting battles.



J Gough, Commissioners, Royal Hospital



Sir Peter Lely

Above – Life in the Long Wards: The four-storeyed buildings enclosing the east and west sides of Figure Court contain the homely living quarters, known as the Long Wards, divided into a series of wainscoted berths. Sir Christopher Wren originally designed them to be 6ft square. But men were shorter in those days and the berths have gradually been enlarged to 9ft square

Left – All present and correct: On parade in Figure Court



Above – King Charles II, founder of the Royal Hospital by Royal Warrant issued on December 7, 1681

Left – Fortunes of war: Three In-Pensioners enjoy reading good news in yet another conflict in war's long history

Woofers' long march pays off

FRIENDS cast doubts upon the mental stability of Sgt Dave Crimmins of B Company, 1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment when he suggested marching home to Tidworth . . . from Bosnia.

Thanks to his efforts – and those of stalwart colleagues and the regimental mascot – he had the last laugh, and the BBC Children in Need charity is more than £16,500 better off.

Based in Sanski Most at the time, Sgt Crimmins enlisted the aid of B Coy's Capt Paul Gilby, who rounded up a team of "hard and desperate men", and Sipovo-based Capt Julian Reilly to be project manager.

The long march was split in two, with a little assistance from the RAF in the middle. The Bosnia phase, from Sanski Most to Split, was 190 miles long, the English 330.

After a spot of leave on their return to England, the team reformed, marching every day whatever the weather. Helped by the back-up squad and the Army Youth Team led by Sgt



Marchers and members of 183 Army Youth Team with regimental mascot Pte Derby the ram, Ram Major LCpl Steve Stone, and Cdr Leslie Thomas, Mayor of Worcester, pictured on their travels in Worcester market

Bung Hughes, street collections were made in towns along the route, raising £11,000.

When the team, with Pte Derby, the regimental mascot, appeared on television to hand over a cheque, Sgt Crimmins was inadvertently promoted to lieutenant colonel by the presenter.

A just reward for all his efforts, perhaps?

A cheque for £2,500 was presented to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children on behalf of Sennelager-based 3 Armoured Field Ambulance. Raised from a parachute jump by Sheryl Donahey and Mrs Mo Smith, wife of the battalion's WO2 (RQMS), the money was originally intended to be used for treatment to an

injured Bosnian boy. When a benefactor stepped in, the money went instead towards a much-needed computer programme and associated publications to help surgeons at the hospital.

Territorial Army soldiers from X Company, 6th (Northumberland) Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, took part in the tough Wallsend road race and raised £500 for the Macmillan Nurse Appeal.

Another TA unit swapping guns for walking boots in a good cause was 201 (Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire) Battery RA, whose soldiers raced 30 miles for the St John's special appeal in Kempston.

Pledging to raise £1,750 for MENCAP is Sgt Craig Manning, Coldstream Guards, who is cycling 500km along the River Nile this month. Donation details: tel 01748 872655.

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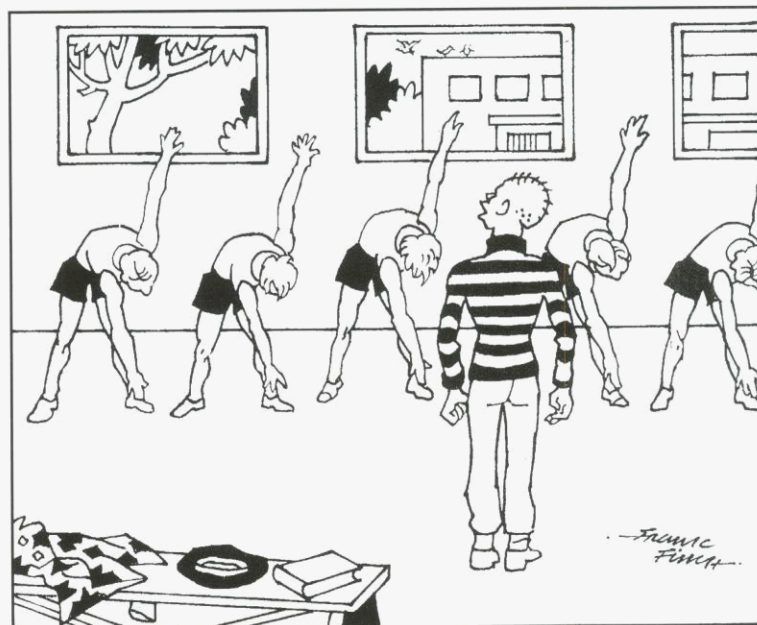
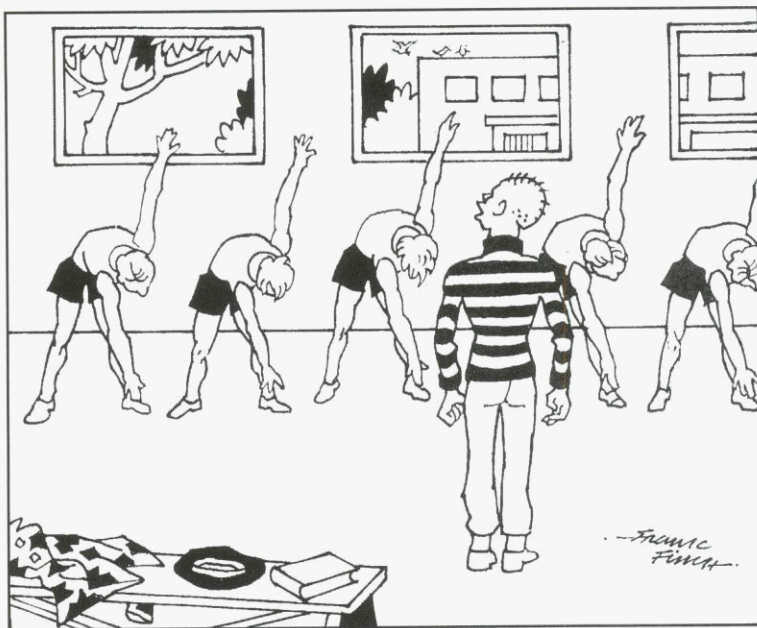
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COMPETITION 656

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These pictures are from our Frank Finch cartoon archives. Find ten differences in detail and you could be £50 richer or win a new book. Circle the differences in the bottom picture, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 656, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot GU11 2DU by March 21. Do not include anything

else in your envelope. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. The first correct entries drawn will be the winners. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner of the £50 first prize and two runners-up (awarded book prizes) will be announced in the April 14 issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

Competition No 653 (Jan 20 issue): First correct entry drawn was from Mr J D Jenkins, of Plymouth, Devon, who wins £50. Book prizes go to runners-up Mr J T Blyth, of Coventry, and Smriti Gurung, of Marlborough House, The Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover, Kent. The ten differences were: parapet, top left; shield, soldier on parapet; armour, first soldier attacking parapet; two-headed airborne arrow; fourth silhouette at top of siege tower; right-hand strut on second tier of siege tower; rear axle pin; bow and quiver of right-hand soldier, foreground.



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Guards' history was Kipling's tribute

RUDYARD Kipling, lauded as poet and writer, and still considered among the finest, was equally denigrated and vilified as a jingoistic imperialist.

Either way, so far as the Irish Guards were concerned – or the whole of the British Army for that matter – he was a true friend, representing Tommy Atkins affectionately in story and poem.

Kipling had the highest regard for soldiers and, when asked by the Irish Guards to write the 1914-18 history of the 1st Battalion, set to work immediately. It took him five

The Irish Guards in the Great War – The First Battalion, by Rudyard Kipling. Spellmount Publishers. £24.95.

years of "agony and bloody sweat" to produce *The Irish Guards in the Great War*, described on the front cover as his forgotten masterpiece. Kipling considered it his greatest work.

It was written as a memorial to his 18-year-old son, who, like so many others of his generation, went to war after joining

the 1st Battalion. He was killed at the Battle of Loos in 1915.

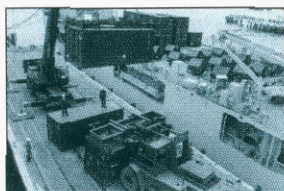
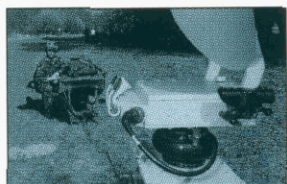
To add to their grief, Kipling and his wife never knew the whereabouts of their son's grave. He was posted missing, believed killed and it was not until 1992, 77 years after his death, that his burial place was located and his remains identified.

Rudyard Kipling's First World War history of 1 IG has

been out of print for more than 70 years, but this new edition is quite a lavish production with photographs from the regimental archives never before published.

For those with a special interest in the history of the Irish Guards and their role in the 1914-18 war, Kipling's history of the 2nd Battalion will be republished in September this year. – JM

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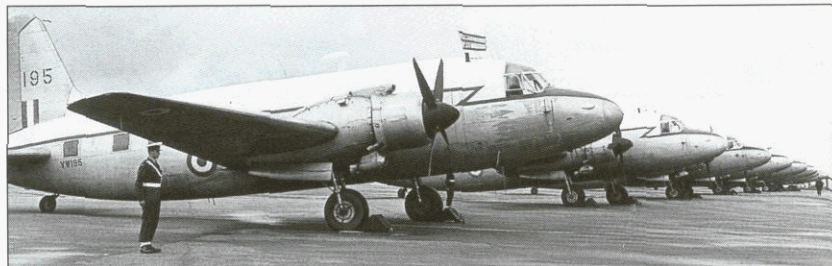
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Familiar sight to RASC despatchers: Valetta aircraft line up on the runway

Life and death links with Vickers Valetta

THERE WAS a time when the Royal Army Service Corps had close links with the Royal Air Force and its air despatchers flew regularly in the twin-engined Valetta.

According to *The Valetta – Vickers's Last Piston Transport*, 19 men of 55 Coy RASC died in eight aircraft crashes during the Malayan Emergency in the 1950s.

A further 16 men of the company died in RAF-Army operations involving this aircraft over Malaya, and there are memorial plaques commemorating their sacrifice in the Aldershot Garrison church.

In four-man teams, they delivered supply packs to soldiers during the jungle war against the communists. They dropped everything from ammo

to food and medical supplies . . . even live chickens for the Gurkhas.

It was hard, physical graft and not without danger as the packs had to leave the aircraft at the right moment to hit the drop zone (DZ).

Often the teams were flying four sorties a day at low altitudes over thick jungle. In all, 55 Coy flew more than 15,000 sorties using 200,000 parachutes to drop 29,590 tons of supplies. Apparently, the flying soldiers were not issued with parachutes, most probably because the aircraft

flew too low for them to be of use.

But they were required to use a safety harness when pushing packs through the open door over the DZ. Whether they did is another story. – JM

The Valetta – Vickers's Last Piston Transport, by Bill Overton. Available from Midland Counties Publications and Mrs S G Overton, 8, Beechwood Avenue, Melton Mowbray, Leics LE13 1RT.

IN BRIEF

Churchill's Secret War by Robin Denniston. Sub-titled *Diplomatic Decrypts, The Foreign Office and Turkey 1942-44*, this book uncovers new evidence to suggest a plan to open another front in the Balkans to hasten D-Day in the West. Sutton Publishing, hardback, £25.

The Blitzkrieg Campaigns by John Delaney. Germany's "lightning war" strategy in action, the text illustrated with more than 200 photographs. Arms & Armour, hardback, £20.

The Fighting Handgun by Richard Law and Peter Brookesmith. An illustrated his-

tory, from flintlock to automatic weapons. Arms & Armour, hardback, £18.99.

The Fatal Englishman: Three Short Lives by Sebastian Faulks. Highly-acclaimed triple biography of three prodigies who died young – painter Kit Wood, airman Richard Hillary and Jeremy Wolfenden, spy. Vintage, paperback, £6.99.

The Last Enemy by Richard Hillary. Long unavailable autobiography of the Spitfire pilot who underwent major plastic surgery after being shot down, then died mysteriously aged 23, after returning to flying. Pimlico, paperback, £10.

A 13-part postcard series on the new regiments and corps of the British Army of the 1990s

THE ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE, BERKSHIRE AND WILTSHIRE REGIMENT (28th, 49th, 61st, 62nd, 66th, and 99th)

ON April 27, 1994 The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment was formed on the amalgamation of The Gloucestershire Regiment and The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment.

The history of the Glosters dated back to 1694 when Col John Gibson raised a new regiment. The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment was formed in 1959 on the amalgamation of two famous county regiments: The Royal Berkshire Regiment and The Wiltshire Regiment.

A distinction unique to the regiment is its right to wear two cap badges. The front badge is backed by the Brandywine flash to commemorate an action fought by the 49th during the American War of Independence. The back badge was awarded to the 28th for its battle-to-back stand at the battle of Alexandria in 1801.

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion also wear the Presidential Unit Citation of the United States of America on both shoulders. It was awarded to the Glosters after their heroic stand at the battle of the Imjin



River in April 1951 during the Korean War.

The 1st Battalion, following a six-month tour in Bosnia, is stationed in Cyprus. It is due to join 24 Airmobile Brigade at Colchester later this year. The 2nd (Volunteer)

Battalion, formed from The Wessex Regiment in October 1995, is based in Reading, with companies in Bristol, Devizes and Gloucester.

The postcard illustrated above was reproduced from a watercolour painting by

Simon McCouaig. It shows:

- Corporal: No 2 dress.
- Soldier: Combat dress.
- Rugby player: Regimental strip.
- Regimental colour party.
- Background: Windsor Castle.

For details of this and other postcards depicting regiments and corps of the British Army, send SAE to: Geoff White Ltd., 19, Rushmoor Lane, Backwell, Bristol, BS19 3JA.

More on China Dragon

More answers to the Mr J Levine, of Brighton (Jan 20) who drew a comparison between the Royal Berkshire Regiment's Chinese Dragon cap badge and the badge of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps.

Back to roots

WE ARE producing a history of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps prior to our formal disbandment on March 31, 1997.

In researching the early roots of Hong Kong Chinese soldiers in the British Army we have also come across some similarities of design in the cap badge of the Hong Kong Regiment, which was raised in India, fought during the Boxer Rebellion and was disbanded in 1902.

The badge of that regiment contained in the centre a left-facing Chinese dragon similar in design and pose to that of the HKMSC and the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

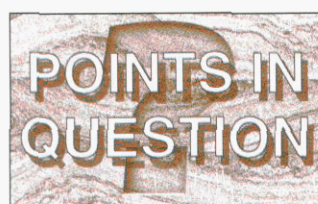
The colours of the Hong Kong Regiment (scarlet and gold) are

also the same as those of the HKMSC. It seems likely that the HKMSC dragon and colours are thus derived from this common source, although they were also used earlier by the HKMSC's direct forebear, the Hong Kong Chinese Training Unit.

Nor were these the only formations to use the same Chinese dragon. Far East veterans will recall that the motif of HQ Land Forces Hong Kong and 51 Infantry Brigade (based in Kowloon) was also the left-facing dragon in identical pose. — Maj J Ingham RRF, 2iC, HQ and Depot, The Hong Kong Military Service Corps, Stonecutters Island, Hong Kong.

Opium War

I BELIEVE that the following extract from an authorised contemporary history of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (DERR) will answer the query. The book is currently in draft and intended for publication in mid-1999.



"... In 1841, the 49th was sent from India to take part in the so-called 'Opium War' against China. The regiment was in action at the captures of Chusan, Canton, Amoy and Shanghai.

"In official recognition of the consistent gallantry displayed by all ranks during the campaign the 49th Regiment was awarded as a badge the Chinese Dragon.

"This later became the cap badge of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, and subsequently formed the centre-piece of the collar badges and cap badge of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment..." [This regiment was formed in 1959 by the amalgamation of the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Wiltshire Regiment.]

Far from copying the badge of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, the Hong Kong Military Service Corps

simply adopted the Chinese Dragon, a long-standing symbol of the Territory of Hong Kong, as its cap badge. — Lt Col D J A Stone RGBW, Ashford.

Border Regiment

THE Chinese Dragon was also incorporated into the cap badge of the Border Regiment, having been awarded to the 55th Foot, later the 2nd Battalion, for service in the Chinese War 1841-43 when they captured the only Chinese standard ever taken in battle by British troops. It used to hang in Kendal Church.

The Buffs also wore a dragon as a cap badge, but it is the Red Dragon of the Royal House of Tudor. — G Ewens, Morden, Surrey.

● Grateful thanks to other readers, including Brian Pittaway, of Eastleigh, Hants; M J Lamble, of Wantage, Oxon; G Sellars, of Abingdon, Oxon; N Anthony, of Ammanford, Dyfed; Ian T Scott, of North Harrow, Middx; M T Nash, of Acton, W3; Paul J Bennett, of Dover, Kent; and "Mac", for their contributions. — Editor

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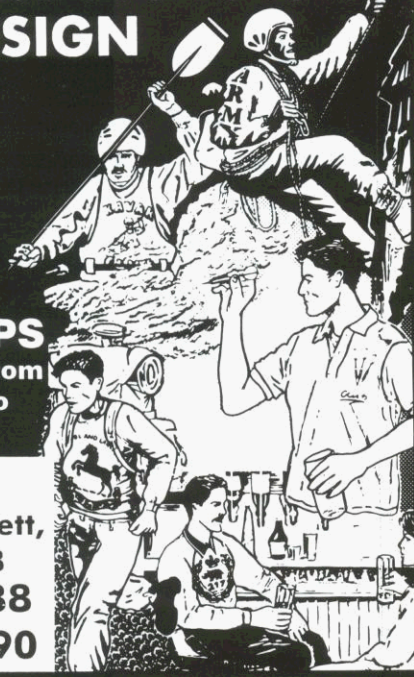
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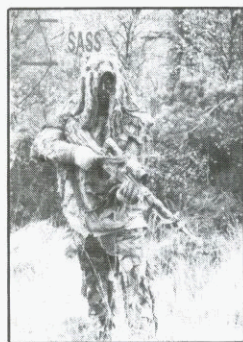
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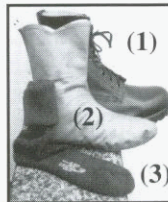
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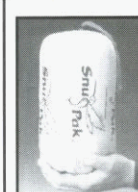


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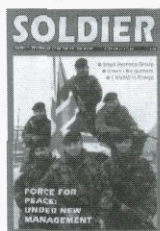
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FEBRUARY 8, 1997

First prize (21 goals, £2,500): CSgt AV Bartley, Defence School of Transport, Leconfield.

TWO-way tie for second prize (20 goals, £1,000 each): Cpl GD Black, 2 PWRR, BFPO 804; Cpl D Houghton, 33 Engr Regt (EOD), Wimbush.

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Rising star

WHEN LCpl Matt Stewart stepped out on the turf at Twickenham to represent Scotland against England in the Calcutta Cup he was fulfilling the potential first spotted by his battalion coach.

The winter has been a watershed for Rugby Union as the game's first season of professionalism got under way. No longer played for fun or for honour, money was to be the new motivation.

Stewart however, with a military career to consider, has not let that stop him from the ultimate accolade of representing his country.

Matt's interest in rugby can clearly be dated to when he joined the Army in 1989. Having played only a handful of games at school, he joined up, turning out for the Junior Infantry Battalion at Shorncliffe, Kent, before being posted to Germany. In that first year he tasted success as his unit reached the finals of the Army Cup.

On joining the 2nd Battalion, The Queen's Regiment, (now The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment) Stewart, a prop forward of immense strength, quickly attracted the attention of the Under-21 selectors.

His mentor, Capt Les Baynham, believed the young soldier had the potential to go much further in the game and put him in touch with local Courage League side Blackheath. Within six months Stewart was playing Courage League III rugby.

While Blackheath were giving Stewart the technique to become a first-class rugby player, it was the Army that provided him with the fitness levels he needed.

"Rugby training was easy for fitness. The Army's training saw me through that," he said. "I'd done a physical training instructor course and P Company, which sorted out my endurance. I got the power and speed stuff through the rugby club."

Matt Stewart is fully aware of the support the Army is giving him in his rugby.

Initially things were a little difficult: as part of his unit's



LCpl Matt Stewart takes the field at Twickenham

recce platoon he completed tours of duty in Northern Ireland and the Falklands. But as his rugby career started to look more promising, the Army played its part by putting him in the gym for a nine-to-

SPORTING PROFILE

five job that gave him the opportunity to concentrate on training.

Things started to happen very quickly for Stewart at Blackheath. He was selected for Scotland's Under-21 side and, in the same season, his club was promoted from League III to League II. An approach was made by Division I Harlequins, but while playing for the Army, Stewart received another offer.

"At the Inter-Service game against the Royal Navy, Capt Tim Rodber [the England forward] asked me to go to Northampton, so I decided to do one more year at Blackheath and then join Northampton. I felt I needed another year with Danny Vaughan, the Blackheath coach, to help me make the progression."

These considerations had to take into account Stewart's Army career. He could have opted for full-time professional rugby, but instead chose to remain in the Army.

The decision has paid off. He is now helping the Army on the recruitment side and within four months of joining

Northampton collected his first full international cap.

When Rodber, England back row player and Green Howards officer, told the Army that Stewart had the potential to go all the way, he was right.

The move to Northampton, which the Army facilitated by giving him a posting to Basingstoke, brought results much quicker than expected. By his own admission, when selected to play against Italy last November, Stewart was "shocked and delighted".

"It was a tremendous buzz. I wasn't really prepared for it and it's quite emotional, but once they've played the national anthem you're prepared to take on anyone."

LCpl Matt Stewart has a three-year contract with Northampton and a contract with the Army that has another seven years to run, but at 23 he is not looking that far ahead.

He was thrilled to be selected for the match against England last month.

"I've played at Twickenham for the Army and it was great to play there for Scotland," said Matt, who is looking forward to this month's match against the Royal Navy at the same venue.

"The Army is still my main employer and that's where my loyalty lies. My regiment, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, has given me full support and I will repay that." —DH

Potent signallers rise to the Challenge

2 Sig Regt 31, RWF 11

FOR the first time in 11 years, an infantry battalion won through to the final of the Army's Rugby Union Challenge Cup final at Sandhurst, only to lose to a superior corps side, writes Roger Thompson.

Hardly had the good-sized crowd settled back when the game, between the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers and York-based 2 Signal Regiment, exploded into life.

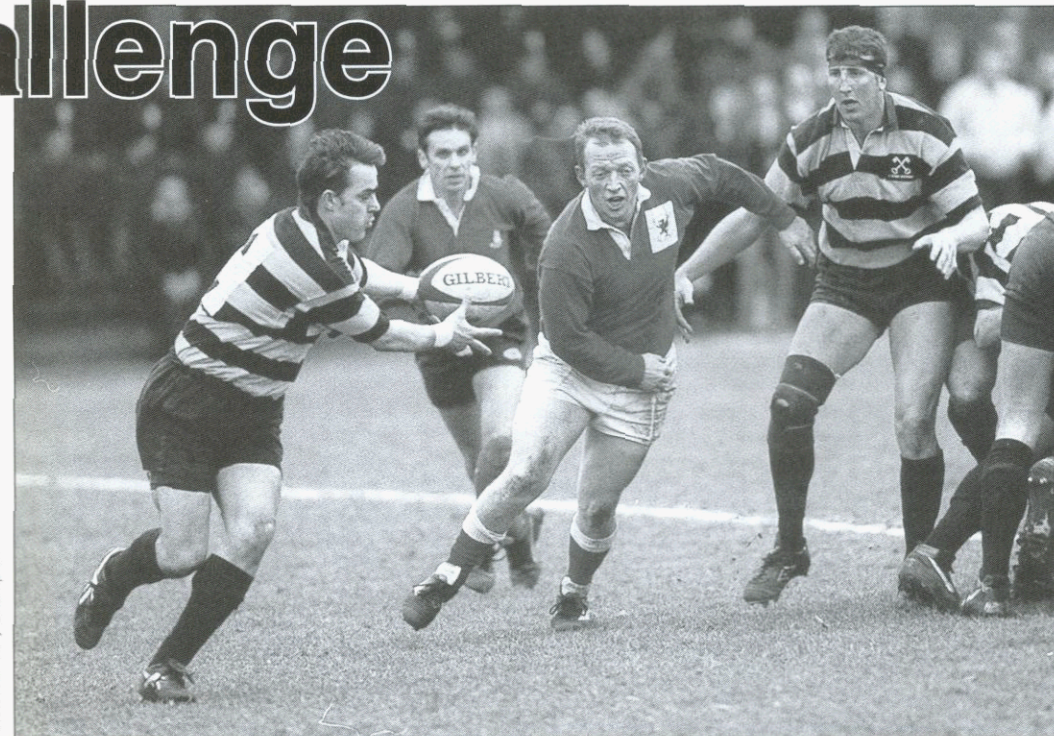
The Welch rifled the ball into the signallers' 22 and, in the ensuing mêlée, whipped the ball across the face of a flat defence to score the slickest of tries in the right corner.

In the space of a minute, the Welch had thrown down the gauntlet, challenging the men from York to play rugby in the hand and to match Welsh creativity. That, however, was not 2 Signals' game plan which slowly became apparent, a near-total reliance on a proven pack containing seven Army players.

For those who bite their nails, it was to be an uncomfortable afternoon as Welch and former Army scrum-half David Williams launched his creative three-quarters off the merest crumbs, only to be shunted back time and again by the 2 Signals' heavies.

In a period of steady territorial pressure before half time 2 Signals dominated all phases of play except the scrum.

Following one wheeling set piece, Cassidy, the York scrum-half, broke blind to free



Gary Cassidy (2 Sigs) receives the ball from a scrum during the Challenge Cup final at Sandhurst

fly half Spowart who scored with conspicuous ease and then converted his own try.

By half-time, 2 Signals had forged another try through Cassidy which, with an exchange of penalties, gave the men from York a 12-11 lead.

In the second half, Spowart kicked two early penalties which effectively put victory beyond the Welch.

Such was the signallers' superiority in the lines-out, with Gibbs accurately picking out Francis, Curtis and Neighbour, Spowart was able to thump easily-won possession deep into touch, knowing re-possession was safe.

Even when the Welch gained possession through opposition errors, Denham, at blind side flank, was blocking any ad-

vance. More than once he absorbed the intended break and then drove the ball back at the men in red shirts.

Maybe the pattern was only two-dimensional and, unkindly, blinkered, but, for those who appreciate the true art of rugby football there is nothing quite like the rhythm and rumble of 16 feet charging in unison.

DUMMY RUN

Spowart scored his second try after 60 minutes when the Combined Service full back Bartliffe drew the heart of Welch defence away from the fly half with a dummy run, bringing his personal tally in the match to 25 pts.

Although tired, the Royal Welch battled proudly on, dis-

playing glimpses of what might have been. The gap between illusion and delusion is never great but Watters, even late on, turned the 2 Signals defence into all sorts of twists before being engulfed by sheer numbers.

Whitehead, a cool, elusive runner at full back, threatened continuously while Williams showed that, even at 30 years plus, he is still not out of contention to win back his Army Number 9 shirt.

The 2 Signals' galloping maul and lines-out supremacy were the major features of a fine victory, but the Welch scrum-half, Williams, eternally inventive and with eyes fixed on that mythical spot ten feet in front of his fly half, stole the show.

Loggies crushed by Para signallers

216 (Para) Sig Sqn 25, 29 Regt RLC 5

A FIRST final appearance for both teams saw 216 Parachute Signal Squadron beat 29 Regiment RLC 25-5 at RMA Sandhurst to lift the Army minor units Challenge Cup, writes Roger Thompson.

Five sparkling tries showed how both teams contributed to an entertaining match which lifted a dull January afternoon

and enthralled the vocal crowd.

Comparison of the two teams before the match showed that 29 Regiment would be hard-pressed to hold back the taller, heavier Para side.

This physical advantage, principally exerted though Poppe and Gunning in the line and Jones, an easily irritated hardman at No 6, threatened to turn the game into a one-

way movement. However Braddock, an incomplete convert from Rugby League, thought *Swing Low* was more of a call to arms than a song. The referee disagreed and sent Braddock to test the temperature in the showers.

His departure produced a more than even game until the fourth quarter, when the physical presence and stamina of the Para signallers pack provid-

ed a near endless flow of ball.

It enabled Wadmore and Morrell, who had outstanding games at half back, to launch their big runners, Poulsen, Allcock and Carrick, to score excellent tries.

Morrell converted one try and kicked a penalty. Hook, the loggies' captain, scored a deserved try for 29 Regiment but the signallers never relaxed their grip.

Stretched Services on losing streak

ICIS League 2, Comb Services 1

AFTER the recent trouncing by an FA XI made up of Vauxhall Conference players, Combined Services were beaten by the ICIS League at Hendon's North London ground, writes Derrick Bly.

Injuries and late withdrawals reduced the Services squad to a bare minimum, with the Royal Navy's Jason White getting the goalkeeper's jersey and Army 'keeper Cfn Ian Elliott wearing the No 9 shirt.

White earned his spurs in the 10th minute, leaving his line to smother a chance. ICIS had the better of the exchanges and with better finishing should have been ahead.

Services had to wait until the 22nd minute for their first corner. Then a header by CPO Flint into the path of Cpl Alfie Alford (Army) came to nothing when the midfielder hit his shot too high.

WO2 Alan Higgins (Army) and Cpl Gary Wooton (RAF) fought hard at the back for Services to keep the lively League forwards at bay. In the 26th minute, however, Forinton moved on to a through ball and rounded White.

Services made the perfect reply when LPT Willett's free kick was headed across the six yard area by Flint and Sig Stuart Johnston (Army) equalised.

Ten minutes from the break the League side again went ahead when a midfielder collected the ball on the halfway line and, with no Services challenge, shot past the keeper.

Cpl Lee Innes headed wide from a Willett's free kick but almost levelled minutes later when he beat the goalkeeper, only for his shot to be cleared off the goal-line.

Innes, Lennox and Flint combined to put more pressure on the league defence and Flint shot wide.

This was a very determined performance by a below-strength Combined Services side. They were not outclassed and with a more even rub of the turf could have shared the spoils.

AWSA 50 RESULTS

Army Alpine ski championships: Individual giant slalom, SSgt I Dryden, QRH; team giant slalom, QRH A; team giant slalom individual, Tpr S Skidmore, QRH A; women's Individual giant slalom, SSgt JE Shenton, APTC.

Inter-Service Alpine ski championship: Men's giant slalom, E Arnold, Swiss Army; team, Army; women's giant slalom, S Austin, RAF; team, Army.

Individual Super G: Men, Pte T McGill, 1 GS Regt A; team, 1 GS Regt A; women, Capt E Watson-Mack.

Individual downhill: Men, SSgt I Dryden, QRH A; team, QRH A; women, SSgt J Shenton.

British national and inter-Services Alpine ski championship: Willis Corroon Super G, men, E Arnold, Swiss Army; team, Swiss Army; women, SSgt J Shenton; team, Army.

Telemark classic slalom: Capt A Pery, LD.

British national, inter-Service and Army Nordic ski championship: 15km individual cross-country, senior, Sgt D Belam, 3 RHA; junior, Pte N Fletcher, 1 D and D; team, 35 Engr Regt; 10km individual, Sgt M Dixon, 35 Engr Regt; pursuit individual, Sgt D Belam; 4 x 10 cross-country relay, 45 Cdo RM.

Biathlon: 20km individual, Cpl J Sklenar, 35 Engr Regt; 15km junior/women, Pte M Little, 1 KORBR; 10km senior sprint, LCpl M Gee, 2 RTR; 4 x 7.5km relay, 45 Cdo RM; 10km junior sprint, Mr R Durnat.

Cresta Run inter-Services championship: Lord Trenchard Trophy, Sqn Ldr A Green, RAF; Prince Philip Trophy, RN; Harland Trophy, CPO G Chisholm, RN; Auty Speed Cup, Sqn Ldr A Green, RAF.

British Army ski-jumping: 1, Capt Ashby and Cpl Primrose, HQ UK Elm AMF(L).

Army luge: 1, Sgt K Yandell, 7 Bn REME

Ski-bike: Men, Cpl Pollitt, 7 Arm'd Bde Sig Sqn; women, Lt Findlay, 2 Bn REME.

Skeleton: Men, Bdr Collins, ATR Pirbright; women, LCpl S Smith, 16 Tk Tptr Regt.

Other events: Princess Marina Cup, 35 Engr Regt; Alpine team comb, QRH; Alpine inter-Corps comb, RAC; SAS Cup, 35 Engr Regt; Kentish Cup, 35 Engr Regt; 30km military patrol race, 35 Engr Regt.

AWSA exhibition snowboard: Giant slalom, PO Gardiner, 819 Sqn and LCpl Dyche, 1 GS Regt (tie); bordercross, PO Gardiner. Half-pipe, PO Gardiner.



Airborne: WO2 Mike Sinclair and SSgt Martin Edmund-Jones demonstrate the wave-hopping capability of their boat, Wavedancer II. They are national champions after their first full season of RIB racing

RIB racers need a little help from their friends

NEWLY-crowned Formula 3 Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) national champions WO2 Mike Sinclair and SSgt Martin Edmunds-Jones have one wish . . . not to give up the fast and furious sport they took up just a year ago.

The talented duo, both Lynx pilots with Northern Ireland-based 5 Regiment, Army Air

Corps, took the championship in their first full season of racing, and admit to being completely hooked on the sport.

"Racing at 50 knots over water is the most exhilarating thing I've ever done in my life," said driver Mike Sinclair. "Speed so close to the water is like sticking your head out of a

car sunroof at 80mph. You just hope you don't get thrown out."

Both men had a boating background, but admit to being a bit wet behind the ears when it came to racing rigid inflatables.

"Choosing a boat was difficult. There are so many different types, designs and engine combinations. In the end, we settled on a 6.7m Crompton RIB powered with an Evinrude 150 horsepower outboard engine," said Sinclair.

An expensive sport, RIB racing involves extensive travel to fixtures around the United Kingdom.

Fuel is costly and the craft guzzles about 45 gallons of it during each of the season's 13 races.

Desperate to continue with the sport, Mike Sinclair says, "Our first year was a trial run. We did so well and would love to continue taking part, but our main problem is finance.

"Last year, we funded it between us, with very little sponsorship.

"If our families could agree to it, and if we could get some sponsorship, then we'd dearly love to carry on and move up in the sport," he said.

Navigator Edmunds-Jones agrees: "RIB racing demands dedication and with the right financial support it could go on to be a worthwhile military pursuit, not only for team-building skills, but also to promote the Army."



Pain shows on the face of the 5 R Irish boxer as he takes a hard punch

Battle of the Irish

TWO Royal Irish Regiment teams were pitched against each other in the finals of the Northern Ireland novice boxing championship.

Old rivals, the 7th (City of Belfast) Battalion and the 5th (County Londonderry) Battalion were both determined to win and, after a hard-fought contest, 7 R Irish captured the

trophy for the third time in recent years, winning six of the nine contests.

A new award, the Hayden Trophy, was presented to Pte J Goodall (7 R Irish), who knocked out his opponent. The trophy marks more than 25 years of service to Army boxing in Northern Ireland by Maj (Retd) Bob Haydon.



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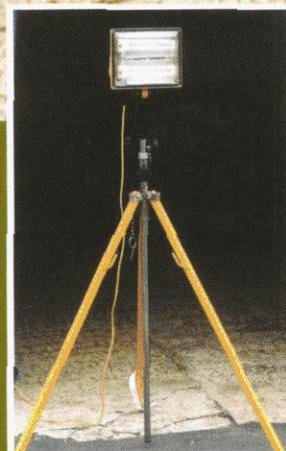
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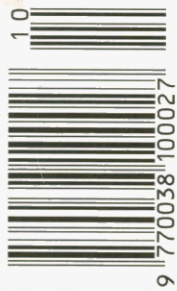
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The latest batch of recruits to the 1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment poses for a team photograph before getting to grips with a Warrior infantry fighting vehicle at Lucknow Barracks. The Tidworth-based soldiers completed their initial military training at the Army Training Regiment Lichfield, before being posted to their chosen regiment. Story and pictures in Page 17

Picture: Mike Weston