

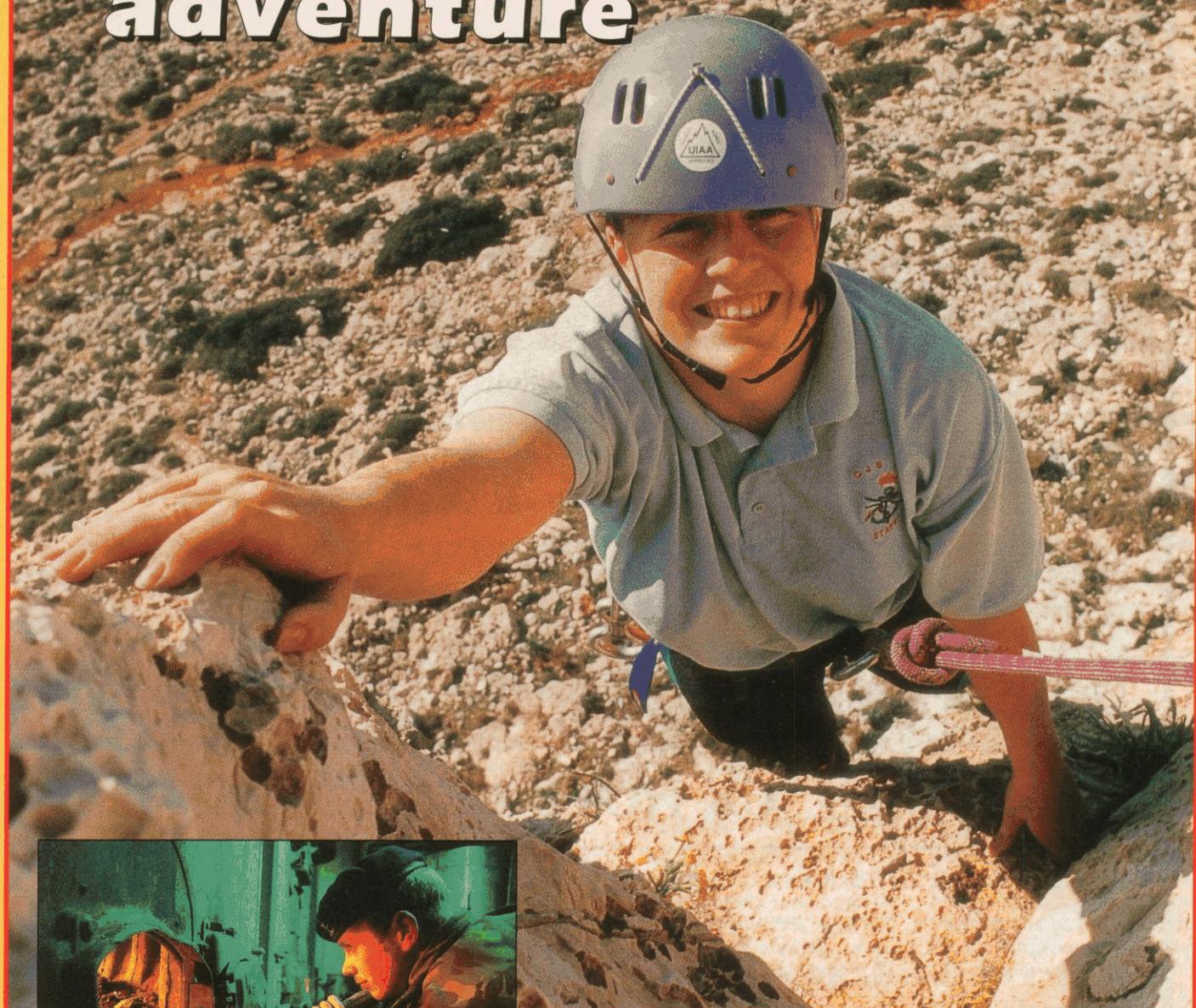
SOLDIER

FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

FEBRUARY 19 1996

60p

CYPRUS: Island of adventure



Bosnia
reports

Kuwait: five
years after

Schools
feature

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Incorporating the Territorial Army magazine

Feb 19, 1996 Vol 52/4

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IFOR units ready to impose the peace

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Picture: Mike Perring

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Sign up a mate... and make £250

A NEW "buddy" recruiting scheme for the Army offers soldiers an incentive to sign up their friends. But before the bounty, designed

to ease the manning shortfall, is paid, the pal has to complete his training and join a regiment or corps. Full details in Page 5.



A British soldier rests in NBC kit during a gas alert in the Gulf

Who do you go to if you believe service in the Gulf damaged your health? – Page 29

Records to be examined in new Gulf War health probe

HEALTH records of more than 50,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen who served in the Gulf are to be screened in an attempt to establish whether there is an increased incidence of illness among the veterans or an unusual number of birth abnormalities among their children.

Under a new study announced by Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames, the Defence Analytical and Statistical Agency at Bath is to compare the records of 51,300 British personnel who took part in the war to liberate Kuwait with the records of a similar number, matched in age and sex, drawn from 249,900 personnel who did not serve in the Gulf.

The MoD's current medical assessment programme, under which more than 350 veterans have been examined, was endorsed last summer by a Royal College of Physicians clinical audit.

At the time, the Royal College recommended the MoD should involve eminent civilian specialists in specific areas of medicine relevant to conditions alleged to have been caused by service in the Gulf.

As a result, discussions have been held with specialists in toxicology, immunology, tropical diseases, epidemiology and birth defects.

A comprehensive medical statistical database has been prepared to provide the basis for epidemiological studies into the incidence and distribution of diseases and other health-related factors.

METHOD APPROVED

Mr Soames said that medical and scientific experts who attended a recent meeting convened by the Surgeon General, Surgeon Vice-Admiral Larry Revell, had expressed approval at the MoD's approach and had agreed there was no evidence at present to indicate the existence of a unique and previously unknown condition or illness associated with service in the Gulf.

"This echoes the US experience of their much larger assessment programme of 17,000 veterans," said the minister.

"We accept that a number of Gulf veterans are ill, and that there is public concern about the possible effects of Gulf service on those children of veterans who have been born with birth defects.

"As the next stage of its work, my department is commissioning a series of epidemiological studies comparing the health of Gulf veterans with similarly matched control groups of Service personnel who did not go to the Gulf."

Some of the studies will be conducted in-house, others by commissioning external research.

The MoD is also to commission research into the alleged

● Turn to Page 5



The flag-draped coffins of the three Light Dragoons are received by a LD bearer party at RAF Lyneham

Unmarked minefield claims Spartan crew

THE BODIES of three soldiers from The Light Dragoons, killed on January 28 when their Spartan light reconnaissance vehicle was blown up in a snow-covered and unmarked minefield near Mrkonjic-Grad in Bosnia, were flown back to Britain on February 1.

The officer and two soldiers will be buried with full military honours.

A Scimitar which was following the stricken vehicle was able to extricate itself although its crew was unable to help because of exploding ammunition and the danger of more mines.

Severe weather conditions and nightfall hampered attempts to reach the vehicle and it was a day before the bodies could be recovered.

The soldiers who died were Lt Richard Madden, Tpr Andrew Ovington and Tpr John Kelly. They had recently arrived in Bosnia as the second Light Dragoons squadron to operate with the Implementation Force.

The LD patrol was moving along a narrow mountain track which had been used before. The lightly-armoured Spartan is believed to have veered off the snow-covered track in bad weather into an unrecorded minefield.

The mine, a Yugoslav TMRP-7 designed to disable heavily-armoured main battle



Tpr John Kelly



Tpr Andrew Ovington

tanks, ripped through the light CVRT-series Spartan, causing a fierce blaze which ignited ammunition.

Heavy snow made the task of clearing a route to the soldiers more hazardous for sappers from Wimborne-based 49 Field Squadron EOD. Several more anti-tank and anti-personnel mines were found.

Princess visits RS

The Princess Royal meets soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots during a private visit to their base in Armagh, Northern Ireland.

Princess Anne, Colonel-in-Chief of the regiment, flew by helicopter to Bessbrook where she was met by the commanding officer, Lt Col Robbie Scott-Bowden.

She later flew to meet troops at a nearby patrol base as well as at Crossmaglen and Newtownhamilton.

On her return to Bessbrook for lunch, Princess Anne presented Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

The battalion began a six-month tour of duty in Northern Ireland in October.



Recruit-a-mate and earn £250

POCKET-sized cards are being issued to soldiers in selected units to be filled in if they recruit a friend into the Army and – on the volunteer's enlistment – earn them a cash payment.

Col Checketts was proud of the contribution made by two squadrons of the Light Dragoons in returning the country to normality, and said the incident highlighted the dangers faced by all IFOR troops on a daily basis.

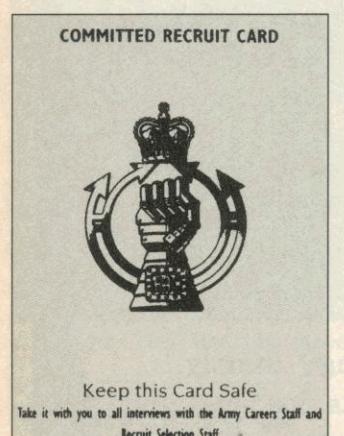
Lt Madden read Russian and Serbo-Croat at university and was due to be promoted. His brother, Maj David Madden, serves with the Queen's Royal Hussars, which deployed two squadrons to the area in early January.

Both troopers were on their second tour in Bosnia.

The day after the tragedy, Tpr Ovington's family received a letter from him in which he wrote of the danger of mines.

All three armies which fought in the area have co-operated with IFOR in providing information about minefields, and some 1,700 have been recorded.

Successful "recruiters" from the Household Cavalry, the Royal Armoured Corps, Royal Artillery and the Infantry (apart from The Royal Irish Regiment (part-



More than 20,000 bounty cards have been issued to the Infantry

time) and the Gurkhas), plus the Royal Logistics Corps (Pioneers only) and the Adju-

tant General's Corps (clerks only) will receive £250 before tax.

Printed in red and blue and bearing the appropriate cap badges, the cards were delivered to the relevant organisations by the beginning of the year for onward transmission to units.

The Infantry has already had a reprint of its initial allocation of 20,000 for distribution to battalions.

Each card is divided into four stages, from provisional acceptance of the potential recruit through commitment, enlistment and bounty application.

"Beneficiaries will be soldiers in the field Army, as opposed to the professional

recruiters," said Maj Anna Steel, SO2 Soldier Recruiting at DAR in London.

"Hopefully, we will get more recruits, since I believe a soldier describes best what a soldier does.

"I think one of the best ways of selling the Army is a soldier telling his war stories."

This should mean that applicants coming in will have a good indication of what lies in store for them, including the selection procedure, she added.

With 48 applications having gone through to date, the first enlistment using the card scheme is expected by March.

Further details are available from battalion or unit headquarters.

It's a fact

BRITAIN'S contribution of ground forces to IFOR is now complete, with a total of 11,500 in theatre. Original estimates were for a British force of 13,100. The United Kingdom's contribution remains, by a substantial margin, second only to that of the United States. – Parliamentary answer

Gulf health initiative

From Page 3

causes of Gulf-related illness, including the possibility of interaction between vaccinations given to Servicemen and women and the Nerve Agent Pre-treatment Sets (NAPS) taken for protection against the threat of chemical attack by the Iraqis.

The Medical Research Council will oversee and review the programme and the results will be published.

Meanwhile, the MoD is

encouraging any serving or ex-Service personnel concerned about their health because of duty in the Gulf to put themselves forward for assessment and counselling.

The Royal British Legion, which has campaigned on behalf of Gulf War veterans, welcomed the announcement by Mr Soames. But the RBL maintains that the MoD could obtain results faster, and more economically, by joining an existing American epidemiolo-

Around the Houses

A summary of Defence topics from Westminster

Troops to secure burial sites

BRITISH troops in Bosnia will provide security for United Nations teams visiting alleged grave sites, Baroness Chalker of Wallasey told the Lords on January 25.

IFOR will conduct foot patrols and aerial reconnaissance of sites and report any suspicious activities that might suggest tampering, she said.

The UN war crimes tribunal proposes to interview a representative group of 1 RWF soldiers about an incident during which the life of a fusilier was threatened while he was being held hostage by Bosnian Serb troops, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames told the Commons.

There are no plans for a special review of the terms and conditions of service for serving mothers with young children, said Mr Soames. A fundamental review of terms and conditions was already taking place under the independent review.

Army debate -Pages 12-13

ditions of service for serving mothers with young children, said Mr Soames. A fundamental review of terms and conditions was already taking place under the independent review.

Points from written answers:
□ United Kingdom costs for the duration of the national deployment with the Implementation Force in Bosnia are estimated at £300 million.

□ Fifteen personnel were discharged with disgrace from the Army between November 1, 1992 and December 31, 1993.

□ Some 5,000 payments averaging under £11,000 each have been made to Service-women discharged on pregnancy between 1978 and 1990.

□ Premature Voluntary Releases for officers and soldiers on the Notice Engagement have dropped from 691 officers and 2,656 soldiers in 1986 to 250 officers and 1,006 soldiers in 1995 (excluding December). Releases peaked in 1989 with 766 officers and 4,123 soldiers and predicted PVR exits for 1996 are 353 officers and 1,728 soldiers.



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41,103...

Natocars present
the new car snap of the year



1973

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me proud to be British



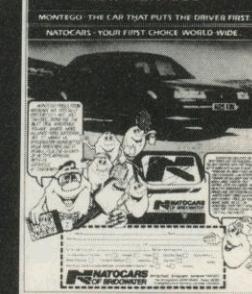
1978

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1984



1988



1992

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FAW to change its name

A NEW name has been agreed for the ten-year-old Federation of Army Wives, but it will not be used until it is officially launched on May 3.

On that day the organisation, which campaigns on a vast range of welfare and social issues affecting Service dependents, will become the Army Families Federation.

The name-change will be marked simultaneously on May 3 at the Rheindahlen Show and at events in the United Kingdom and overseas garrisons.

Nearly 80 per cent of those canvassed last year felt the FAW should rethink its title to reflect changes in the components of the modern family.

The old name was seen to be excluding growing numbers of a community which includes single parents, both male and female.

Most of those who voted – 78 per cent – preferred Army Families Federation to the other suggested title, the Federation of Army Wives and Families.



Lt Col Eric Kohn (standing, second right) and team members pictured before the march and shoot



What the papers have been saying

Soldiers on LSD 'blew it'

According to declassified MoD documents, soldiers who volunteered to take part in secret chemical warfare trials at Porton Down in the 1960s became disorganised and incapable of taking orders after they were dosed with LSD tablets. – *Times*

□ Defence chiefs want to disband 3 Para and transfer its troops to the two other battalions of The Parachute Regiment. – *Sunday Times*

□ One of Britain's most endangered species, the stone curlew, has found a safe haven on MoD training grounds on Salisbury Plain. – *Independent*

□ The pick of young offenders sent to MCTC Colchester under the new "boot camp" regime are to be invited to join the Army under a scheme being considered by the Home Office and MoD. – *Daily Telegraph*

□ Military chiefs have been ordered to train thousands of "agony aunts" to tackle problems faced by Servicemen and women. – *Daily Mail*

□ Retired Col Alec Forbes was the last patient to be treated in Aldershot's 117-year-old Cambridge Military Hospital. The former APTC officer left the CMH on January 31 following his third hip replacement operation. – *Aldershot News*

Medics move on rodent disease

MEDICS have established a monitoring system for British troops serving with NATO's Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) in former Yugoslavia.

The move followed confirmation that a British soldier had contracted a rare rodent-borne disease in north-east Bosnia. He is now receiving treatment in the UK for haemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome (HFRS), a disease historically associated with armies in the field.

Railway's tribute to GER-khas

COLCHESTER-based Queen's Own Gurkha Transport Regiment and the Brigade of Gurkhas were honoured on February 6 when Great Eastern Railway named a Class 321 unit "Gurkha" in a ceremony at the town's station.

Before the formal naming took place, the Gurkha band entertained travellers. Present were 90 members of the Clacton branch of the Royal British Legion and members of the Burma Star Association who later returned to London on the newly-named train as guests of GER.

GER managing director Bob Breakwell said: "The link with this famous regiment is now forged and will be seen by literally thousands of people every day."

Watchkeepers' pool carries off TA team prize

STAFF officers from HQ 5 Airborne Brigade (All Arms Watchkeepers and Liaison Officers Pool (V)) won the TA Bells Trophy for the best Territorial Army team in the brigade march and shoot competition held on RMA Sandhurst's Barbarossa training area.

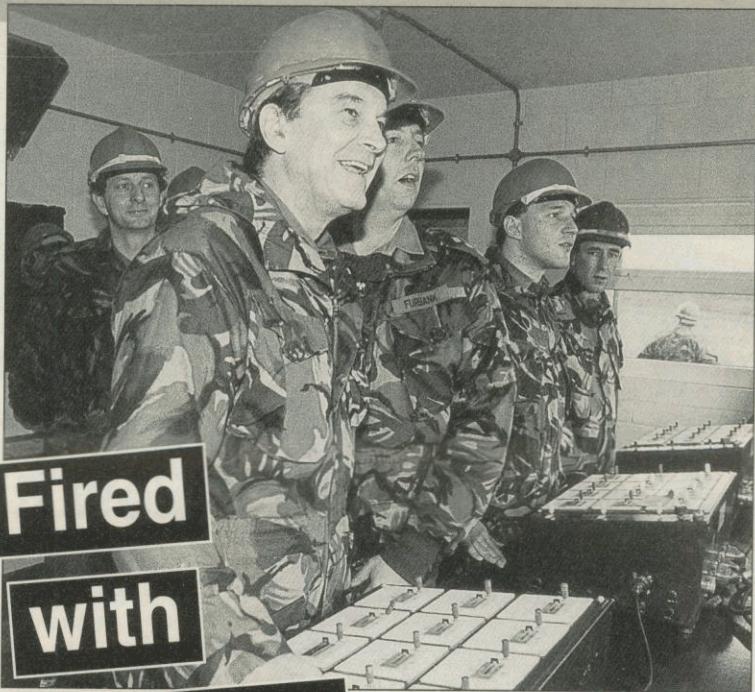
The ten team members, led by Lt Col Eric Kohn, REME, had to cover a ten-mile course, including 16 checkpoints, followed by a shoot.

Apart from two other REME representatives, their cap-

badges ranged from Gurkha to Royal Artillery and RAMC. Teams from Regular and Territorial Army units which are part of, or affiliated to, the brigade took part.

● TA staff officers also provided a four-man team for the Swiss Raid Commando competition in Colombier Neuchatel.

The gruelling event involved military teams moving more than 150km across mountains for 48 hours. Part of the course was completed on Swiss Army bicycles.



**Fired
with
enthusiasm**

Maj Gen **Charles Vyvyan**, COS HQ Land Command, with Capt **Tony Fairbank** of 48 Fd Sqn (Air Support) RE, tries his hand in the control room of the computerised shooting range at Peat Fell Range, Catterick.

The general was in Yorkshire to open the £700,000 range, constructed by Waterbeach-based 48 Fd Sqn, and the first in the UK to be purpose-built for the new automatic marking system, which gives trainees a computer monitor at the firing point to check their accuracy.



**Here's
tae
Rabbie!**

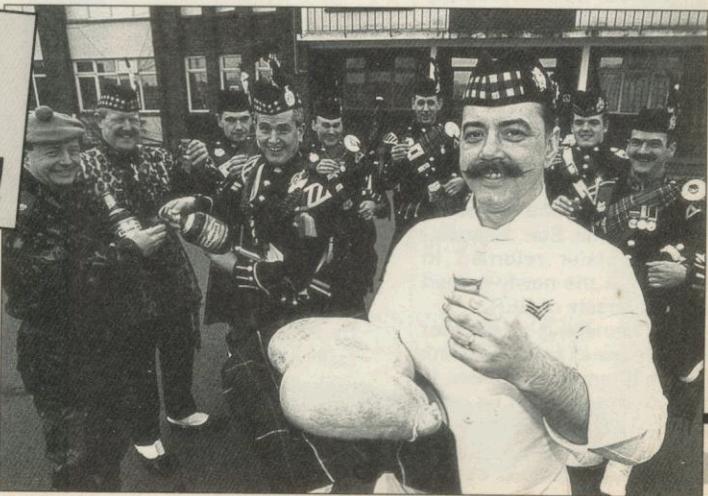
Pipe Major **Steven Small** (above) of the Black Watch celebrates the arrival of Drambuie and haggis at Pirbright. The goodies were part of a consignment donated by distillers Drambuie and a chain of butchers to Scots serving in locations which included Northern Ireland and Bosnia to help them celebrate the bicentenary of the death of Rabbie Burns.

Sgt **Christopher Crosbie** (right) and pipers and drummers of 1 KOSB toast the haggis in Belfast.



Dove's a high flier...
Blazing a trail as one of the first serving soldiers to gain a grade 5 National Vocational Certificate – recognised as between degree and master's degree level – and diploma in management is WO1 **Derek Dove**, based at Bulford Camp, where he is seen being presented with the documents by Brig **Tony Kerr**, Assistant Divisional Commander 3 (UK) Division.

"I was left facing the future with a lot of management experience but no formal qualifications, which is why I enrolled," said Derek, who studied for 14 months in his own time and, after 34 years in the Army, has less than a year left to serve.



OH, BROTHER

Who says the Army and Royal Navy don't have a heart? Certainly not 19-year-old Pte **Lea Cox** and his brother, Able Seaman **Mark Jones** (20), both serving with NATO forces in Split.

Their respective Services got together and arranged a surprise meeting for the pair, who were separated as children and had seen each other only once in 15 years.

Lea, an AGC (SPS) clerk, had been instructed to go to the helipad to book in troops arriving from Italy, only to find his brother – who changed his surname by deed poll when his mother remarried – getting out of a helicopter sent to pick him up from HMS *London*, on which he serves as weapon systems operator, in the Adriatic.

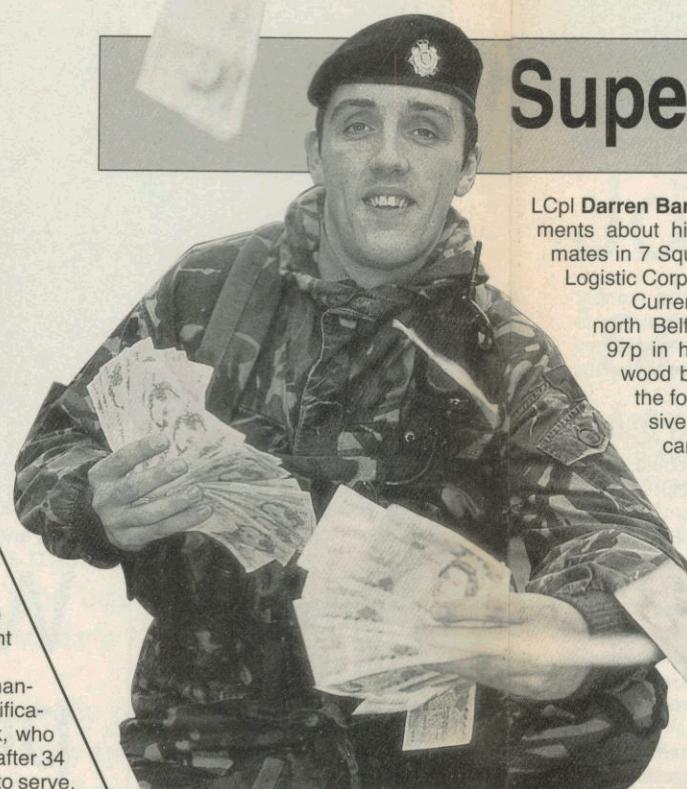
The next three hours for the astonished and delighted brothers were spent in catching up on topics such as their mutual love of hockey.



Picture: Dave Whitley

PEOPLE

Super saver



LCpl **Darren Barton** is used to hearing comments about his infamous "frugality" from mates in 7 Squadron, 27 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps.

Currently on a six-month tour in north Belfast, "Daz" spent an entire 97p in his first four weeks at Girdwood base, a total increased over the following two weeks to a massive £25, mainly on phone cards.

But for Darren, who, by the end of his tour (his second in Northern Ireland) in April will have amassed savings of £6,000 to add to the £4,500 he totted up the first time around, there is a sensible aim in view – to set up home with girlfriend **Lorraine** ...



**Tanks very
much ...**

PARTING was not such sweet sorrow for Pte **Jill Ewing** of 32 Engineer Regiment and her husband, LCpl **Jim Ewing** of 16 Tank Transporter Squadron RLC.

The sappers, to whom Jill is attached as a member of the AGC, were leaving Hannover to join the Implementation Force in Bosnia and Jim had applied for a temporary transfer to 3 Tank Transporter Squadron, which is in theatre.

The request was granted without hassle or red tape so Jill and Jim were able to leave together.

**Link's
link**

When motorists in a small Bosnian community found themselves stranded on either side of a huge hole after their main road collapsed due to a landslide, the sappers went to the rescue.

And in charge of the heavy plant brought in to construct storm drains and build a second road above the original on more solid foundations was Cpl **Dean Link**, plant section commander for 5 Field Squadron RE, seen, as it were, at the scene.



F(a)irwell, Gordon

One claim to fame for **Gordon Williams**, who has retired after almost 40 years in the Civil Service, is that, as an information officer at the Air Ministry at the beginning of the 1960s, he helped to launch the Red Arrows aerial display team.

Another notable episode for Gordon, whose final post was in York as Senior Public Information Officer for 2nd Division, was a stint in the 1980s as editor of *Soldier News* and news editor of *Soldier* magazine.



Lt Gen Sir Roger Wheeler, GOC Northern Ireland (left) with an oil painting of a Gazelle over Belfast by John Young (right).

The painting was one of three commissioned by 5 Regiment, Army Air Corps unveiled in the AAC Officers' Mess at Aldergrove to commemorate 25 years of aviation in Northern Ireland.

How do we help man who's lost everything?

WHEN I first went out to Germany it was my proud boast that all my worldly goods fitted into the back of a small car. As the years progressed I accumulated more and more possessions. Some of them were cherished reminders of happy times.

Every time I moved I packed them into the boxes provided and sent them off into the unknown. Fortunately my faith was rewarded on every occasion and I was reunited with my precious things.

Some people aren't so lucky. I remember one friend whose boxes went up in smoke when the lorry carrying them caught fire. Others have lost all or part of their belongings in accidents and thefts.

In every case the loser was reassured that it would all be all right because they were insured and could claim back the loss. While this is true it's impossible to put a value on an album of photographs, an ornament kept as a remembrance of a loved one or a collection of love letters.

Every now and then I get a letter from someone who has been affected by just this sort of event. The latest is from a man who was posted overseas from the United Kingdom.

His boxes were in a truck which was stolen, emptied and abandoned. He lost everything.

He had been wise and insured his possessions and he will be reimbursed but he was unprepared for the emotional shock of losing all the belongings that made up his personal history.

He praised the MoD for their help but he has voiced a concern shared by others similarly affected. He has been dismayed to find that the contractors have apparently suffered no penalty for the incident. He also wishes he could have been kept up to date with any inquiries carried out to find the thieves.

Whenever I've looked into this in the past I've been told that this



Cari's column

kind of event is regrettable but rare. Given the number of moves carried out around the world and the amount of boxes loaded and unloaded this is probably true. But shouldn't this mean that, when it does happen, there should be even more attention given to keeping the injured party up to date with how inquiries are progressing?

My correspondent says that he is concerned about uninsurable losses. It seems that there is now nothing he can do about the personal effects which he hadn't thought about insuring for large amounts of money. How do you put a value on them? And how can you insure yourself against the very real feeling of bereavement when they are all taken from you?

Unfortunately losing your belongings can happen wherever you are and at any time of the day. Details of a current initiative, Kit Watch (Soldier, Jan 8) are available from your local RMP.

The message for anyone thinking of renewing their insurance or taking it out for the first time is that you must talk it over with the agency selling you the cover. Make sure you take a long look at your possessions. Don't just think about how much your hi-fi is worth or how much it would cost you to replace your computer.

Finally, on the general subject of insurance, please bear in mind that this is big business where cheaper and cheaper deals are being advertised along with easier methods of taking it out.

Whatever you're insuring, whether it's your kit, your house, your health or anything else, ask what isn't covered rather than what is. Find out if there are any exclusion clauses or time limits for claims. You're the only one parting with the money so any reputable company or agent won't mind you asking detailed questions before giving them your business.

When you've packed your boxes don't forget to keep a list of everything contained in each of them.

This is not just a help when you're unpacking but it could pro-

Bulletin ...

SRB 5, the Tri-Service Resettlement Organisation's bulletin, contains venues and dates of useful courses planned throughout the country, plus articles on career openings for those considering work as an airline pilot, school bursar, prison officer or occupational therapist.

... board

War widows bid fails

A REQUEST to extend eligibility to war widows' pension was rejected by the Government in the House of Lords.

Under the rules of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, before 1978, a widow had to be married to her husband while he was still serving to qualify for a pension.

From April 6 1978 the entitlement was extended to the widows

of those Servicemen who married after retirement.

Lord Campbell of Alloway asked whether the 1978 pension rule change could be extended to potential widows who married after 1964.

But Defence Under-Secretary Earl Howe said there were no plans to extend the provision retrospectively.

Helpline helpline

AN 0800 free information number that gives callers advice on how to keep calls to telephone helplines as confidential as possible has been set up by BT.

The advice addresses the problem of last-number re-dial and itemised bills which could deter people from seeking help.

The BT Calling Helplines number is 0800 0800 08.

LINCOLNSHIRE RESETTLEMENT: A series of briefings for Service personnel planning to work or live in the county has been announced by Lincolnshire Training and Enterprise Council.

Working in Lincolnshire seminars are to be held on May 15 and October 16, and a Living in Lincolnshire briefing on July 3.

The events will be hosted at bases throughout the county and run by the Service Leavers Support Team stationed at HQ 49 East Brigade, Chetwynd Barracks, Nottingham.

Franchise exhibition

A record number of companies are expected to take part in the new-look national franchise exhibition to be staged at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham on October 4-6. Visitors will have the chance to look into a wide range of business opportunities, with investments starting from less than £5,000.



Mrs Shephard meets Service personnel at a London Jobcentre

Jobcentres to 'sell' the Army

ARMED Forces vacancies are to be advertised for the first time in all 1,100 of the United Kingdom's national network of Jobcentres.

"The Employment Service will be able to reach those who may not have considered the job opportunities that the Armed Forces can offer," announced Education and Employment Secretary Gillian Shephard.

"In particular, people may not be aware of the skilled jobs available such as mechanics, drivers, cartographers, cooks and so on."

Successful pilot schemes had already been run in Edinburgh, Gloucester, Greenwich, Liverpool, Norwich and Swansea between October 1994 and March 1995.

Recruiting was a very high priority for the MoD, said Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames, and it was "critical" that sufficient people of the right calibre were recruited to maintain the operational effectiveness and capability of the Forces.

"I hope young people who had not previously considered a career in the Services will be attracted by the wide variety of jobs on offer."

MEMBERS of the British Army are being offered, through Soldier, savings of up to £100 per person on the cost of a Cyprus holiday.

Airglobe Holidays, a specialist tour operator to the island, is offer-

New guide to schools

A second edition of *The Gabbitas Guide to Independent Schools*, described as the definitive guide to independent education in the UK, has been published. The directory of more than 2,200 schools is published in a chunky, 780-page paperback by Kogan Page and costs £9.99.

Naafi home insurance

A NEW home contents insurance scheme has been launched by Naafi Financial Services. Homeplan, underwritten by General Accident, is designed to complement the existing Safeguard scheme by meeting the needs of those who do not want full worldwide cover. It is available to civilians as well as military customers.

ing 10 per cent off any of their holidays there which, they add, are "already competitively priced".

The reduction applies not only to the basic holiday cost, but also insurance and optional supple-

ments such as room or board upgrades and car hire.

For Airglobe's 52-page brochure, call 0171-813 1122. The discount offer must be mentioned at the time of booking.

Looking on bright side of separation

just come out of the showrooms."

Others said the procedures were now more relaxed and that paying cleaning contractors had reduced the pressures on them.

With an estimated one-in-three marriages in the UK now ending in divorce, SSAFA's long-term project seeks to discover the level of divorce in the Armed Forces.

The research is being financed by the MoD.

SSAFA's working party includes representatives from the three Services, Relate, the Samaritans, Families Need Fathers, the National Stepfamily Association, CAST (Community Activity Support Team), Service chaplains, and SSAFA's Director of Social Work.

It has alerted the MoD to the implications of proposed divorce legislation.

"Our objective, in all our work, is to try to prevent unnecessary breakdowns in Service marriages," said Mrs Alison Barnes, chairman of the working party.

● Bird's eye-view – Page 31

Militia sappers refurbish Haig Homes

SOLDIERS from the Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) have been caring for two RE-allocated Haig Homes in Cardiff.

Men from the regiment's Cwmbran-based 100 Field Squadron (Militia) decorated both houses last year and are preparing to work on the garden of Howard and Doris Silvester. Howard served with the corps in a railway operating company during the Second World War.

The other Haig Home is occupied by Harold and Janet Gavin. Harold served throughout the 1939-45 war and saw action with the British Expeditionary Force. He also saw action in Iran and Iraq.

WO1 (RSM) John Dargavell RE delivered hampers to both families at Christmas.

British Army 'a matchless asset'

WITH the British deployment to IFOR in Bosnia complete, more than one third of the Army is now on, preparing for, or recovering from, operational commitments.

Meanwhile it continues to implement far-reaching and profound changes, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said in the Commons debate on the Army.

Earlier he said he hoped the House and the country realised "how incredibly lucky we are in Great Britain to have such a superb Army."

"At every level of command and throughout all ranks, the Army is exceptional in its personal and professional standards, in its team work, and in its highly developed sense of cohesion, identity, duty and obligation."

Acknowledging that the reorganisations of the past few years had inevitably extracted a price in terms of the pressure and upheaval that they have caused, he said: "This institution is a matchless asset."

Other points from the debate:

Bosnia

"They have disposed of more than 3,500 mines and unexploded objects and overseen the clearance of more than 70 major minefields, reducing the risk to innocent civilians."

"They have repaired and rebuilt bridges, notably a 270ft Bailey bridge in Mostar to link the Muslim and Croatian sides."

"They have reconnected water, gas and electricity supplies, including the water supply to 45,000 people in Bugojno and 26,000 more in Gorazde, thus dramatically improving the quality of life of the local people. They have also re-opened and rebuilt schools and health centres."

The 11,500 British troops serving in IFOR include 450 volunteer TA soldiers and reservists, including signallers, engineers, movement controllers, military policemen and petroleum specialists.

Among other notable achievements, they have constructed more than 100km of new roads, constructed, improved and maintained more than 1,000km of routes to help the humanitarian effort and the distribution of aid.

Tour intervals

Mr Soames reaffirmed the

Government's commitment to achieve an average operational tour interval for infantry battalions of 24 months.

"In 1995-96 we shall achieve an average interval of only about 22 months for the infantry, although we shall exceed the target comfortably for the Royal Artillery and the Royal Armoured Corps."

"On the basis of current commitments, including the continuing IFOR deployment, we expect to meet the target of 24 months for the infantry in 1996-97."

Mr Menzies Campbell referred to "an allegation" he had heard that over a four-year period one 26-year-old captain had spent only six weeks at home.

Sir Archibald Hamilton, a former Armed Forces Minister, called for one or two battalions of Gurkhas to be "salvaged" to carry out peacekeeping tasks.

Doubt that the 24-month interval would ever be achievable was expressed by Dr

Charles Goodson-Wickes.

"In some specialist units, such as the sappers, the emergency tour interval is as low as 12 months and, in some individual cases, soldiers with a particular expertise have been working on a back-to-back basis."

"The problem is magnified when we have such an enormous percentage of forces who are either training, on operations or re-training . . . the highest since the end of the Second World War."

Recruiting and retention

To maintain the right balance of age and experience, the Army needs to recruit about 15,000 young soldiers a year. But fewer volunteers than needed are coming forward, particularly for the combat arms, said the minister.

Special measures are being taken to meet the shortfall and studies are going on to "further fortify, refresh and sustain the historic county and regional links with the Army".

To improve the retention rate, a re-engagement bounty had been introduced and "the Adjutant General and his excellent team are looking at ideas such as modern apprenticeships and bringing military qualifications more into line with the requirements of civilian employers - through the introduction of National Vocational Qualifications, for example".

On the subject of using job centres for Forces recruiting, Shadow Defence Secretary Dr David Clark sought an assurance that there would be no financial penalty on a young unemployed person for not wishing to join the Army.

Defence Procurement Minister James Arbuthnot said that rejection of a Service career would not involve loss of unemployment benefit.

Equipment

During their extended and searching examination in Bosnia, British Army equipment - particularly Warrior, the tracked armoured reconnaissance vehicles and the DROPS logistic vehicles - had continued to perform extremely well, said Defence Procurement Minister James Arbuthnot.

"It is an excellent illustration of the speed and effectiveness of response by the MoD and industry working closely together with a common aim."

Earlier in the debate Opposition Defence spokesman Dr

"Bosnia has also enabled my



Picture: Mike Perrin

Pte Craig Harris, Graeme Kelly and Mark Howe of the 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry with driver Rfn Steve Cogan (1 RGJ) refuel a Warrior at Malibu Corner in Bosnia. The armoured fighting vehicle was said in the Army debate to be performing "extremely well" in former Yugoslavia

department and industry to show their skill at responding quickly to urgent operational requirements.

"There have been many examples, but I want to single out the rapid development and deployment of the prototype HALO sound ranging equipment used for locating hostile artillery."

Because members of the group will be required to possess a degree of authority, age limits will not be a bar to selection of suitable volunteers.

New recruits will be offered TA commissions to the rank of major or above.

Depending on demand and availability, volunteers will be offered the chance to commit anything from one day a year to full-time working and will be paid for each day of service and receive a bounty.

Application forms are available from Lt Col T J W Robertson, Civil Affairs Group Study, Engineer Branch, HQ Land, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury SP2 OAG, tel 01722 433805, fax 01722 433816.

Terriers wanted for new Civil Affairs Group

TRANSPORT, financial, catering and legal experts are among specialists wanted by the Territorial Army for a new Civil Affairs Group to become operational on April 1 next year.

The group will consist of 50 officers who will be available in teams or as individuals to military commander.

Members of the group would act as liaison officers should civil authorities require military assistance or co-operation.

Co-ordination of operations involving non-military agencies would be another aspect of their work.

Some officers already serving in the Territorial Army would be qualified to join the group. Subject to agreement with their present chain of command, their transfer should be relatively simple.

No age limit

Because the group does not need a rigid upper age limit, it will be able to offer extended service to more mature officers with the necessary skills and experience who are coming to the end of a TA appointment.

Men and women on the Regular Army Reserve of Officers will, it is thought, be a particularly rich source of recruits, especially those currently in civilian employment in one of the preferred areas of expertise.

Subject to fitness levels and an ability to learn basic military skills, people with no military experience but with appropriate civilian expertise will be eligible.

Because members of the group will be required to possess a degree of authority, age limits will not be a bar to selection of suitable volunteers.

New recruits will be offered TA commissions to the rank of major or above.

Depending on demand and availability, volunteers will be offered the chance to commit anything from one day a year to full-time working and will be paid for each day of service and receive a bounty.

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Union flag signals tough new approach

A NEW spirit of hope pervades the areas where British soldiers serve with the Dayton Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia Hercegovina.

The Union Flag, which once had to defer to the flag of the United Nations, again flies proudly from flagstaffs and aerials.

British soldiers have largely left the areas of central Bosnia where they spent three years hamstrung by an unclear mission.

They are now spread in the west of the troubled country, with Canadians and Dutch under command.

As a new page was turned, Maj Gen Mike Jackson, who commands IFOR's Multi-National Division South West, paid tribute to the work of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), which struggled to help humanitarian aid through to communities ravaged by a ferocious, barbaric war.

He had no criticism of the UN, which did a difficult task without the mandate and full resources it needed, he told *Soldier* at the former UN Sector South West headquarters at Gornji Vakuf.

"Life was a struggle and it was getting difficult for the UN, but under IFOR there has been a transformation," he said.

"We have a very clear military mission laid down by an international treaty which gives us clear powers."

The order of battle assembled by IFOR was strong and capable, and would fight if need be.

Freedom of movement

"We are not being mucked about at some checkpoint as the convoys or patrols wearing blue berets were. We have absolute freedom of movement and do not recognise the cease-fire line as any block to our movement."

Gen Jackson warned that the IFOR had to be very careful to implement only the military aspects of the peace. IFOR was present to deal with the opposing armies, and not drunken youths.

"If anybody is fool enough to fire at us, we will fire back, but we are not here as a police force. We are not asked to police the area, we don't want to be asked to, and it would be a very worrying road to go down."

Capt Paul Sulyok of the 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry, understands more than most how the goalposts have changed. While serving as a convoy officer with the RGBW and RWF in Gorazde in 1994 he was detained by Serbs for ten days during the NATO bombing of Serb positions.

"We were completely at the mercy of Muslims, Serbs or Croats. They would search every single bag of every single soldier in each wagon, and just took any film, cameras and binoculars they wanted."

"When weapons were cocked you



Maj Gen Mike Jackson

Bluebird of unhappiness

NO LIGHTS twinkled in the frozen night as a *Soldier* team returned along Route Bluebird to 4 Armoured Brigade HQ in Sipovo after visiting troops of the Peace Implementation Force in Sanski Most.

No warm glow came from a single house window.

High on a snow-covered hillside there was an unnaturally intense orange light. It was a man burning his house before he abandoned it.

Bluebird runs through the "anvil", a predominantly Serb area overrun by the Bosnian-Croat federation last autumn, but destined to be returned to the Serbs in March.

By the time British troops started moving into the area in December, the writing was on the wall. Another Army route - Vulture - sounded more appropriate. The "anvil" was being picked clean of anything of value.

As writer and photographer left the shoe factory which houses 1 RRF in Mrkonjic-Grad, four carts drawn by horses were taking a detachment of HVO soldiers along the road. They were systematically stripping telephone wires and electricity cables.

One cart had a cow in it. Nothing but

hatred was being left behind for the Serbs.

Only three old women remained in the area, one with a broken leg, said Sgt Keith Armstrong. The Fusiliers' doctor had visited the women and they had been given food.

While on patrol, Sgt Armstrong and 9 Platoon visited an old man in another town.

Mrkonjic-Grad, a city the size of Gloucester, is dead. So are a score of other once beautiful towns.

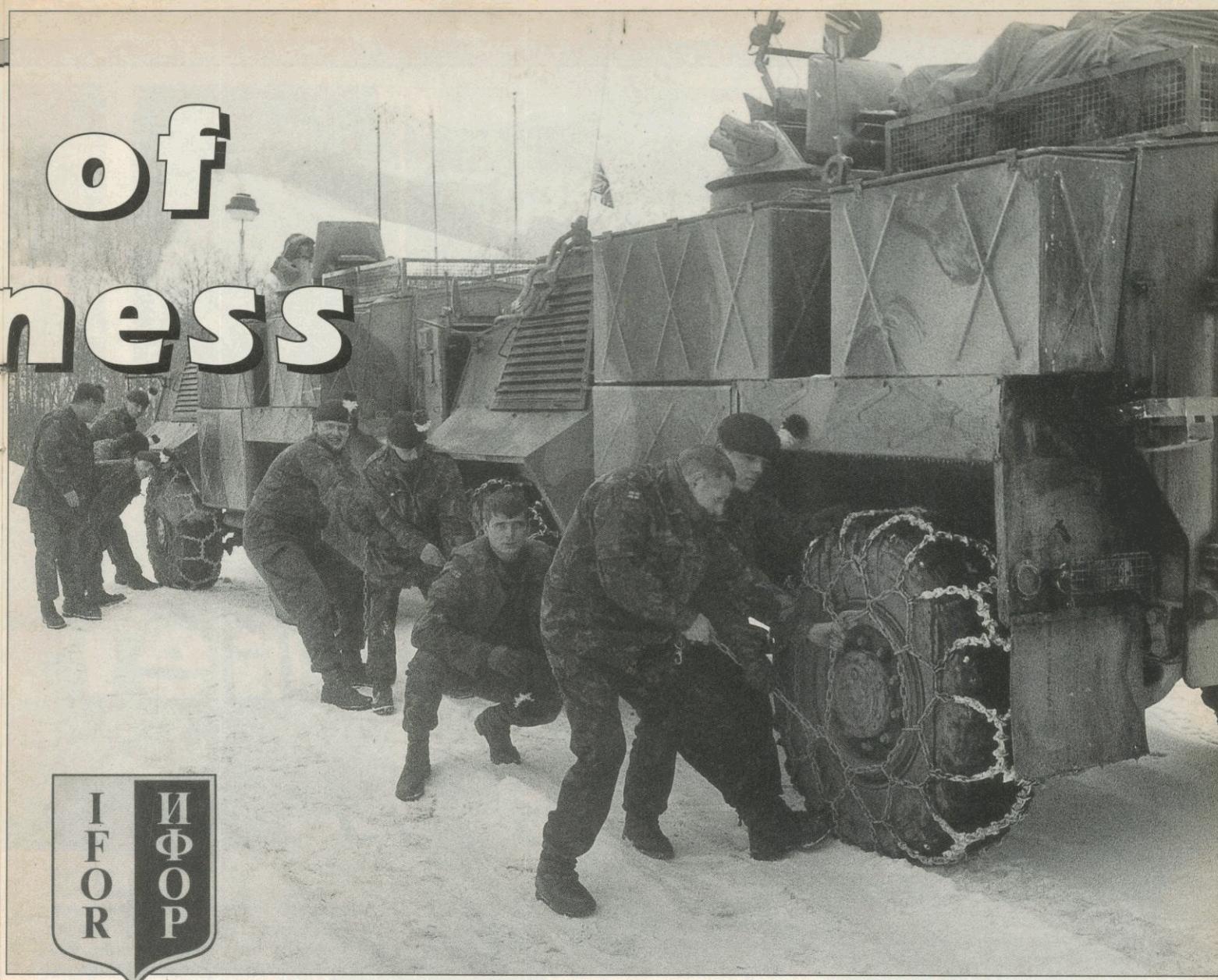
The Krajina, or border lands, with its historic capital of Knin, was for centuries a reminder of how Serbs had been rewarded for courageous service to the Austrian Habsburgs defending that land against the Ottoman Empire.

It is now lost. A devastating offensive by Croats and Muslims who once shared the area expelled the indigenous Serbs last September.

They had little time to collect their belongings and what was left was strewn about the streets and countryside.

These wretched people were experiencing what had happened to Muslims and Croats on the other side of the confrontation line for the past three years.

It was eerie to wake up in a city that had



died, said SSgt Steven Wellon RMP. Looting and burning had been done before the British arrived, and only the occasional house was now being gutted.

It was vandalism for vandalism's sake he said, but what right did IFOR have to interfere as a man burned his own home?

At an ancient school on the former front line, a platoon of Light Infantrymen made themselves comfortable in an upstairs classroom.

The evocative name of "Malibu corner" belied its dreary setting. Riflemen were burning the detritus of war, which included school records dating to the turn of the century.

This would be a prisoner exchange point, or a collection point. The school had been used as a field hospital and a recruit training camp, said Sgt Malcolm Pattison. When one side left, the other side trashed it.

For the soldiers, the school was better than a bivvy beside a Warrior. There were sofas from ruined houses to be used as beds, oil lamps and ornaments to soften the otherwise stark surroundings - knick-knacks of a houseproud woman.

Perhaps she will return. The "anvil" is to be returned to the Serbs as part of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Areas to be transferred were to be cleared of occupying soldiers by early February, and the new owners would be allowed back in mid-



Above - Treacherous road conditions require the First Fusiliers to put snow chains on their Saxon

Left - Cpl Steve Edwards and Cpl Dave Mortimer erect warning signs in the gutted town of Sipovo

matter for his own government. It was unlikely he would ever return to a home just a few kilometres on the wrong side of the agreed inter-entity boundary.

All parties to the agreement were keen to make it work, willingly withdrawing from the confrontation line and co-operating in marking the estimated three million mines which contaminate the landscape.

First difficult hurdle is the exchange of prisoners. Surviving prisoners are far fewer than missing soldiers.

IFOR will remain in Bosnia for only a year to stabilise the situation while civilian organisations prepare to rebuild the shattered country.

Maj Stewart Mills, OC B Company of 2 LI, hoped that IFOR would bring some light to the situation. But with each side trying to eliminate the culture of the others, it would not be easy.

"There has been a squabble here since the 12th century and you don't sort that overnight, but we must give it a try," he said.

● Signallers lead the way - overleaf



Men of 2 LI's 6 Platoon settle into Malibu Corner

• From Page 15

started talking a bit faster. But now we just steam right through."

Capt Sulyok, who has completed a ten-week Serbo-Croat course at Beaconsfield, is heavily involved in liaison and higher-level meetings. He believed British soldiers were always respected, because they had the reputation of hitting hardest. "Other governments tied their troops far more than ours. Our hands were tied by the UN, but MoD did its best to allow us as much freedom as possible," he said.

Maj Richard Haldenby RA, the last British UN Military Observer in Gornji Vakuf, was returning to Germany with a great deal of experience.

Much valuable expertise was lost as the majors and captains from 27 countries returned home. Unarmed and living in the community, they had a good feel for what was going on.

"IFOR is allowed to be much more robust, which is good because the only thing that the warring factions are impressed with is power and military might," he said.

The only times he felt he made progress was when he lost his temper.

"The UN didn't get on because it was trying to be too soft, but it was amazing the results we got when we were aggressive – that is what they respect."

Federation offensive

Maj Haldenby had seen quite a change in the fighting qualities of the opposing armies. One of his abiding memories will be of watching the Federation offensive in September. He saw Donji Vakuf being taken after three years in Serb hands.

"We were sitting on a hill, with no helmet and no flak jacket, watching this most amazing fight going on a short distance away."

Being unarmed, the UNMOs could do little to prevent irregulars stealing their equipment, nor could they do anything about the 350 vehicles stolen from the UN last year.

It had been a most interesting time, said Maj Haldenby, but times had changed, and the IFOR was not going to stand for any such nonsense.

As soon as 3 Div HQ and Signal Regiment moved into Gornji Vakuf the IFOR signallers politely asked that UN vehicles be driven out of sight.

Those that couldn't be moved were dumped by a Foden recovery vehicle, said the regiment's CO, Lt Col Ian Foxley.

"We are a proper army," he said, "and people who pass will recognise this from the change in appearance, with proper signs and the Union Flag flying."



Capt Paul Sulyok and Adjutant Johnny Bowron swap notes in the 2 LI operations room



SSgt Frank Roberts of HQ Sig Sqn finishes connecting main cables after rewiring the Sipovo camp to British standards



Left – LCpl Smudge Smith and Sig Dave Kane load cargo into a Lynx helicopter of 657 Sqn AAC at Gornji Vakuf for LCpl Neil Greenwood to deliver to a rebroadcast station

Signalers lead the way

IT WAS gratifying for Lt Col Ian Foxley to hear Admiral Leighton Smith say: "I've got to hand it to you guys. You Brits have done it again and have really led the way."

Coming from NATO's Commander Southern Europe and overall commander of the Dayton Peace Agreement Implementation Force in Bosnia, it was high praise for Col Foxley, whose 3 Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment had been instrumental in smoothing the route.



LCpl Charlie Forsyth and Sig Shane Wakeling reflect on a lucky escape after an argument with a Warrior Recovery Vehicle going the opposite way over ice

Also high in the satisfaction stakes was seeing a young Light Infantry soldier crouched in a broom cupboard in the unsavoury "pig farm" near Sanski Most.

He was talking to his mother on a welfare telephone the signallers had installed the day before.

Along with logisticians, signallers were instrumental in paving the way for the 13,100 British troops to operate in a largely new area in Bosnia.

"As the enabling force, we took over the site, removed most of the UN communications, put in Ptarmigan combat net radio, and took over local postal and telecommunications facilities," he said.

Initially the signallers, known as "Foxbat", had prepared only for a forward headquarters with a limited amount of comms equipment to operate Ptarmigan and a combat net radio.

WO2 (FoS) Dave Ball's main problem was time, but with teams working 20-hour days he had the links ready in four days, one day early. "We had only 40 men providing comms for a full divisional signal regiment," he said.

International dialling in the area was reconnected when two technicians mended a mast on top of a mountain between Gornji Vakuf and Mostar.

In theatre are elements from six of the 11 Royal Corps of Signals regiments: Lt Col Foxley's 3 Div Sig Regt; 7, providing comms for the ARRC's IFOR HQ; 16, rear comms in Split; 14, electronic warfare facilities; 30, some of the satellite detachments which are the bearer system for the

Cpl Darren Perry and LCpl Trevor Stanford of 204 Sig Sqn set up an SSVC dish

Ptarmigan elements; and 21, linking to the support helicopters.

The system was functioning but brittle, and required the influx of the main body to cope with problems plus the Canadian and another brigade expected to come under command.

At Gornji Vakuf the signallers took over the former UN complex; at Sipovo they took over a former hotel and a gypsum factory in which everything was coated by a thin layer of white dust.

Initially 4 Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (204) at Sipovo provided comms over a divisional area, twice as big as it would normally cover.

In addition to radio and Ptarmigan, a plethora of non-standard systems made their job a lot more challenging – and rewarding.

"If the radio is down, try Ptarmigan, if not try international maritime satellite, then tactical satellite, then the local telephone system, and if all else fails, send a vehicle with the message," said the OC, Maj Elton Davis.

Criss-crossed with narrow, steep-sided valleys, Bosnia is a challenge for signallers. But they impressed the military who came into contact with them. They had to provide conference facilities to allow senior



main troop, forward troop and support troop.

Main Troop looks after the hotel complex, and equips the commander with his tactical HQ, rebroadcast stations and radio detachments.

Forward HQ gives the armoured complex a high-visibility presence in the major Serb town of Banja Luka, and Support Troop provides the essential life support for the HQ and is home to the wide variety of capbadges, from power to pioneers and Gurkhas, guarding the complex.

Cpl Jim Winters and seven other members of 23 (Pioneer) Regiment RLC regularly turn away HVO soldiers trying to gain access.

With nine technicians and two power men, SSgt Frank Roberts completely



IFOR

rewired the HQ complex in Split for the UN national support element, before rewiring the whole Sipovo hotel ops room and peripherals.

"We had no idea how safe the existing wiring used by the Croats and Serbs would be, so we decided we'd go it alone and be British," he said.

While supplying communications for the United Nations at Gornji Vakuf, the Royal Signallers adopted two dogs, Blackie and White Fang.

They took the dogs north to Sipovo where they provided nicknames for the two major crossing points – Black Dog and White Fang – over the confrontation line.

Blackie also provided 4 Bde with a litter of nine pups and leaves them in the care of Capt

Polly Ford when she goes for runs with staff officers.

Like Blackie, British soldiers are bringing new life to towns gutted and deserted in the recent fighting. They have supervised the departure of the soldiers who fought there, and civilians will soon be allowed back to regenerate the devastated land.



Left – Capt Polly Ford has the care of Blackie and her nine pups among her many duties

commanders to hold joint military commission meetings with local corps leaders.

The squadron is divided into its HQ element, a

main troop, forward troop and support

troop.

Main Troop looks after the hotel complex, and equips the commander with his tactical HQ, rebroadcast stations and radio detachments.

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With nine technicians and two power men, SSgt Frank Roberts completely

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PARENTS have for generations recognised the value of boarding school education for their children.

Stability and continuity, high academic expectations and an ordered environment are the qualities which have traditionally attracted Service parents.

And although modern boarding schools have adapted to meet the educational demands of the new millennium, it is those values which will ensure the continuing appeal of boarding.

In a recent survey of boarding parents carried out by the Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS), one Army father spoke for many when he commented:

"While we have missed them, there is no doubt that our sons' boarding school experience, combined with a stable, loving home background, has made them a pair of well-balanced, confident, amusing, worthwhile members of society."

Nearly one in five of the 5,000 parents included in that survey were in the Armed Forces. So, in spite of recent cuts in Service numbers and mobility, it seems likely that the traditional links between many British boarding schools and the military will continue.

ISIS International, the consultancy arm of ISIS, has a special understanding of the needs of Service families: its senior consultant, Wing Cdr John Towey, is a former deputy

controller of the Service Children's Education Authority. He commented: "With so much recent change in education, it is important that parents have up-to-date information and advice about schools.

"Our close and regular contacts with the 600-odd accredited independent boarding schools in the UK mean that we can help Service parents to choose appropriate high-quality schools for their children."

ISIS International helps to place the children of hundreds of overseas parents in British schools each year. Parents choose British independent schools because they are attracted by the high standards of teaching, the good examination results, small classes, supportive pastoral care, a settled, happy environment and a wealth of extra-mural activities.

These are qualities which bind together ISIS-member schools, yet the schools themselves are individual. What makes them different is what a parent needs to discover before making a final choice.

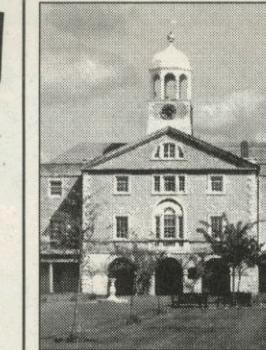
Some are single sex. Some require their pupils to have special skills in music, dance or drama. Some seek children who can cope with competitive entry tests and highly spe-



cialised teaching while others welcome the less academically gifted.

Parents of children with specific learning difficulties need to be particularly careful in ensuring not only that current needs can be catered for but also that the school will continue to develop the child's abilities once the initial remedial programme has been completed.

ISIS has nearly 1,400 schools in membership and its official guide "Choosing Your Independent School" (£7.95) is an invaluable aid. It also gives



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This block of flats was hit by naval gunfire. Its inhabitants fled and the building remains abandoned



This track of sand ran through the middle of the 1st (UK) Armoured Division headquarters which was based in an abandoned date plantation. The Army named it after Aldershot's Queen's Avenue

All quiet on the Basra road

A SHORT row of decaying wooden field latrines stand as silent sentinels in a date plantation south of the Mutlah Ridge in Kuwait.

The collapsing "thunderboxes" are the only visible sign of the 1st (United Kingdom) Armoured Division's occupation of the site at the end of the Gulf War.

Queen's Avenue – the sand track that once bustled with soldiers striding from their accommodation tents to begin a shift in the Div headquarters – is deserted.

Where armoured personnel carriers were laagered, the date trees grow again.

Long gone are the billowing black clouds from burning oilfields that blocked out the sun. Gone too, are the wrecked tanks and trucks of an Iraqi Army torn to shreds by cannon shells and cluster bombs as it fled the advancing Coalition forces.

North-west of Kuwait City, the Basra road rises past a police post on the crest of the Mutlah Ridge. The area is popular with Kuwaitis who have erected huge marquees close to the road. Each weekend they encamp to commune with their Arab heritage.

Five years ago, shocked British sappers stood on the ridge and took in with horror an appalling scene of shattered cars, trucks and tanks stretching for more than two kilometres.

Scattered across all six lanes of the motorway, the vehicles had carried retreating Iraqis. Allied air attacks brutally stopped the exodus.

Centurion AVREs and combat engineer tractors of 31 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 32 Armoured Engineer Regiment RE were tasked to clear the roadway, but first the enemy dead had to be removed.

Shortly after the cease-fire, a Soldier reporting team met a US Army graves registration unit recovering corpses. Each was lifted into a black rubber body bag and carried away for burial.

Further north, mass graves were dug in the wide, central strip of sand marking the motorway's central reservation.

The positions of the graves were accurately fixed by satellite navigation equipment before the information was marked on maps.

Later, a slow drive into Kuwait City itself revealed a capital stirring itself from a deep slumber.

Kuwaitis emerged from hiding to greet each other in joy and stare in disbelief at the destruction around them. Parts of the city echoed to the sound of gunfire as members of the Kuwaiti resistance settled scores.

Now, five years on, most of the detritus of war has been cleared away. Normal life has been resumed. The roads are packed once more with large American cars and four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Few outward signs of the war remain. Those that do are striking.

The Ramada Salam Hotel, once a luxury liner called the *Stella Polaris*, was gutted by fire. Its rusting hulk remains prominent on the shoreline.

The side of a block of flats at Abu Halaifa was torn away by a shell. Since abandoned, a settee hangs precariously from the ruins of an apartment. An abandoned doll lies in the rubble.

A mass of twisted Iraqi armour remains on waste ground beside one of the Kuwait City's several ring roads. Several tanks are balanced on top of one another.

A huge balloon hangs in the sky several thousand feet above a still-wrecked Kuwaiti Army barracks. Anchored by cable, it carries an airborne early warning system to detect invasion-threatening movements by Iraqi troops.

More than 600 Kuwaiti and third world nationals, including women and children, remain prisoners in Iraq. A national committee for the missing and PoW

Report: Laurie Manton
Pictures: Mike Weston



Consequence of war: A child's doll lies abandoned in the rubble of a home destroyed by shellfire. Did its owner survive? Who knows?

affairs continues to campaign for their release.

Five years after the war, Iraq claims it holds no prisoners, despite evidence to the contrary held by the International Red Cross.

A return visit to the battlefields of Kuwait proved strangely disappointing.

Perhaps it was the lack of tangible evidence that a war had been fought, or the absence of war cemeteries.

Maybe the battlefield clearance operations by Royal Ordnance and others had been too effective.

Whatever the cause, when *Soldier's* writer and photographer stood overlooking the Basra road on the Mutlah Ridge and tried to recall the carnage they had witnessed five years ago, they were strangely unmoved.



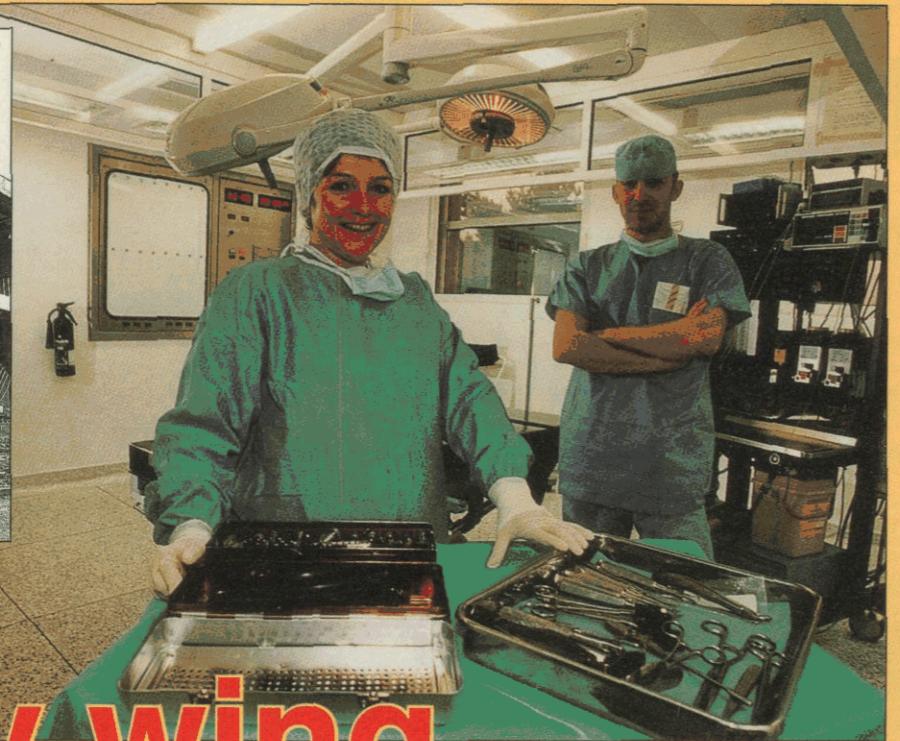
Above: Nothing remains to indicate the 1991 horror of this stretch of the Basra road on the Mutlah Ridge. Right: Then, it was jammed with wrecked vehicles and littered with bodies after US aircraft shot up an Iraqi convoy



An Iraqi tank, one of hundreds cleared from the Basra road, lies rusting in a desert graveyard



The scene in November, 1991, brings home the impact of the explosion on the site of the new Duke of Connaught Unit



Military wing opens at Musgrave

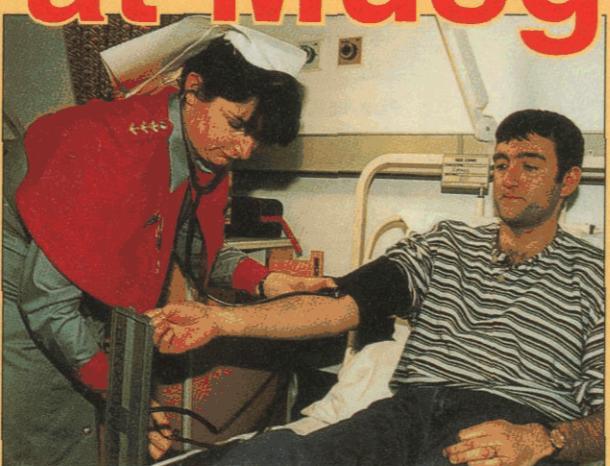
A NEW self-contained military hospital wing – the Duke of Connaught Unit – has been officially opened at Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast, on the site devastated by an IRA bomb in 1991.

The unit replaces the former military wing, badly damaged in a terrorist attack in November of that year, in which two soldiers were killed and a number of other people, including children, were injured.

Terrorists had used an underground passageway linking children's facilities at the hospital and the 58-bed wing (built in 1962) to leave their explosives.

WO2 Philip Cross RAMC and ambulance driver Dvr Craig Pantry RCT died in the subsequent explosion which swept through the basement recreation room.

The blast also destroyed the operating



Left – Patient Rob James is treated by Capt Liz Murray QARANC in the newly-opened Duke of Connaught Unit

nursing and administration staff.

Disruption was limited to the loss of just one day of routine clinics and two days of medical boards, although damage to the wing meant that the admin corridor had to be evacuated while the affected area was rebuilt.

Temporary repairs were carried out and a mobile operating theatre was set up in the wing, pending plans for the Nuffield Wing to be vacated and allow the MoD to carry out total refurbishment.

Facilities in the new unit – opened by Gen Sir Roger Wheeler, GOC HQ Northern Ireland – include an operating suite and headquarters and administration, casualty and resuscitation, physiotherapy and outpatients departments.

Self-contained accommodation for two families visiting injured or ill Service personnel is also housed in the building.

The unit's name commemorates both the Duke of Connaught and St. Asaph, a field marshal and first Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Connaught Military Hospital, which stood in North Camp, Aldershot from 1898 until 1946.

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Cec's challenge upsets the men

LCPL Cecilia Mason has issued a challenge to women sledgers from 18 competing nations to establish a women's skeleton World Cup series.

She made her appeal after she was banned from taking part in the men's World Cup.

LCpl Mason, who is serving with the 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt in Herford, Germany, said: "If nine nations compete in the International Ladies' Cup at Konigssee then the governing FIBT will class the competition as a women's world championship race."

"I'm racing and I hope that the Army can release three other women to help me form a team. Even if we can only get seven nations competing it becomes a European Cup or championship."

In skeleton, competitors reach speeds of 85mph as they race head first down the bobsleigh track on a light 44kg sledge with no brakes. Cec Mason beat nine men in finishing 39th in the first World Cup race at Altenberg on January 15. She was the only woman in the race.

DISQUALIFIED

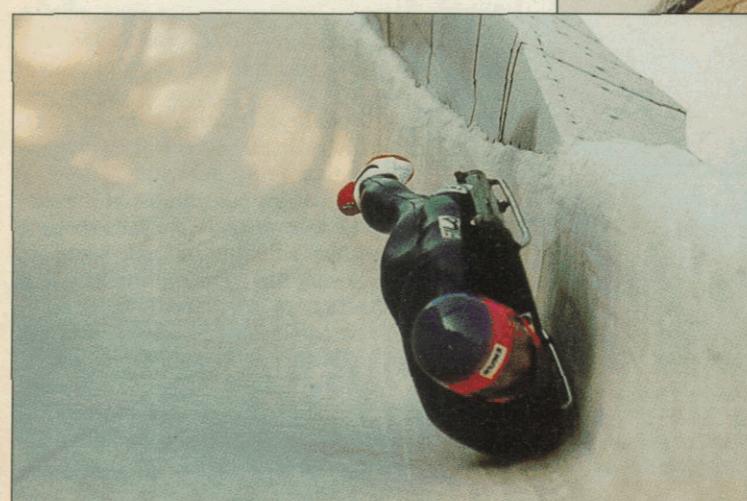
Although three women competed in the 1989-90 season, the IBTA, in keeping with the rules for the related sports of bobsleigh and luge, disqualified LCpl Mason. Officials told her she could take part in other World Cup races only by going first to test the track.

British Bob-Skeleton Association secretary Richard Houghton said LCpl Mason could win at Konigssee. "She is much better, stronger and cooler than many men. She is really amazing as this is only her second season."

Mason is the current British, Austrian and German women's skeleton champion.

Last year an Army team of four men finished fourth for Britain in the World Cup team category and is hoping to compete in the 1998 Winter Olympics. Five of the six members in the national team are in the Forces.

They include Sgt Richard Rochester (40 Regt RA), Cpl Robert Watson (REME Wksps, 47 Regt RA) and Cpl Tim Hathaway (2 Bn REME).



Above – British women's skeleton bobsleigh champion LCpl Cecilia Mason who has challenged other nations to join her in setting up a women's competition on the World Cup circuit.

Left – The ice is never very far away for a skeleton competitor, and it is about to get even closer for Sgt Richard Rochester (40 Regt RA) as he begins to turn turtle on a fast corner at Altenberg



Divided island provides valuable strategic base

CYPRUS, the third largest island in the Mediterranean, lies 40 miles south of Turkey, 60 miles west of the Syrian Coast and 220 miles north of Port Said in Egypt.

Slightly less than half the size of Wales, it has a population of 725,000. Since the attempted coup in 1974, and the invasion of the northern part of the island by Turkey that followed, Cyprus has been divided by a United Nations-manned Green Line.

Britain recognises the Republic of Cyprus which covers the southern two-thirds of the island, but not the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In fact, Turkey is the only nation that does recognise the Turkish enclave. Two Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) - 98 square miles in all - have remained under British jurisdiction since Cyprus's independence in 1960.

The Western SBA encompasses Episkopi Garrison and RAF Akrotiri, while the Eastern SBA, with slightly more than 50 square miles at its disposal, provides a home for Dhekelia Garrison.

The SBAs enable Britain to keep a permanent military presence at a strategic point in the eastern Mediterranean, serving a number of purposes. Akrotiri's airfield is an important staging post, and communications facilities provide a vital link to the UK's world-wide network.

Together, the SBAs provide a base from which Britain could react in the region, and offer training facilities in a hot weather environment.

Episkopi is home to the offices of the SBA administration and the headquarters of British Forces Cyprus. The garrison, commanded by Col Peter Cook, late Queens, contains an infantry battalion and a range of military and civilian support agencies.

The Eastern SBA has a garrison at Dhekelia, commanded by Col Stuart Adlington. Army units based there include an infantry battalion, a Royal Engineers squadron, a REME workshop, an Army Air Corps flight and a supply depot.

Responsible for strategic communications are 9 Signals Regiment and 33 Signals Unit RAF based at Ayios Nikolaos. There is a landing strip at Kingsfield.

British Forces Cyprus is a joint command comprising almost 4,000 Servicemen and women, 2,500 of them soldiers.

Their task is to protect the SBAs and retained sites, operate and defend the airfield at Akrotiri, maintain the radar and communications facilities on the island, and provide logistic support for units training in Cyprus.

Every year more than 3,500 soldiers from Britain get a chance to train in Cyprus. They find the rugged terrain and steamy summer climate invaluable for developing basic military skills and physical stamina.

Britain also contributes 390 troops to the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The command and operation of the British contingent (BRITCON) is UN-directed which means there is no operational link between BRITCON and British Forces Cyprus.

Reports:
Laurie Manton
Pictures:
Mike Weston



All at sea: Rigid raiders carrying Greenjackets speed across the open seas off the Cyprus coast

Greenjackets return to the main stream

WHEN the 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets left Cyprus last month to join the 1st Mechanised Brigade at Bulford, it became the first time for eight years that the battalion had been part of a major field formation.

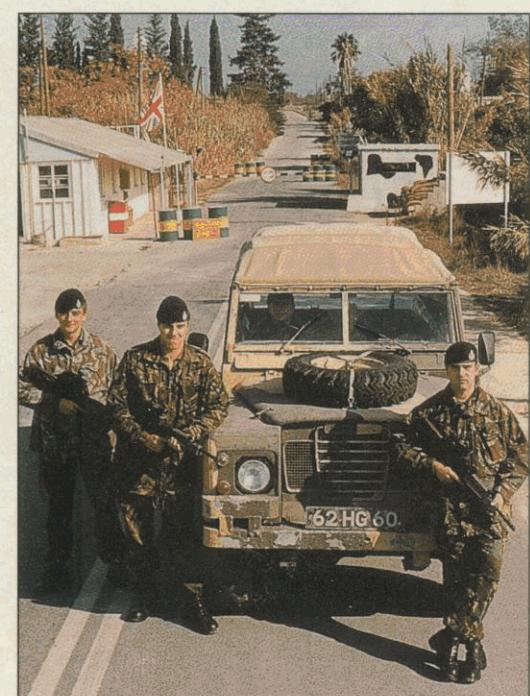
Since 1989 1 RGJ has completed tours of duty in Northern Ireland and Dover and done a stint at Warminster as the infantry demonstration battalion.

"A lot will have changed in terms of attitudes and training in that time, but we are looking forward to the challenge," said its commanding officer, Lt Col Jolyon Jackson.

Conversion to Saxon and a package of individual and collective training will culminate in a full-scale battalion exercise on Stamford training area in May, after which 1 RGJ will start training for a tour in Bosnia.

The last 12 months of the battalion's tour in Cyprus have been full of activity, with many soldiers having the opportunity to train away from the Island.

A Company carried out an exchange visit with Alpini troops in the Italian Alps. The Greenjackets learned Alpine survival skills and took part in long distance marches through the moun-



Quick reaction force at Black Knight checkpoint was provided by Rfn Steve McGuire, LCpl Rob Horner and Cpl Shane Willoughby. Behind the wheel is Rfn Rob Povey



Cpl Dave Stocks and LCpl Les Leslie man the Black Knight checkpoint near Ayios Nikolaos

Right - CO 1 RGJ: Lt Col Jolyon Jackson

tains. The whole battalion was involved in Exercise Golden Sands, a month-long field training exercise on the El Quatrana training area in Jordan.

A magnificent tented camp created in the wilderness by Maj Mike McGarrigle and his staff was the hub of 1 RGJ's activities.

In the initial stages, companies deployed into the desert to live under *bashas* for ten days. Each was attached to a company of

the Jordanian Army's 2nd Royal Mechanised Guards Battalion.

Major events included an ambitious 18-hour live-firing battle run, and a three-day advance to contact which ended in a spectacular attack watched by most of the Jordanian Army Staff.

The battalion provided the best part of two rifle companies for a reinforced infantry company group sent to the Falkland Islands for four months. During an eventful tour the Greenjackets experienced the islands' worst winter since 1904 and one soldier nearly drowned in a swollen river.

Lt Simon Tomkinson received a well-earned commendation for saving his life.

Summing up the tour, Col Jackson said: "The soldiers left behind in Cyprus had to work exceedingly hard."

"With 200 troops away in the Falklands, and 80 personnel under strength, it has been a hard old grind carrying out all the routine garrison internal security tasks and duties that are the responsibility of an infantry battalion here."



Crimp and save . . .

IF ENEMY bombers ever cut communication links at Royal Air Force bases around the world, Royal Signals units would instantly spring into action to repair the damage.

At RAF Akrotiri, 259 Signal Squadron's telecommunication mechanics frequently rehearse the rapid repair of copper and fibre optic cables.

The telemechs are trained to joint and splice cables ranging from two to 100 pairs. Crimping tools might not always be to hand in war, so the specialist tradesmen learn to be adaptable and to use whatever tools and materials are available.

And they have to practise their trade in environments ranging from the extreme summer heat of Cyprus to the cold, biting winds of the Falklands.

And if the job wasn't difficult enough anyway, they also have to learn how to work in NBC suits, a scenario which makes bomb damage repair an uncomfortable, slow and laborious job.

The squadron, commanded by Maj Kevan Thornber, is responsible for the Cyprus fixed telecommunications system and line and radio communications in the Western and Eastern Sovereign Base Areas. Elements of 259 Sqn are based at Episkopi, Dhekelia, Troodos and RAF Akrotiri.



LCpl Lee Stennett and Sig Kevin Powe radio back a report on bomb-damaged cable

Beat of the East

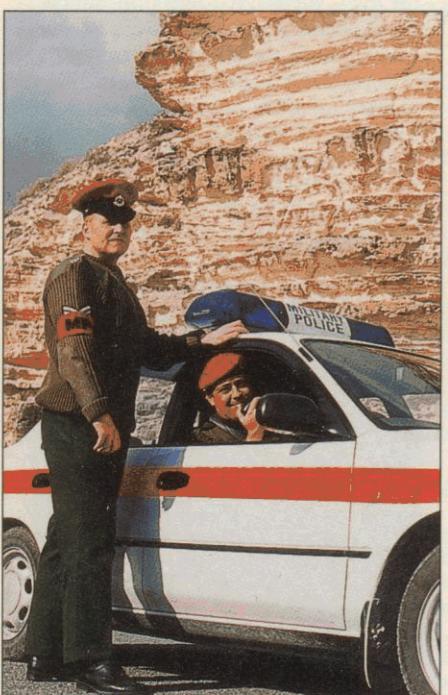
ON TOP of its crime prevention, law enforcement and operational support duties, the Royal Military Police detachment in Cyprus offers soldiers and their dependants round-the-clock assistance, advice and information.

From his Dhekelia headquarters Provost Marshal Maj Paul Watton is responsible for all Special Investigations Branch and general policing duties on the island, and for close protection assets within the command.

"We have military police stations at Episkopi and Dhekelia, each commanded by a garrison provost officer. They respond to offences and incidents occurring within the Sovereign Base Areas," explained Maj Watton.

RMP Cyprus also maintains full-time presences at Troodos station, the Berengaria retained site, Ayia Napa and Pergamos. It is also responsible for provost support to British Forces in the whole of the Middle East and a large slice of the Mediterranean region.

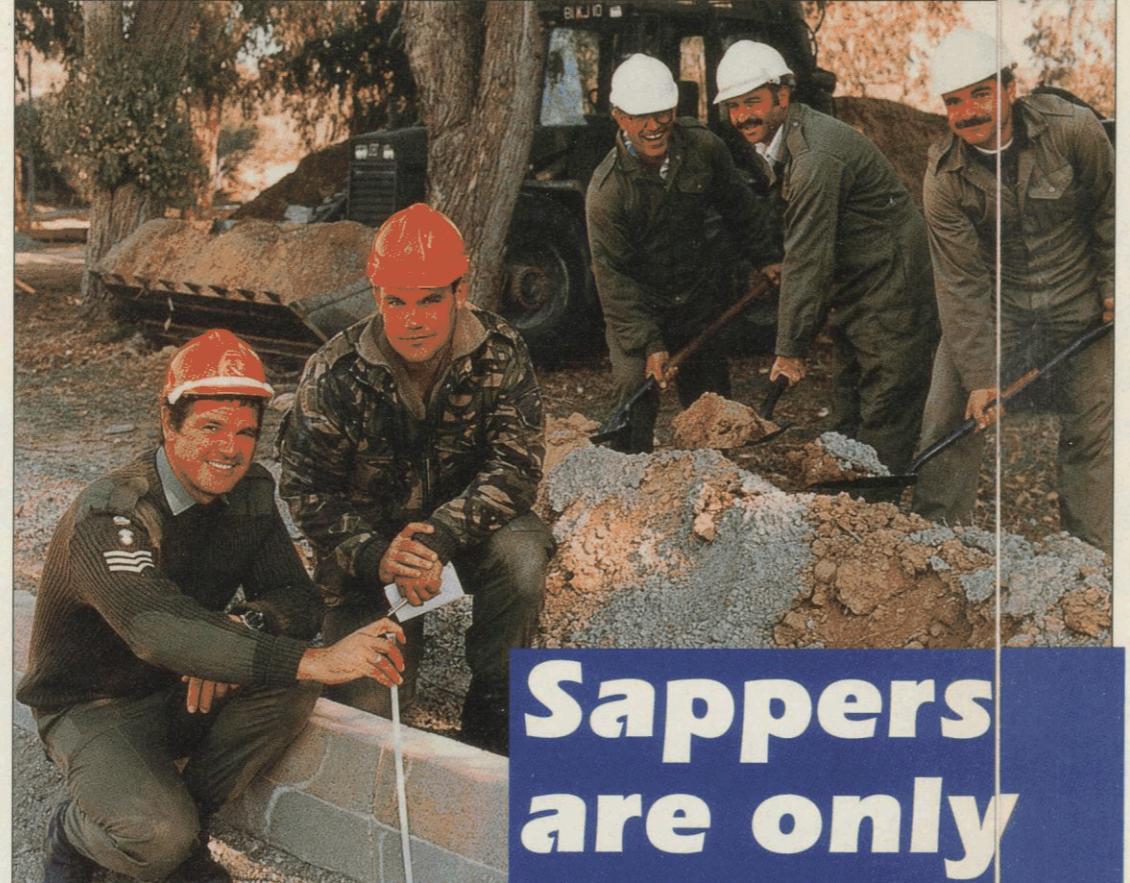
Royal Military Police have served in Cyprus since the Second World War. During the 1956 Emergency, the RMP had sections at Limassol, Famagusta, Larnaca, Kyrenia and Nicosia.



Left - Calling all cars: Cpl Oz Jones stands by as Sgt Tom Richardson radios back for reinforcements



Provost Marshal Maj Paul Watton



As the civilian workers stand by with shovels, military plant foreman Ssgt Chopper Ingham and Cpl Sam Vrean measure up a new car park at Dhekelia Garrison

SOLDIERS from 62 (Cyprus) Support Squadron, Royal Engineers are constantly waging a war to improve facilities for British soldiers and their families in the island . . . in the cause of improving their combat engineering and artisan skills.

During recent "campaigns", they have constructed car parks, erected safety barriers to protect pedestrians, refurbished a playground and laid out a sports pitch.

The squadron maintains teams on-call to meet priority commitments such as high-risk search, small boat operations and military diving tasks.

It provides boats and crews for regular internal security patrols around the Eastern and Western Sovereign Base Areas undertaken by the resident infantry battalions. SBA police and customs units can also request the use of the five rigid raider craft.

Squadron's boat officer Capt Stephen Massetti says the rigid raiders are operated only by sapper-capbadged soldiers and often deploy in support of Lion Sun and other exercises involving beach landings.

The rigid raiders are powered by two 140 horsepower engines, which give them a top speed of 35 knots.

During the winter, 62 Sqn sappers are responsible around-the-clock for clearing snow from the approach roads to Royal Air Force and Royal Signals sites in the Troodos mountains.

During Soldier's visit, an RAF Regiment Land Rover slid backwards into a ravine. Fortunately for the occupants, its progress

Sappers are only too happy to wage war



Squadron boat officer Capt Stephen Massetti (right) with his rigid raider crews. Left to right are Cpl Murph Murphy, LCpl Ian Ashbury, Cpls Glen Lishman, Al Heys and Eddie Edwards and Spr Taff Jones

was halted on the way down by a tree. A 62 Sqn snow clearance team of LCpls Dave McKay and Gaz Bernie and Spr Jock Steven was called out to help.

LCpl McKay courageously took the wheel of the precariously-balanced Land

Flight makes itself useful - above and below the waves

CYPRUS-based 16 Flight Army Air Corps is about to dump some of its unwanted equipment into the sea . . . in the name of conservation.

An old Scout helicopter has been stripped of its interior fittings, fuel tanks and oil pipes, and will be sunk to provide a home for fish.

The unit, commanded by Maj Andrew Gossage, provides aviation support to Headquarters British Forces in Cyprus, involving its aircraft in border patrols, internal security, casualty evacuation and search and rescue missions.

The flight also supports exercises, on and off the island. It recently deployed helicopters and ground staff



Maj Andrew Gossage (front, in flying suit) with members of 16 Flight AAC. The helicopter behind has been stripped ready for dumping in the sea

"We can reach Troodos, 6,400 ft above sea level, night or day.

"Sometimes we have to fly close to the flight 'envelope', which means taking on less fuel or carrying fewer passengers."

UK-based Army Air Corps pilots visit Cyprus each year to gain experience of flying in hot, high climates.

Worn down by heat and fever

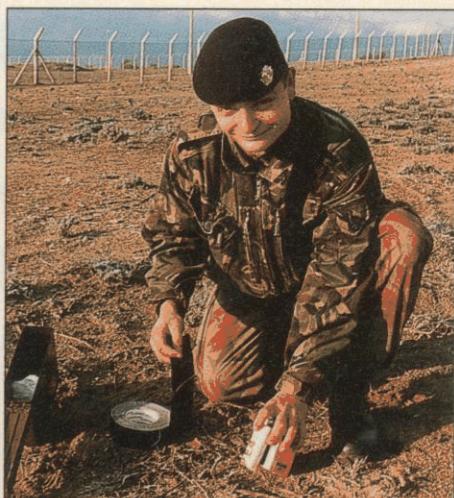
HEAT exhaustion and enteric fever killed many soldiers serving in one of the earliest British bases in Cyprus, at Polymedia Camp near Limassol.

First to be buried in the small British cemetery established north of the town on the road to the Troodos mountains was Sgt James Adams of the Royal West Kents. He was laid to rest on October 23, 1882.

Others who followed included a Russian general and Mary Conway, schoolmistress to the 2nd Battalion, The Essex Regiment.

One headstone records the details of Pte Edward Capel, RAMC, who died in 1899 from a fever contracted while nursing comrades in the Army hospital.

The stone was erected by the officers and men of the RAMC, the Depot Staff Limassol and C Company, 1st Battalion, The Border Regiment as a mark of respect.



Pte Gary Gittens prepares to attach a fuse to a charge of plastic explosive during a bomb damage repair exercise at RAF Akrotiri. He is one of a number of Royal Logistic Corps ammunition technicians and supply specialists who make up the Cyprus Logistic Unit's ammunition troop.

With the exception of specialised RAF munitions, the troop is responsible for all ammunition used by Cyprus-based units. In the past year its personnel have supported the Lion Sun series of exercises on the island as well as exercises in Morocco, Jordan and Kuwait.

They also provide bomb disposal cover in the Sovereign Base Areas.

CYPRUS ADVENTURE - SEE PAGE 28

Serious side to this life of adventure

IF THE mood takes him, a soldier serving in Cyprus can soon find ways to dive to the seabed, hurl himself out of an aeroplane at 10,000ft or cling to a sheer rockface. And all in the name of amusing himself during his off-duty hours.

But the activities on offer to him at the Cyprus Joint Services Adventurous Training Centre (CJSATC), commanded by Maj Len Crawford, APTC, have a serious purpose.

The Army sees challenging outdoor pursuits as ideal for developing loyalty, team spirit, discipline, self-respect, courage, fitness, resourcefulness, adaptability and good humour, all qualities which soldiers must draw upon during active service.

An important

spin-off of adventurous training is that, by boosting confidence and forcing participants to accept responsibility and make decisions, it is an invaluable aid in the development and training of potential leaders.

"We run more than 200 courses a year, but I have only ten staff – five military and five civilians – so

we have to rely heavily on local and off-island units to provide incremental staff," explained Maj Crawford.

The centre, within Dhekelia Garrison, provides training for beginners, potential leaders and instructors in free-fall parachuting, kayak-

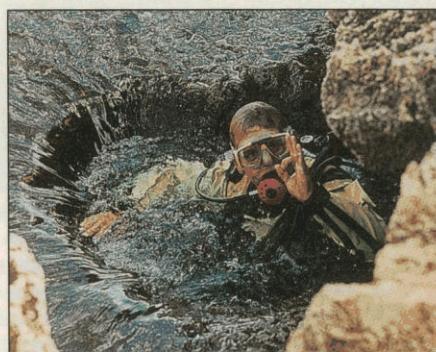


Instructor Cpl Claire Kemp AGC (left) demonstrates the art of abseiling at Cape Greco, watched by Cpl Chris Sayell 1 RGJ

ing, rock climbing, sub-aqua diving, offshore sailing, hang gliding and Nordic and Alpine skiing.

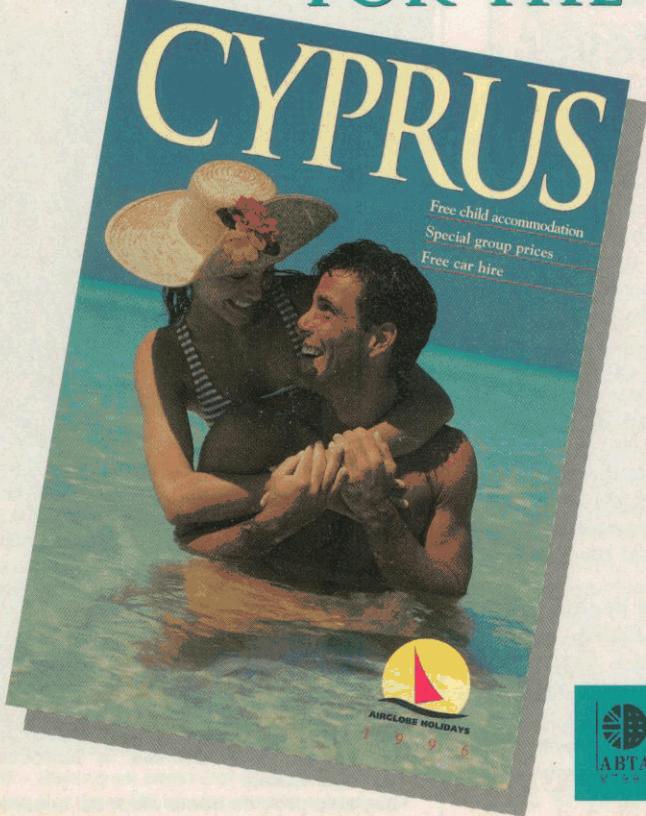
CJSATC staff also provide guidance and training for group adventurous training expeditions.

The centre started running courses for garrison troops in 1982 and was established as a Joint Services facility in 1986.



Cpl Chris Sayell surfaces from a blow hole off Cape Greco

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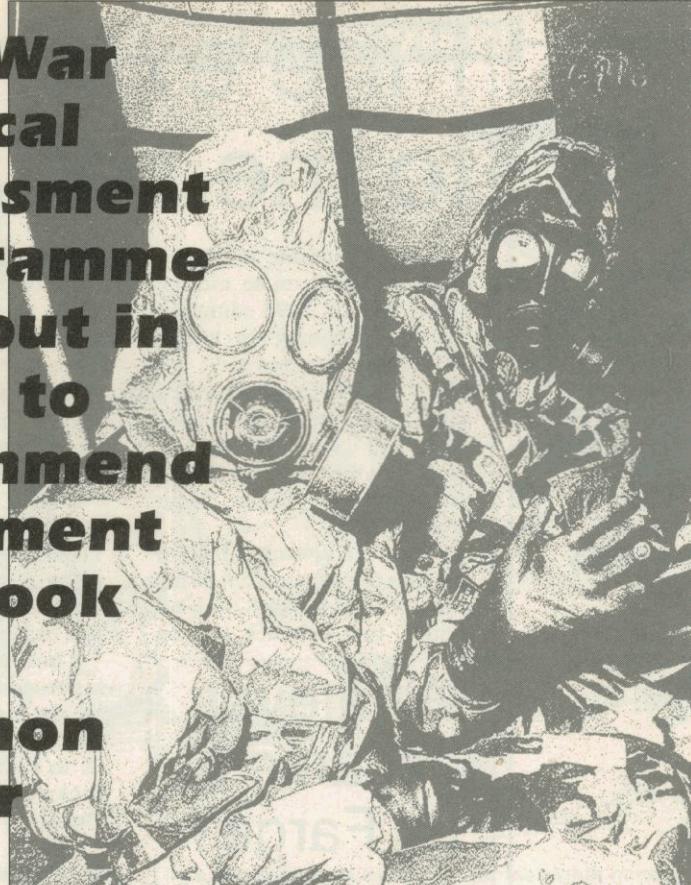
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Gulf War medical assessment programme was put in place to recommend treatment and look for a common factor



If you need help, see your MO

ANY soldier who fears his or her health has been affected by Gulf War service can seek help without jeopardising their careers, writes **Laurie Manton**.

Public assurances have been given at ministerial level that serving personnel who ask to be referred to the MoD's Gulf War medical assessment programme can do so with complete confidence that there will be no repercussions.

The programme is also open to former members of the Armed Forces.

Serving soldiers can get on to the programme by approaching their unit medical officer. Attendance counts as duty.

Ex-Servicemen and women, and serving and former MoD civilians who took part in the Gulf campaign, have to be referred to the programme by their own civilian doctors.

Notes should be sent to Wg Cdr Bill Coker, Consultant Physician, Gulf Medical Assessment Programme, RAF Central Medical Establishment, Kelvin

House, 32-34 Cleveland Street, London W1P 6AU (tel 0171-636 4651 ext 211).

The twin-track programme is designed to provide the patient with a diagnosis of their medical condition and a recommendation for treatment, and to gather medical data to enable the MoD to establish if there is a common factor behind the illnesses and symptoms troubling some Gulf veterans.

Patients are given a full medical examination and undergo tests which can include a full blood assay, urinalysis, X-ray or CT-MRI scan, electrocardiograph, endoscopy and vitalograph studies.

And they can claim reasonable travel costs from the MoD.

Anyone considering referral for assessment is being urged to read the detailed information sheet produced by the MoD. It and other information can be obtained via the ministry's helpline on 0171-305 5087.

New stores CD-ROM system makes life easier for loggies

A NEW CD-ROM system which should transform the lives of Army logistic personnel in units all over the world was launched in Glasgow on January 9.

The hi-tech retrieval system will give instant access to a massive stores database, reducing the time loggies have to spend in finding information about or locating items.



Eric Mitchell of ATSA

The first formal ISIS (Item of Supply Information System) CD was accepted on behalf of the Army by Eric Mitchell of the Army Technical Support Agency (ATSA).

Mr Mitchell said the CD would enable screening of the ISIS database to be carried out instantaneously.

"Traditional screening methods using communications links direct to the database have been unreliable and time-consuming in waiting for access to ISIS. The CD is a major step forward and is entirely compatible with the emerging technologies in the ATSA," he said.

The CD-ROM contains 4.5 million items of supply – plus ten million part numbers – in a complete range of domestic, NATO and foreign identification and code categories.

Units can make ISIS CD applications to Miss E McAnena, DCA Secretariat (A), Room 2203, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow G2 8EX (tel 0141-224 2915, fax 0141-224 2148).

It's a fact

Fewer bands

REGULAR Army bands have been reduced from 69 to 30 in the past three years while bandsmen number 1,162, as against 1,991 in 1990.

Fifty-seven bands have disappeared since 1990 and 18 new bands have been created.

TA bands number 24, the same as six years ago, but there are 58 fewer staff, including 35 bandsmen in each.
– Parliamentary reply.

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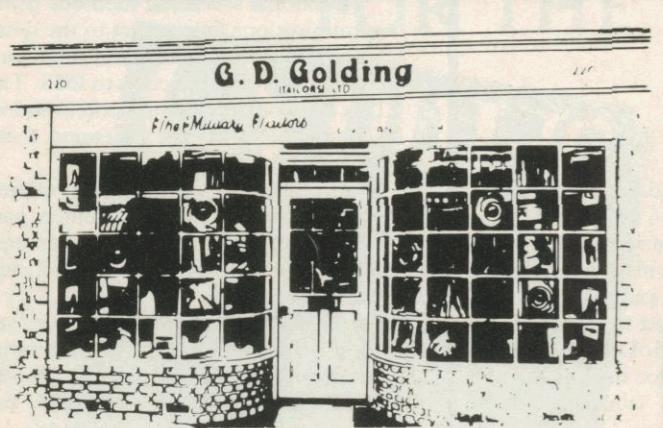
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WRITE TO **SOLDIER ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT HANTS GU11 2DU**

Fine example to the battalion

AN OLD comrade in Devon has just passed on to me the September 18, 1995 edition of *Soldier*, containing an article which has astounded me.

It is Phil Wilcox's interview with Reg Dance, describing his harrowing wartime experiences with the 1st Bucks Battalion, Ox and Bucks Light Infantry.

I was anti-tank platoon sergeant to the battalion. In my retirement (I'm now 82) I have written two volumes on the

Whatever became of Le Farge?

READING the January 22 edition of your excellent magazine I came across the piece on Popski's Private Army.

We of the recce regiments knew about them, of course, but it brought back memories of another band of irregulars – Le Farge and his Goums – who I last saw looking chipper on the Tunisian victory parade.

The Guards showed us all up by sending hundreds of miles for white blando.

Do we know what happened to Le Farge and his Goums?

And in reply to Mr Golder (Letters, Jan 22), we actually had a King's Corporal in our unit. Sufficient to say he wouldn't have been a latrine orderly if he could have been busted. – Don Smith MM, Telford.

BW and QLR neck and neck in honours count

THANK you for the smashing feature on my old regiment, the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, on guard at Buckingham Palace and the Tower (Jan 22).

I also enjoyed Dickie's cartoon on Page 31 of the same issue, but what he should have added to the "notice-board" propped against the sentrybox was the fact that the

YES, WE DO EAT TRPE
NO, WE DON'T HAVE GASLIGHT
YES, WE DO TALK FUNNY
NO, WE DON'T EAT OUR YOUNG
YES, WE DID INVENT:
RUGBY LEAGUE,
BLACK PUDDINGS,
MUSHY PEAS,
ECCLES LAKES...and
BODDINGTONS!
NO, IT DOESN'T ALWAYS RAIN
MANCHESTER...ONLY

Detail from Dickie's cartoon

While The Black Watch has 109 accredited battle honours to the QLR's 106, figures for emblazoned

battle honours tip the balance in QLR's favour. Up to 1991 QLR had 97 of the latter compared with BW's 59. – Editor

history of this famous TA unit.

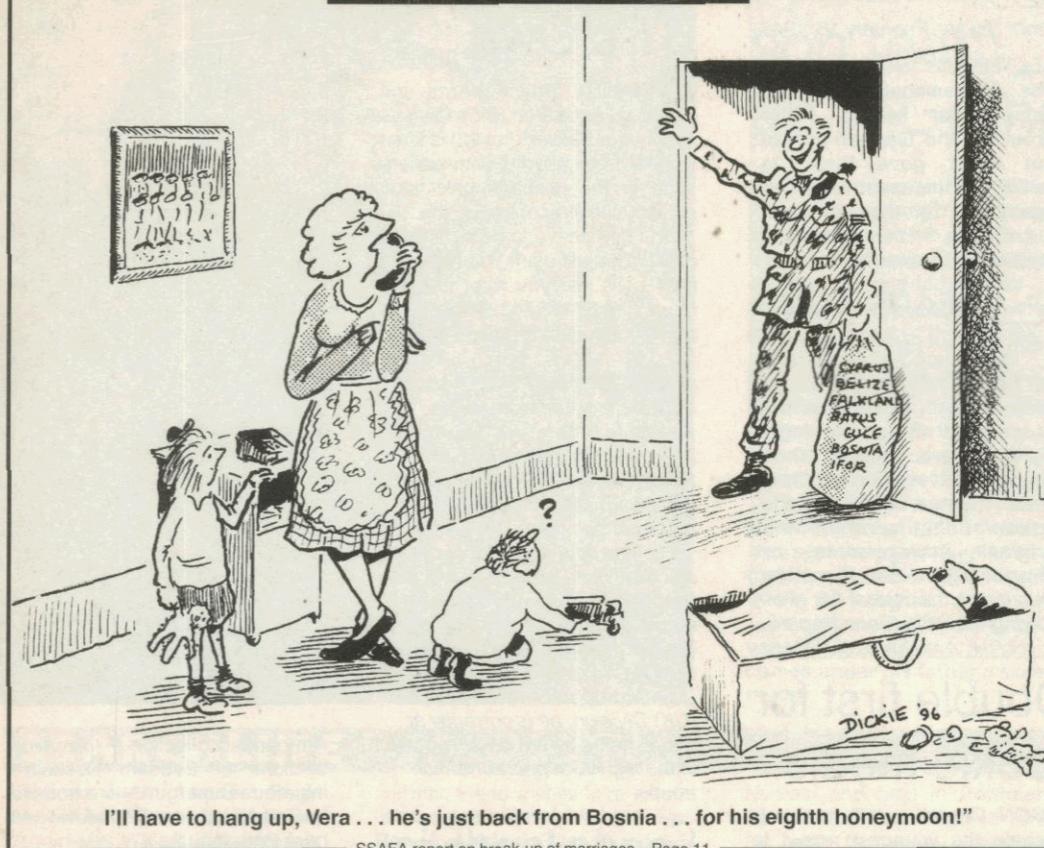
From the wartime photograph you printed I am sure I knew him and would like to contact him. He was one of a number of men who put their names forward when volunteers were sought to join the Special Service Force.

I must congratulate *Soldier* on this article. I know Reg Dance was perhaps one of many Servicemen who underwent such hardship, but what a fine example.

Those of us who are left of his original battalion, and there are not many now, are proud of him. Thank you for enabling us to share his experiences. – Jack Cheshire, Aylesbury, Bucks.

● We have put Mr Cheshire in touch with Mr Dance. – Editor.

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



"I'll have to hang up, Vera... he's just back from Bosnia... for his eighth honeymoon!"

SSAFA report on break-up of marriages – Page 11

AMF(L) gunners have fine record of service in Bosnia

I WRITE to correct a misapprehension which is causing some disquiet among my soldiers. I realise the cause of this problem is the unusual nature of my command, but feel those within it should be given credit in print for the part which they are playing in Bosnia. It has

not been appreciated that for Operation Resolute the guns of 8 Commando Battery, 29 Commando Regiment RA were deployed as part of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) – AMF(L) – Artillery Group, together with 19/5 Bty and HQ/156 Bty.

We feel our contribution, particularly in providing all UK gunner support to 4 Armoured Brigade until D+30, is worthy of mention.

You may recall that the AMF(L) Artillery deployed to Ploce in Croatia as part of 24 Airmobile Brigade in August last year. Having completed two months as part of the Theatre Reaction Force, we left in October to return to the UK for training as the roulement unit on Op Grapple for 19 Regiment RA.

We flew to Bosnia in late November, as BRITARTY-BAT, with 480 men comprising 19/5 Bty, 8 Cdo Bty and HQ/156 Bty, and were deployed on Mount Igman

throughout December, simultaneously supporting the French Multi-National Brigade and 4 Armd Bde after D-Day.

On Boxing Day we redeployed 19/5 Bty and remained in support of the LI and RRF with our two light gun batteries.

The gun batteries occupied more than 130 gun positions between D-Day and D+30. On the arrival of 26 Regiment we have regrouped the entire unit to the discount warehouse between Mrkonjic-Grad and Sipovo and are now providing the Divisional Mobile Reserve with light guns to reinforce the AS90s by road or helicopter in poor weather or remote locations.

The AMF(L) Artillery Group is due to disband this month when 8 Cdo Bty will return to



Lt Col Richard Lungmuss

29 Cdo Regt and prepare for Exercise Purple Star in the USA. The remaining UK Force Artillery, comprising 19/5 Bty and 156/HQ Bty, will remain in theatre until June, by which time we will have completed eight out of the past ten months on continuous operational service.

You will understand that we are exceptionally proud of our achievement in providing artillery support to Op Resolute at a time when the reactivation of the warring factions was uncertain and there was a real element of risk.

I hope you may be able to recognise our achievement in print. I look forward to future editions of your excellent magazine. – **Lt Col Richard Lungmuss RA, CO AMF(L) Artillery Gp, Jezero, BFPO 538.**

Proof in the pikes

I QUOTE from *The Home Guard of Britain* by Peter Graves, published in 1943:

"... a ribald laugh went up universally when it was officially announced that pikes were to be issued to the Home Guard and that they were well-balanced instruments particularly useful for street-fighting.

To many a Home Guard HQ there came bundles of lengths of iron tubing with a bayonet-like blade at one end. Arriving as they did, just when Tommy-guns were being mastered delightedly, their psychological effect was unfortunate.

"Most battalion commanders contented themselves with checking their numbers and storing them away as a bad joke..."

This was in 1941, while a year earlier, before rifles had been made available, a certain Maj Newton in Lancashire had acquired some scrap spindles from old mill machinery which were "turned on a lathe until there was a formidable point at one end. A handle and a sheath were made for each other... many officers carried them whenever they went on duty." – **Robert Waddington, Worcs.**

The British refugees ...

WHILE I do not wish to prolong the correspondence about Hitler's invasion threat in 1941, Mr Golder (Letters, Jan 22) appears to suggest that the contents of my memory are in doubt.

There is much evidence about "trekking" from the bombed South Coast cities, including that of my future wife, who witnessed hordes of people descending on her village.

Much information on this subject is in *Living Through the Blitz* by Tom Harrison, based on reports written for the Government at the time.

As for getting here, the Germans gave us quite a few surprises in the last war. – **M F Reid, St Albans, Herts.**

Star and Garter's birthday party

SPECIAL guests at a reception to mark the 80th anniversary of the Royal Star and Garter Home for disabled ex-Servicemen and women included Falklands veteran Simon Weston (recently appointed a vice president of the home) and Dame Vera Lynn.

An exhibition showing the work of the Surrey-based establishment, an archive section and a doll's house made by residents were on display to 500 guests at London's Mansion House.

Two years into a refurbishment programme at the home, all main services have now been completed and an open ward has been transformed into single and twin rooms.

THE Band of the Coldstream Guards and Trinity College of Music held a joint concert at St James's Church, London W2 last month. The collaboration began several months ago when students were invited to a drill session at Wellington Barracks for an insight into military music-making.

CLOSURES

WOs' and Sgts' Mess, RAF Sek Kong, formerly the British WOs' and Sgts' Mess, Borneo Lines, will close during July. Anyone who made a presentation to the mess and would like it returned should contact the Mess Secretary, Sgt C J Robins, RAF Sek Kong, BFPO 1 by May 31.

Due to closure of 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME on November 30, anyone who has made a presentation to the unit and would like it returned should contact Drawdown Project Officer, 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME, Malaya Lines, BFPO 1 (tel 24837652 or 24837657).

As part of the drawdown of British Forces Hong Kong, 67 Gurkha Indep Fd Sqn QGE will disband on December 31. Anyone who has presented property to the **Jago Arms** (70 Sp Sqn QGE) or the **Sim Simme Bar** (67 Gurkha Indep Fd Sqn QGE) and would like it returned should contact the SSM, 67 Gurkha Indep Sqn QGE, Borneo Lines, BFPO 1 by May 1.

The fund subscribed to by the British officers, WOs and sergeants of 1st Battalion, **Malaysia Rangers** (1963-66) has been wound up. The balance will be presented to the National Army Museum for the purchase of a

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, February 16, 1946

BEETLES ABOUT

The Volkswagen, the £15 saloon car which Hitler promised the German people but never gave them, is rolling off the assembly lines again: not for the Germans, but for the British Army and the Control Commission.

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, February 1971

OPTION TO QUIT

From 1 April, all boys in the Forces will have the legal right to reconsider their engagement terms when they reach the age of 18, and the option of continuing on their original engagements or shortening them to leave the Service at the age of 21. (Following the Donaldson Report).

Double first for rookie medic

SIMON Chandler (17) not only became the youngest recruit to join the Portsmouth-based 243 (The Wessex) Field Hospital – he was also the first.

The TA unit was formed on the amalgamation of 219 and 211 Field Hospitals.

APPOINTMENTS

suitable item to be included in a new exhibition to commemorate the service of British personnel with the battalion.

Combined Services Golf Society Hong Kong wishes to return all trophies to their donors. Donors, or anyone who knows of donors, are asked to contact WO2 (YoS) Steve Bertram, Vice Captain CGS, Hong Kong Gurkha Signal Squadron, BFPO 1 by May 31.

Due to closure of 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME on November 30, anyone who has made a presentation to the unit and would like it returned should contact Drawdown Project Officer, 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME, Malaya Lines, BFPO 1 (tel 24837652 or 24837657).

REUNIONS

Brigadiers: T Dalby-Welsh – To be Comd HQ RLC Trg Gp and Deepcut Gar, Jan 15; D J Wills – To be Comd HQ (11) ARRC Sig Bde, Jan 15; A D Ball – To MoD, Jan 22; L D Curran – To Ord Bd, Jan 22; G L Kerr – To HQ AFCENT (Staff), Jan 25.

Colonels: G J Barrett – To MoD, Jan 15; N S Hunter – To BLO Germany, Jan 19; R A Bencini – To MO UK Sp Unit SHAPE, Jan 22; J E B Smedley – To Staff Coll, Jan 22; K E Ferguson – To 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, Jan 22.

Lt Cols: A A A Beattie PWRR – To HQ Inf, Jan 15; the Hon A J C Campbell, Hldrs – To be CO 3 Hldrs (V), Jan 15; D F Palmer, R Signals – To Royal Sch of Signals, Jan 15; A S Paphitt AGC(ALS) – To 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, Jan 22.

Retirements

Brigadier: A J Stevens, late RA, Jan 24.

Colonels: P S Adams, late RE, Jan 20; J S Houchin, late R Anglian, Jan 16; M A Orwin, late AAC; Jan 16; A G P Meagher, late REME, Jan 29.

Not quite BT's Own

SPECIALIST Territorial Army unit 81 Signal Squadron (BT's Own as featured in *Soldier*, Jan 22) is keen to hear from anyone with experience in the telecommunications industry thinking of joining the TA.

You don't have to be a member of BT, they tell us. If you have the right skills and you want to know more, ring 01225 743240 ext 5314 and ask for an information pack.

AWARD of the Polar Medal for outstanding achievement and service to British polar exploration and research means Maj John Spottiswood RLC will be able to wear the distinctive white ribbon and Antarctic clasp.

He was deputy leader of the Joint Services expedition to Smith Island in 1994-95. Cold weather expertise will not be wasted on Maj Spottiswood at the moment. Serving with the Bulford-based Logistic Support Branch of HQ 3 (UK) Division, he is currently at Gornji Vakuf where he is involved in the logistic support of British troops.

Leeds leads in armoury stakes

A NEW £42m museum to display many additional items to the mere ten per cent of national arms and armour which can be shown in the limited space available at the Tower of London is to open in Leeds.

Described as "the biggest, most exciting attraction in the United Kingdom", the Royal Armouries, making its debut on March 30, will contain many items never seen before on public display.

The development and use of arms and armour over more than 3,000 years will be covered in five themed galleries.

Other prizes in the Royal



Armouries collection – including sections of Saddam Hussein's infamous Supergun – are housed in Fort Nelson on Portsdown Hill near Portsmouth.

More details: tel 0113 220 1999.

Sheet music

DOES anyone remember a paper orchestra created by a Royal Engineer many years ago? Reader J R Holmes, who served in the corps from 1930 to 1944, recalls a colleague, one Spr Wratton, making a violin entirely of paper in 1936 or 1937.

The sapper was apparently given three months' leave from Ismailia and the funds to return home, where he completed a full set of wind instruments out of paper.

A radio concert was arranged, with Louis Levy conducting the orchestra on *In Town Tonight*.

Other prizes in the Royal

RM Condor, Arbroath: Reunion proposed for all RM, RA, RE, RN and RAF personnel who served at Arbroath. Send sae to Dave McCaige, 21 Priory Crescent, Arbroath, Scotland, Jan 16.

The Queen's Regimental Association: Annual all ranks reunion on March 9 at Victory Services Club, London. Tickets (£8.50) from the Secretary, RHQ on 01227 818054 or 818056.

218 Army Troops Company (Royal Engineers): 50th and final reunion at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London on March 16. Enquiries to J Wilkinson, 182 Fulbourne Road, London E17 4EU (tel 0181 531 4973).

Military ball and reunion: Com-

SEARCHLINE

All Arms Junior Leaders Regiment (AAJLR) based at Tonfanau (Towyn-Mid Wales) disbanded in 1966. As far as is known, the only juniors still serving are Maj L Smith and Maj R Martin (Catterick), Maj I McPherson (Newcastle), Maj C Hallam (Larkhill), Maj R Southgate (Middle Wallop) and Lt Col J Lanham (Salisbury). Any others still serving are asked to contact Maj L Smith, QM, 5 Regt RA, Marne Barracks, Catterick Garrison, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 7NP (tel 0115 928 2847).

Chenies Primary School celebrates 150th anniversary in July. Personnel and staff of the Joint Services Staff College/National Defence College at Latimer, Bucks who sent children to the school are asked to contact the school secretary (01923 282546) for details.

D Salter, 71 Common Road, Claygate, Surrey KT10 0HU seeks information regarding Nola, Naples, 5 Bn, No 1 General Regt Trg Depot and accident involving WO2 SSM C Watson, 51 RTR, March 1945; and 100 Gen Hosp, Afragola, Naples.

W F Thorburn, 32 Dotland Close, Eastwood Grange, Hexham NE46 1UF wishes to trace former Italian PoW **Dominico Vacario**, believed to be from Benevento near

bined Services charity ball and reunion will take place at the Oakley Centre, West Street, Crewe on April 20. For details, contact J G Davies, 6 Mavor Court, Crewe CW1 3BL (tel 01270 257092).

138th (City of London) Fd Regt RA Association: Reunion on April 29 at Victory Services Club, London. Details from Frank Flack, 22 Camborne Way, Hounslow, Mdx TW5 0PW (tel 0181 570 5267). Members' news welcomed.

APTC Association (York Branch): Annual dinner on May 17 in Imphal Barracks, York.

Details from Capt D Holling ACF, Hammersley House, 27 Blenheim Road, Barnsley S70 6BA (tel 01226 207046).

RCT Corps UK/BAOR football: Reunion planned at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham, Lincs, June 7-8 for all Regular and ex-Regular person-

nel who represented the RCT at football. Write for details to WO1 Geordie Holden, Headquarters RLC TA, Coldharbour House, Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Lincs NG31 7TJ.

Airborne Ordnance: Fifth annual all ranks airborne reunion will be held on June 14-15 at Fulwood Barracks, Preston. Details from Sgt Kev Lambert, 82 Airborne General Support Squadron, Arnhem Barracks, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2AU (tel Aldershot Mil (722) 4693 or civil 01252 349693).

Combined Ex-Services Association of Bridlington: 15th annual conference and reunion weekend will be held at Bridlington on June 14-16. Tickets (£6.50) are avail-

Father and son team up in Gornji

Col Tim Cross met up with son Alex in Gornji Vakuf and was able to show him how British troops in Bosnia are supplied, transported and fed as they advance into new areas in the north and west of the country.

Col Cross is Commander Logistic Support for British Forces serving with the Peace Implementation Force in Bosnia and Alex is a sub-lieutenant in the Royal Navy.

They met while Alex, currently at Loughborough University, was spending a fortnight on the aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious* in the Adriatic.

He also visited the RLC vessel HMAV *Arakan*, which comes under his father's command.

DATES

February

14-16: Royal Marines' Mountbatten Festival of Music, Royal Albert Hall. Ticket office 01705 547205.

16 – until April 28: Exhibition of George Rodger's photographs from lesser-known Second World War fronts, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (0121 235 1966).

25: Battlefields Trust study day on "The Common Soldier in British Battles", Europe House, nr the Tower, London. Bookings on 01203 350763.

28: Dedication service for memorial to those killed in the Gulf War, St Paul's Cathedral.

March

2: The taking of Pegasus Bridge, a talk by Maj John Howard DSO, Ox and Bucks LI, Airborne Forces Museum (details: 01252 349619).

9: Victorian Military Society fair, New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London WC2, 1030-1630.

May

4-6: Aldershot Show.

11-12: Army centenary international military culinary competition and open day, St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, 1000.

25-27: Overlord '96 military vehicle rally, Southsea, Hants.

June

5-6: Floodlit Beating Retreat by massed bands of Household Division, Horse Guards Parade, 2130.

15: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards. Colour trooped by 1 IG (rehearsals June 1 and 8).

July

9-20: Royal Tournament, Earl's Court.

21: Oxon-Bucks RBL gala day, Stonor Park nr Henley-on-Thames. Details from County Field Officer on 01865 53151.

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

able from the Ticket Secretary, 17 Hustler Road, Bridlington YO16 5RN.

Mosquito unit: Members of 6147th Tactical Group Mosquitos who served with the Fifth Air Force in the Korean War will hold a reunion on July 2-7 at the Crown Plaza Holiday Inn, 1360 Worcester Street, Natick, MA 01760. Contact Bob Gibbons, 49-H Street, Hull, MA 02045 (tel (617) 925-2093).

22nd Cheshire Regiment: First Berlin/Northern Ireland reunion for all who served from 1969 onwards to be held in Chester on August 17. Details from Alan Gregson, 13 Croughton Road, Stoak, nr Chester CH2 4HQ (tel 01244 301564).

ONE DAY IN MAY THAT COST 12,000 LIVES

FIRST World War battles such as Ypres, Loos or the Somme still hold much meaning and emotion for a great many people.

But how many know of Aubers Ridge? Not many, according to Adrian Bristow in *A Serious Disappointment – the Battle of Aubers Ridge 1915 and the Munitions Scandal*.

One reason for the possible obscurity of this battle is

because it lasted just one day – May 9, 1915. But that one day in May cost the lives of 12,000 British soldiers. It was in every respect a bloody fiasco.

Gen Douglas Haig, Commander 1st Army, was the man responsible for the plan, which included frontal attacks by Regular battalions of infantry on an objective heavily defended by machine-guns.

As in many other battles,

A Serious Disappointment by Adrian Bristow. Leo Cooper, hardback, £18.95.

men were cut down before even reaching the wire. Some got through to the German defences, but they didn't last long and Haig was forced to abandon the battle.

While it seems folly to have started it at all, Haig was

plagued by the shortage of artillery shells to soften up the German defenders, guns being rationed to just a few shells a day each, and what guns and ammunition he did have were of poor quality.

Bristow relates a story about War Minister Lord Kitchener who, shortly after the battle of Neuve Chapelle, which preceded Aubers Ridge, told a Cabinet meeting: "Oh, it is

terrible – terrible!" Members asked if the casualties were very heavy. "I'm not thinking of casualties," replied Kitchener, "but of all the shells that were wasted." Such was the thinking of some of the Army's commanders at that time.

This is a fascinating account of a battle, which at the end of that particular day, saw thousands dead without a yard gained. – JM

Harsh lessons of Gallipoli

"FOR ALMOST forty centuries the area known in modern times as the Dardanelles has played an important if fitful part in military history.

"This is the point of access to the Black Sea from the Aegean... Once through the Narrows and the Sea of Marmara there was a further defile to negotiate: the key to this, the Bosphorus, lay in the hands of whoever possessed what is now Istanbul."

Thus the raison d'être of an ill-fated campaign of the First World War is explained by Michael Hickey in *Gallipoli*, published to coincide with the 80th anniversary.

Col Hickey traces the roots of the catastrophe to the remoteness of war leaders in

Gallipoli by Michael Hickey. John Murray, hardback, £19.99.

London, incompetent admirals and generals on the spot, and inadequate resources in terms of supplies and reinforcements throughout the campaign that lasted from March 1915 to January 1916.

The author presents a clear résumé of how Turkey came to be in the war on the side of the Central Powers and a background to the launching of the Allied action, caused largely by an appeal from Imperial Russia to relieve pressure by the seemingly invincible Germany and her allies.

Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, looking for almost any way to break the stalemate in France and Flanders, overrode the advice of the First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Fisher, and persuaded the War Cabinet to sanction a naval expedition to Constantinople, thus eliminating Turkey from the war, and calculated to sustain Russia's war efforts which in turn would draw German forces from the Western Front.

In March 1915 British warships unsuccessfully bombarded the outer forts of the Dardanelles, which alerted the enemy to the threat.

Even so, the naval commander on the spot signalled to Churchill that he still believed his fleet could batter its way into the Sea of Marmara, even without military assistance! This view was not shared in London and preparations to land an invading force were hastily put in hand.

The author begins the history of the landings with an

account of the train crash at Quintinshill on May 22, 1915 in which 215 officers and men of The Royal Scots were killed and 191 injured. They had been on their way to Liverpool to embark for Gallipoli.

Australian, New Zealand, Indian and French troops as well as British formed the army that put ashore on the peninsula over the fateful months. The force included nine British divisions, one of which was the Royal Naval Division.

Throughout the campaign the supply of artillery and ammunition was critically inadequate. The three British

divisions on the peninsula by June should have had at least 300 guns but could muster only 118.

The losses on both sides were horrendous. "Out of nearly half a million Allied soldiers and sailors who served at Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, nearly half became casualties. Over 36,000 soldiers and sailors of the British Empire died..." Turkish losses are not known.

The book is a sincere tribute to the luckless fighting men of 80 years ago who did their best until, in the words of one of them, "beaten in the end by own leaders".

Col Hickey has made this a very comprehensive study, which could have been slightly improved by a summarised chronology. – BJ

Picture: Imperial War Museum



"I can't resist big trucks" says author Pat Ware in his foreword to *Tugs of War*, which he describes as "an unashamed attempt to exploit that weakness." The book, which devotes

172 large-format pages to British Army heavy recovery vehicles, tank transporters and artillery tractors of 1945-65, is a must for the legion of devotees like himself, with its wealth of facts, figures and illustrations, like the Leyland FV1200 above. *Tugs of War* is available only from Warehouse Publications, 5 Rathbone Square, Tanfield Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1BT (tel: 0181-686 2362). It costs £28.50 (inc p & p), or £31.50 overseas.

A must for all truckies

with horns a-whooping in Malcolm Arnold style for the Irish scenes, and what can only be termed widescreen big-country stuff for his arrival in America.

Tribute is paid to Aaron Copland with snippets of his music put together for his 85th birthday – *Fanfare for the Common Man*, *El Salón Mexico*, *The Shaker Tune*, *Hoe Down* and the like – a real tune-teaser (to adapt an old army saying) which leaves you longing for more of each.

Silent Sky is a short piece for piano and band in reflective mood which is a welcome break, along with *The Wind Beneath My Wings*, between excerpts from the film *Memphis Belle* and the aforesaid damp-bustery Second World War tunes under the title *Music for a Tattoo*.

A Gordon Lightfoot Medley comprises three songs made popular by the Canadian singer-songwriter, while *Far and Away* is John Williams's music to the Tom Cruise film

minutes-worth of an hour's programme, and as far as I am concerned beginning with one of the finest works ever likely to be written for band.

It is Buxton Orr's *A John Gay Suite* which, if it wasn't so tricky to conduct and play, would receive more performances.

Gay was of course associated with *The Beggar's Opera*, based on many beautiful tunes from the 17th and 18th centuries; a fragmented *Lilliburlero*, emotional *Golden Slumbers*, and most wistful and nostalgic of all – *Over the Hills and Far Away*.

Sheer magic, even if you find it a little demanding at first.

Music / Rodney Bashford

● **On the Quarter Deck** – The Stadacona Band of the Canadian Navy. Conductor: Lt P L van der Horden. Bandleader CD BNA 5113 £12.00, cassette £7.60, from Sound & Picture Co, PO Box 177, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5FE.

● **Silent Sky** – Air Command Band Canadian Forces. Conductor: Capt T O'Connor. Bandleader CD BNA 5100 and cassette, as above.

Heart of Oak rounds off a very acceptable programme, well played, arranged, and compiled.

MORE MUSIC from Canada with *Silent Sky*, this time with tunes we are (too) familiar with from our own RAF bands. Fortunately only about eight

All-in-one history of infantry regiments

English and Welsh Infantry Regiments. An Illustrated Record of Service 1662-1994 by Ray Westlake. Spellmount, hardback, £30.

THE PUBLISHERS describe this book accurately as a unique record of the campaigns, overseas service, battles and engagements of the English and Welsh line regiments created in the Army reorganisation of 1881 in a single, all-embracing volume.

As a point of fact it also includes home service. Scottish and Irish regiments were recently covered in books by P Mileham and R G Harris respectively.

The content is mainly a chronological record of the regiments' stations and battles, which have been extracted from Army lists and regimental records, together with a brief reference to the devices used on the badges, the colour of the uniform facings and the principal nicknames by which they were known.

This book obviously produces a quick answer to names, locations or devices, but as the author readily accepts, further detailed research would be necessary in regimental histories.

It is impossible to check all facts for accuracy but there are bound to be some omissions, such as in the case of The Royal Sussex Regiment, where no reference is made of its location in Belfast 1959-61, the city in which it was formed and which granted it its Freedom in 1961.

The choice of illustrations, of which there are roughly seven per regiment, is excellent and various but sadly the reproduction of some lacks clarity and definition although the overall impression is good.

It is a sad reflection on the recent changes in the Army that only four of the 51 regiments listed remain in the current Order of Battle. In spite of this, the book is thoroughly recommended to the general public and military buffs alike. – PSN

BOOK BRIEFS

Who Won the Malayan Emergency? by Herbert Andrew. Account of the events of 1950-64 – the bloody battles between terrorists and security forces and the roles of the police, Chinese, Malays, Gurkhas, and Gen Templer. Gazelle Book Services Ltd, Falcon House, Queen's Square, Lancaster LA1. Price £7.99.

Little Brother by David Mason. Second thriller by the former Welsh Guards officer, author of the best-selling *Shadow Over Babylon*, which netted a million-dollar film deal. This one deals with an international assassination attempt. Bloomsbury, hardback, £15.99.

The Search for Lee Harvey Oswald by Robert J Groden. Large-format photographic biography of the sinister figure whose life and deeds still excite curiosity, three decades after the Kennedy assassination. Bloomsbury, hardback, £20.

Gunners to the rescue for Bosnian girl's op

MEMBERS of the British element of NATO's Allied Command Europe Mobile Force Artillery Group serving in Bosnia with IFOR dipped into their pockets to ensure that Akja Ripotak, a 13-year-old local girl with a spine deformity, and her mother, could travel to Germany for an operation.

"It was impossible to turn away after meeting Akja and her family in their remote community in the hills," said Lt Chris Hart, an officer in AMF(L) Arty Gp.

"On our first visit there, we were met with a mixture of fascination and fear.

My interpreter and I sat in the family's front room and were slowly joined by what seemed to be the whole village."

Born with a spinal deformity, Akja had steel plates inserted in her back several years ago to correct the problem, but as she has grown, these have begun to exacerbate the problem – making an operation essential.

A German woman had already raised the money needed to secure the operation and a rehabilitation course in a German clinic, but the family could not afford the fare to Frankfurt.

Overnight, the soldiers at their Gornji Vakuf base raised DM700 to add to DM500 contributed by local workers,



Akja Ripotak



Pulling power

Detainees from the Military Corrective Training Centre, Colchester, display a cheque for £1,118 raised for the Children in Need appeal – the result of their Her-

culean efforts in pulling a 4-tonne Army truck around St Michael's married quarters estate, persuading local businesses to support them in the process



Putting their collective best foot forward in a good cause were ten members of Alnwick-based W Coy, 6th (Northumberland) Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. Among those (pictured with children from Whittingham First School) who took part in a 50-mile sponsored relay run around local villages which raised more than £350 to help the school build an adventure playground were (left to right) Cpl Mark Reynolds, Cpl John Leddy, Fus Charles Pottinger and LCpl Meg Tindall.

to send the couple to Germany.

"It was worth every second, and every Deutschmark," said Lt Hart. "We knew we had done the right thing."



The cheque being held by Stephanie Barter, treasurer of the Cancer Research Campaign, bears the name of Bdr Taff Morgan, whose contribution to a total of more than £2,000 raised for the charity was to achieve 5,001 non-stop sit-ups.

Fellow members of Aldershot-based 7 (Para) RHA, led by Cpl Lee Dawes, swelled the total by creating a new abseiling record of 39 miles. Pictured outside the 7 RHA Officers' Mess are (left to right) Bdr Morgan, Lt Col Chris Brown RA, and Cpl Dawes.

Picture: Mike Weston

included an open day for families of staff and a sponsored half marathon run by three soldiers.

Capt Bob Meldrum, Director of Music, the **Minden Band, Queens Division**, presented a £500 cheque to Diana Hawkins, Regional Officer for United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

Military and civilian staff at the Army's **Base Vehicle Depot** at Ludgershall have raised £1,000 for the Douglas Arter Centre in Odstock, which cares for adults with multiple and profound disabilities.

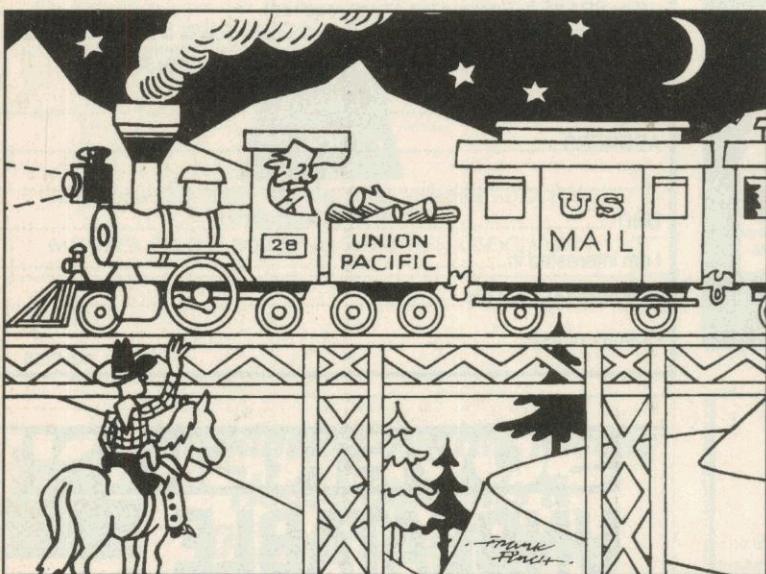
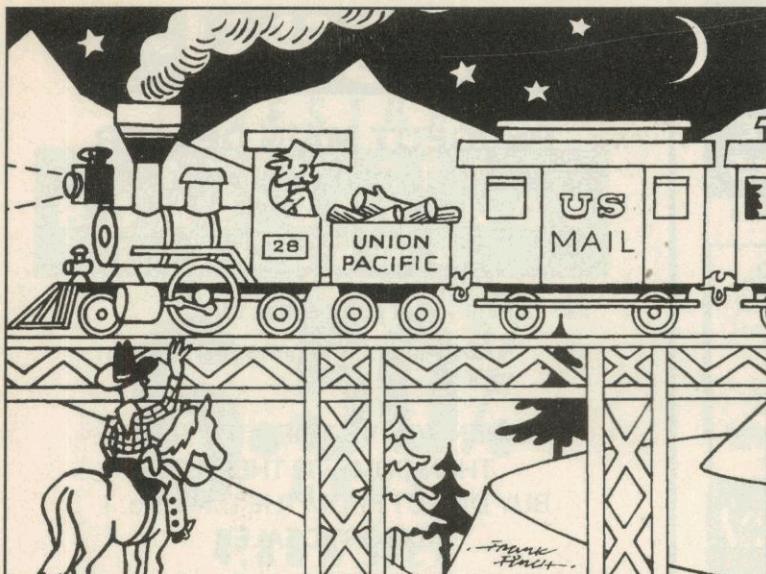
Events organised to raise the money – handed over by Maj Steve Jenkins, depot OC –

More than £1,000 is expected to be raised for Liverpool's Alder Hey Children's Hospital and St James's ("Jimmy's") Hospital in Leeds, and towards a forthcoming unit expedition to Nepal, thanks to a sponsored walk by 11 members of 208 (L) **Field Hospital (V)** along the 127-mile Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

Despite blisters, fog and bitterly cold conditions, the teams, starting in Leeds and taking it in relays, made it to Liverpool's Stanley Dock over the course of a weekend.

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Competition No 627 (Jan 8 issue): Congratulations to Mr S Matthews, of Ramsgate, Kent, who wins £50. Book prizes go to runners-up 2nd Lt F E Galbraith, 1 WFR, Lucknow Barracks, Tidworth, and Maj Mitchell, of BFPO 801.

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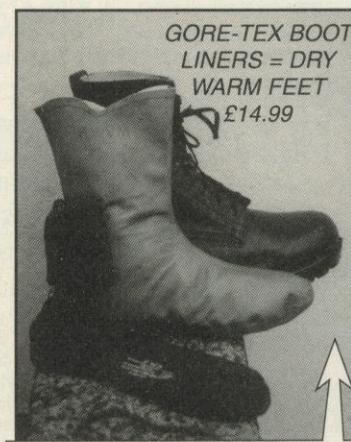
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Sara, 31, 5'4", slim, blonde hair and brown eyes. Own car and home and professional career. Enjoys swimming, skiing, pubs, clubs, cinema and music. Would like to write/meet persons home or abroad aged 28-38. All letters answered. **P616** 04/96

Helen, 30, single, 5'1", blue eyes and light brown hair. Lives in Yorkshire and wishes to write to a lonely soldier, aged 30 plus. **P617** 04/96

Elaine, 23, 5'3", medium length black hair. Enjoys reading Stephen King and Tom Clancy books, music, cycling, walking and writing letters. Seeking pen pals aged 25-30. **P618** 04/96

Jay, 5'4", smiling green eyes and wavy brown hair. An aromatherapist and teacher with a SOH and adventure. Enjoys swimming, skiing, photography, reading, walking and music. Seeking pen pals aged over 30. **P619** 04/96

Lisa, 32, 5'6", with dark brown hair and brown eyes. Single mum with a six-year-old daughter. I enjoy the cinema/theatre, swimming, going for walks, clubbing and most kinds of music. Seeking genuine male pen pals aged 32 plus. Photo appreciated. **P549** 04/96

Alexa, 27, 5'4", long dark brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys swimming, badminton and history. Seeking pen pals aged 27-32. **P605** 04/96

Rhonda, 25, 5'5", medium build, dark hair and dreamy blue eyes. Single mum who enjoys videos, pubs, cinema, cosy nights in and having fun. Seeking pen pals aged 20-35 with GSOH. I want someone to bring some sunshine in to my life. **P606** 04/96

Tall, intelligent, fun loving female, 29. Seeks tall, single, sincere soldier with SOH and adventure, to rescue her from uninteresting civvies. Interests include sport, travel, music, good company and good times. **P607** 04/96

Gary, 28, 5'5", average build. Ex TA soldier who enjoys keeping fit, eating out, cinema and everything military. Seeks female Regular soldier, aged 18-30, for correspondence, friendship. Photo appreciated. **P608** 04/05/96

Catherine, 25, 5'7", long blonde hair, green eyes, slim build and GSOH. Enjoys drinking, dancing, playing all sports and especially going to the gym. Seeks male pen pals aged 28-35. **P609** 04/96

Clare, 26, 5'6", slim build, black hair, dark eyes and olive skin. Graduate and qualified French teacher, speaks fluent French and Japanese. Entrepreneur, now setting up a twins theme cafe with twin sister. Seeking pen pals aged 25-35. **P610** 04/96

Carol, 38, 5'7", divorced Staff Nurse with GSOH, auburn hair and blue eyes. Enjoys swimming, travel, socialising, reading and music. Seeking pen pals aged 35-45. **P611** 04/96

Ann, 47, 5'7", auburn hair and brown eyes. I enjoy music, walking, swimming, dancing and computer studies. Coming from a military background I appreciate the role of correspondence and contact with civilian life and would like to write to anyone aged 47-57. **P612** 04/96

Antonia, 21, 5'8", slim with brown hair. Enjoys gym, netball and nightclubs. I am a secretary, live at home with my parents and have my own car. Seeking pen pals aged 20-30. **P613** 04/96

Hi, my name is Mandy, 32 years old, with short brown hair, brown eyes and divorced with a daughter. Interests include Arsenal Football Club, vodka and generally socialising. Would love to hear from any single soldier aged 28-40 with GSOH. **P614** 04/96

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D8

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JANUARY 20, 1996

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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JANUARY 27, 1996

68 way tie for first prize (21 goals, £88.24 each): Lt R C Barrett, 32 Regt RA, Larkhill; WO1 K Black, 12 Sup Regt RLC, BFPO 44; Lt Col A W Blackett BMATT Zimbabwe; Cpl T Boyd, QRH, Catterick; Capt R E C Brewster, 133 Wksp Coy REME (V), Ashford; Ssgt S Briggs, HQ Mil Works Force, Chilwell; Capt A Buckley, HQ Land, Wilton; SSgt R C Burch, 2 RTR, BFPO 38; Cpl R P Butler, 2 CS Regt RLC, BFPO 47; Cpl A R Carr, 3 RHA, Topcliffe; SSgt E W F Chadaj, 47 Regt RA, Thorney Island; Sgt M R Champion, SEME, Bordon; Sgt C P Charley, SEME, Bordon; Cpl M W Christopher, 40 Regt RA, BFPO 30; LCpl J Clarke, MOD (A) Medical Centre, London; LCpl D S Cooper, 24 Tg Sp Sqn RE, Chatham; Sgt E J Crossland, 2 RRF, Chester; WO2 P A Cuthforth, 16 Signal Regt, BFPO 40; SSgt I E A Davis, 16 E Shoeburyness; WO1 A E Day, HQ UKSC (G), BFPO 140; Maj R J C Eaton, HQ Trg, Upavon; Cpl R M Evans, Cyprus DASU, BFPO 58; LCpl D R Fermor, 1 RWF, Chepstow; Cpl S J Fitzsimmons, 38 Engr Regt, Ripon; LCpl A J Gadsby, BFPO 825;

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D3

Ski-bikers make clean sweep of British honours

ARMY ski-bikers swept all before them at the British national championships staged in the beautiful Swiss village of Adelboden, writes George Attard-Manche.

Cpl Neil Pollitt (7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn) won the men's individual title for the first time while Cpl Vicky Hardisty (16 Sig Regt) retained the British women's championship.

The national event was combined with the Swiss ski-bike national championships, with two runs of a very technical giant slalom course and a quick Super G deciding the outcome. Swiss and British raced over the same courses, making it possible to assess their respective standards.

Defending British champion Graeme Spence of Scotland, Cpl Paddy Maybin (16 Sig Regt) and Pollitt were the main contenders, while young Ray Power, son of an airman, posed an outside threat.

DISQUALIFIED

Spence missed a gate on the tight, fast giant slalom course and was disqualified, but Pollitt's time was bettered only by the two top Swiss competitors. Maybin pulled out all the stops on the second run to head Pollitt by a fraction over four seconds and win the giant slalom.

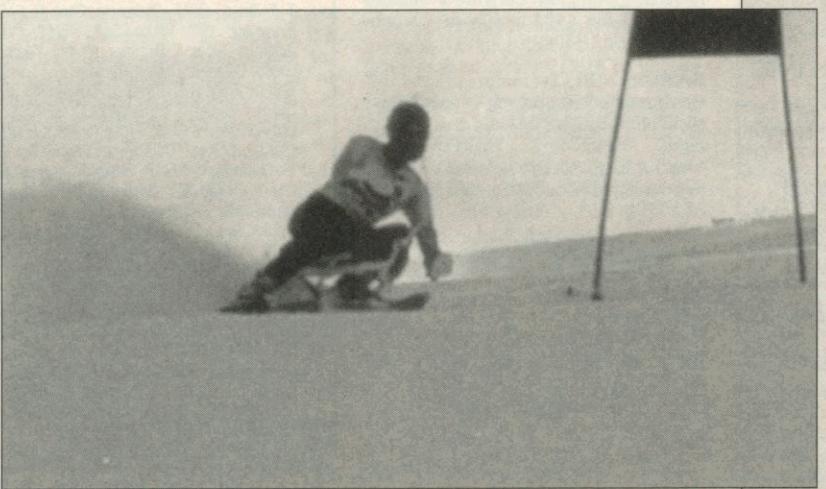
Maybin threw caution to the winds in the deciding Super G set over 1,390m of icy, hard snow and a 315m drop.

But a spectacular crash at the bottom of the slope brought his challenge to an abrupt end and Pollitt sensibly took full advantage to claim the national title.

Hardisty, in a class of her own among the British competitors, won both her races as she pleased and was beaten on the clock only by the Swiss women's champion.

Sgt Jane Robinson (10 Tpt Regt RLC) was second.

Army Ski-Bike Club president Lt Col Richard Platt (MoD(PE)) set a fine example by finishing second in both races. In both he achieved times which were faster than



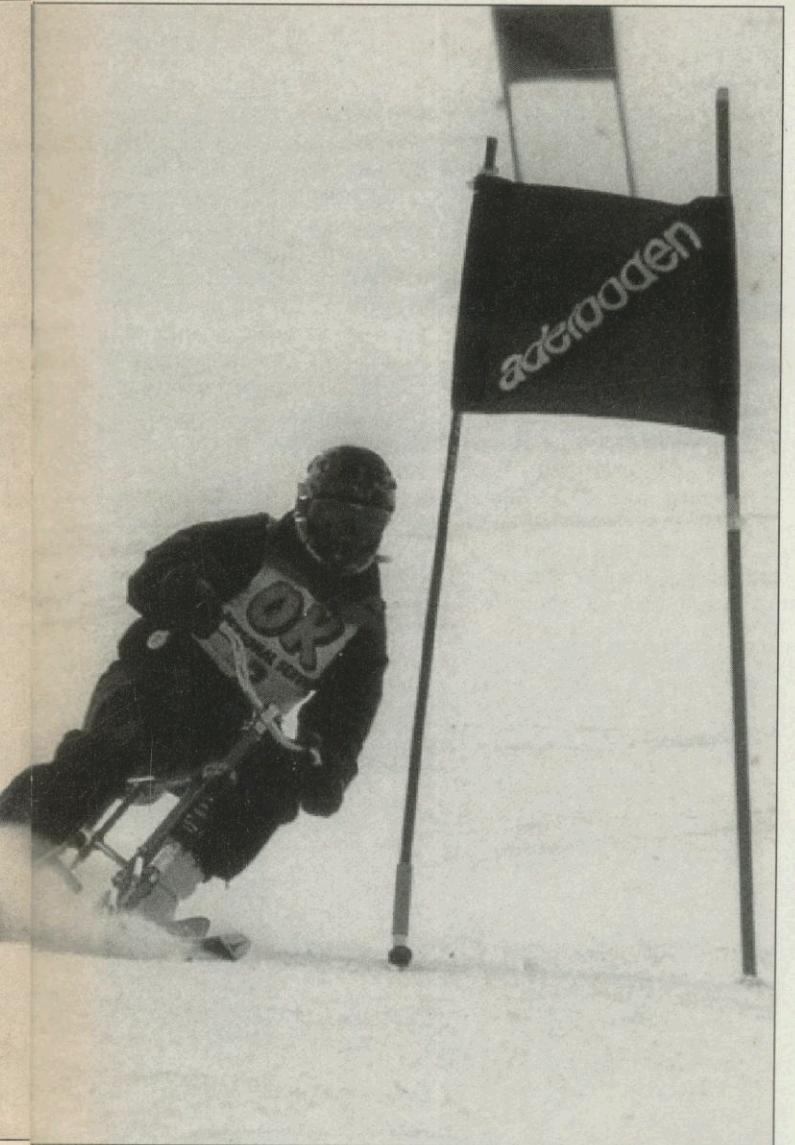
many set in the open races.

The top three men and two women will represent Great Britain in the World Championships at Willach in Austria.

Above: The British men's élite champion, Cpl Neil Pollitt, attacks the course at Adelboden. Right: Cpl Vicky Hardisty on her way to the Great Britain title



Members of the GB ski-bike team: (back row, from left) Sgt Docherty, Lt Col Ric Platt, Kevin Rochfort of the Ski-Bike Association of GB, and Graeme Spence; (second row) Cpl Paddy Maybin, WO2 Rushton and Cpl Eyes; also in the picture are Swiss ski-bike instructors who assisted the squad



Spirited U-21 effort sweeps RAF aside

Army U21 27-RAF U21 10

AT LAST the small but loyal squad that has made up the Army Under 21 rugby squad has something to celebrate, writes Tom Wye.

After a season dogged by injury, unavailability due to operational commitments, and the refusal of some players to turn out for the Service, the side came good during a convincing 27-10 win over the RAF.

Following defeat at the hands of the Royal Navy the previous week, the Army players were nevertheless confident after thorough preparations and positional changes forced on the team.

The red-shirted Army simply engulfed their light blue opposition, forcing them to concede penalties. Spr Griffiths soon kicked two to give the home side a 6-0 advantage.

On the half hour Pte Morris (injured ankle) was replaced in the back row by Fus Jones, and although the RAF converted a penalty, the Army finished the half strongly when Griffiths responded with two more before the effects of an illness forced him to leave the field.

Skipper Pte Bovill kicked another penalty soon after the re-start and the tenacious Pte White, an ever-present at full-back, crashed over for a try which Bovill converted. Fus

Winning Div

THE 4 Division women's football team got off to a winning start against a combined London District-Northern Ireland side in the inter-formation Mandrake Challenge competition.

They beat London-NI 7-1. An opening round win was also recorded by 3/5 Division who beat 2 Div 2-0.

The RLC women's side was evenly matched against Abbey Rangers in their Southern League Division 2 clash but had to settle for a 4-4 draw after conceding two goals in the last few minutes.

Miles put the Army 27-3 ahead when he forced the ball down after heavy pressure by the pack.

A late RAF try did nothing to temper the joy of a fine win.

The shield was presented to Fus Kemble by chairman Lt Col Bill Withers who also presented colours to 21 Army players. Spr Hughes received the Player of the Season shield and a tankard.

Diary dates

Cross country

Training Regiment and Depot RLC will host the fifth inter-corps cross country championships at The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut, Surrey on February 23.

Rugby

The annual clash between the Army and the Royal Navy for the Willis Corroon Trophy takes place at Twickenham on March 30. There is a prize for the best regimental or mess tent erected in the car parks and tickets are available in advance from the Secretary ARU, Clayton Barracks, Aldershot GU11 2BG (01252 348573) or at the gate on the day.

Fell running

Service units are being encouraged to enter the 30-mile Manx Mountain Marathon being staged on the Isle of Man on April 6. Teams from Larkhill and several UOTCs took part in the 1995 event. Details from the secretary, Arthur Jones, 97 Silverburn Crescent, Ballasalla, Isle of Man IM9 2ED (tel 01624 822286).

Canoeing

The Army sprint and marathon canoe racing championships are to be held on the River Wye at Monmouth, South Wales, over the weekend July 20-21. The sprints will be over 500 and 1,000m, the marathon over distances varying from five to 12 miles depending on class and ability. Entry forms from Capt Duncan Capps RLC on Camberley (726) 2506, fax 2595; civil 01276 412506, fax 412595.

Pacey sappers outstrip REME on ARL debut

REME 12, RE 26

THIS meeting of REME and RE at SEAE Arborfield was the first time either corps had played the 13-man code.

Under the eye of new Army Rugby League chairman Lt Col Mike Bowman REME, both sides featured several representative players with much to prove to the selectors.

REME scored first when Sgt Kev Naylor touched down after a well-executed move, and the sappers hit back when Spr Bruno Green scored in his first League game.

In a stern forward battle many big hits went in, particularly from SSgt Richard Naivalurua (REME) and Sgt

Richard Nelson (RE). The sappers took a 12-6 lead when Cpl Ritchie Thomas nipped in to complete the first half scoring. The second period produced Rugby League of the same relentless ferocity.

Cpl Eugene Kelf, the sapper captain, scored the first of his two tries to open the gap, but REME soon retaliated with a Naivalurua try which was converted. LCpl Darryl Cooper's long-range effort for the sappers completed the scoring.

The sappers had the edge in pace and the man of the match award went to Nelson for his outstanding performance. Kelf and Sgt Tim White (REME) were outstanding in defence.

Para sappers win high-grade final

9 Para RE 25, 15 Regt RLC 9

A ROBUST and high-quality ARU Minor Units Challenge Cup final was won 25-9 by 9 Para Sqn RE.

Defending champions 15 Regt RLC were a much-depleted side compared to 1995 when they so convincingly beat the Infantry Training Battalion Strensall.

Postings, Bosnia and "resources re-allocation" had all taken their toll, although the logistics side put up an excellent fight on the coldest afternoon of the season.

The sappers were blessed with having two former Army

players in key positions, Maj David Hudson at fullback and Capt Bobby Matthews at hooker. They were well-drilled and started confidently, the pack securing a regular supply of quick ball.

Cpl Mark Walker at scrumhalf selected his options well

MINOR UNITS FINAL

and never let go the pressure button. This led directly to lengthy territorial advantage and Hudson's first penalty which gave the sappers a 3-0 lead.

No 8 SSgt Vince Lithgo scored an excellent try, con-

verted by Hudson. In a period of relative equality, the sappers conceded a number of needless free kicks mainly against hooker Matthews. Later he compensated by taking several balls against the head, one of which resulted in a try by centre SSgt Lindsay Horton.

The sappers' ability to recycle the ball swiftly put 15 Regt under constant pressure.

The game was always passionate, frequently frenetic and usually skilful, but 15 Regt had little ball and found it difficult to create attacking momen-

tum.

Their brave tackling, however, prevented 9 Para running away with the match.

Further unconverted tries were scored by Capt Mike Fuller and Capt Paul Fontaine.

This was an excellent final. While the 9 Para approach was more dumper truck than Aston Martin, they nevertheless played spirited, accurate rugby, keeping the ball alive at vital moments to score four good tries.

They last won the cup in 1982 but will not be able to defend their title next season because of an exercise commitment in Kenya.

Horse Gunners wobble, but not for long

7 (Para) RHA 27, 4 GS Regt 11

PREDICTABLY, 7 (Para) RHA beat 4 GS Regt RLC in the LEX Major Units Army Rugby Challenge Cup final, writes Roger Thompson.

While the Horse Gunners' forwards dominated territorially, their backs failed to sparkle against a loggy side who played to their potential, particularly in defence, and scored an excellent try at a time when they should have been beaten beyond sight.

The gunners started energetically, the forwards taking control through Fowers, Wood, Coghlan, Dahinton and Brooks, who had an excellent all-round game.

With skipper and scrumhalf John Denwood barking at the heels of his pack, it was possible to imagine the scoreboard team being the busiest people in the Aldershot Stadium.

However, little went right outside Denwood, flyhalf Rory Jones appearing obsessed with shouting "two lines" - much to the confusion of both sides.

Wilcoxson made valiant efforts to create a bridge in the centre against a rapidly advancing 4 Regt defence, and



Picture: Mike Perring

Action from the Minor Units Rugby Union final at Aldershot. Cpl Mark Walker, the 9 Para Sqn RE scrumhalf, looks up before passing to No 8 SSgt Vince Lethgo

Bramble once more showed that

MAJOR UNITS FINAL

in the past, the forwards

stirred at the crucial moment. They reverted to a series of fearsome drives led by Dahinton and Brooks, and an excellent individual try was scored by Capt Justin van der Plant.

The 7 RHA game plan has always considered the shirts numbered 11 to 15 to be something of a side-show, and they reverted to grinding, driving, battering, eyeball-to-eyeball intimidation by the best front five in the Army.

Following a period of loggy pressure, two well-struck penalties by SSgt Don Lewis and a deserved try by fullback LCpl Geoff Hunt made the score 19-11.

With 7 RHA cruising nowhere, the unthinkable crossed spectators' minds. But as has happened so many times

and Van der Plant in support. Crisp passing allowed Gnr Andy Dawling to split the defence and drive over in the shadow of the posts. Then Van der Plant scored his second try.

It is probable the 7 RHA coaching side got this one wrong. There was a clearly defined attempt to ignore the weakness in the backs and to play the in-vogue "champagne rugby" rather than shift the pack into four-wheel drive and slowly drain the lifeblood from the opposition forwards.

Playing to their strengths is not pretty but it had won them the cup nine times in the past 12 years - a superb record.

They are the undisputed champions, and Signals, Logistics and Infantry need to start training now if it is to be any different in 1997.



Above - Action from the Major Units Rugby Union final at Aldershot. LCpl Neil Wilcoxson (7 (Para) RHA), with the ball, attracts the attention of 4 GS Regt RLC's Pte Ron Beard (No 5) and LCpl Glen Hunt. Behind are Sgt John Denwood and Capt Justin van der Plant (partly obscured) of 7 RHA
Picture: Mike Perring

Right - LCpl Darryl Cooper (1 RSME Regt) of the RE team looks to get a one-handed pass away in the Rugby League merit table match between the RE and REME at SEAE Arborfield. Cfn Andy Shaw (REME) makes the tackle, while Sgt Kevin Ross (left) moves in to help and Spr Dean Ross (right) of 35 Engr Regt offers support
Picture: Mike Weston



LCpl Alfred Everest, Sgt Mick Tribe and Ted the Bear of B Sqn, Light Dragoons on duty with IFOR deep in Bosnia. Story in Pages 14-17.

Picture Mike Perring



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