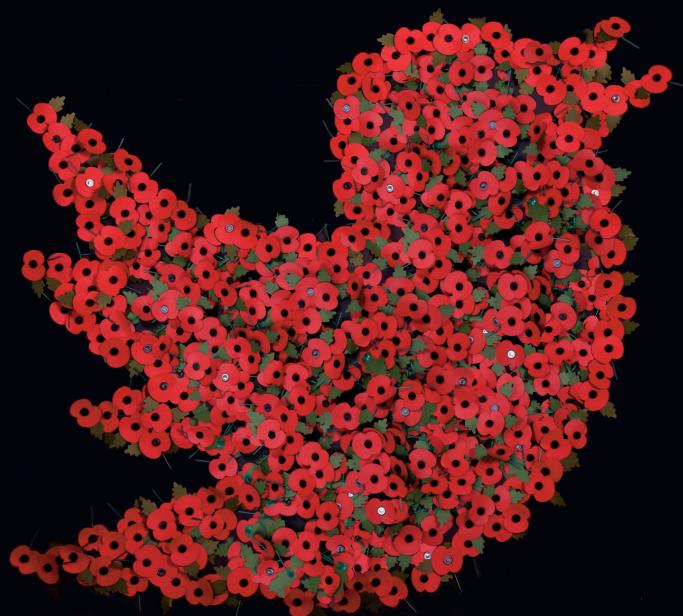


# SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



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Digital project sheds light on Somme's fallen





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Ordnance Barracks, Government Road,  
Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU.

**All enquiries:** Tel: 01252 787107 / 94222 7107  
Fax: 01252 787110 / 94222 7110  
**Email:** news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Editor**

Sarah Goldthorpe 01252 787096 (7096)  
sgoldthorpe@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Sports Editor**

Richard Long 01252 787098 (7098)  
rlong@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Assistant Editor**

Joe Clapson 01252 787097 (7097)  
jclapson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Assistant Editor**

Becky Clark 01252 787099 (7099)  
rclark@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Art Editor**

Tudor Morgan 01252 787100 (7100)  
tmorgan@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Designer**

Maddie Marchment 01252 787101 (7101)  
mmarchment@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Photographer**

Graeme Main 01252 787103 (7103)  
gmain@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Photographer**

Steve Dock 01252 787103 (7103)  
sdock@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Managing Editor**

Steven Muncey 01252 787095 (7095)  
smuncey@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Business Manager**

Andy Clarkson 01252 787105 (7105)  
aclarkson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Advertising**

Heather Shekyls 01252 787106 (7106)  
advertising@soldiermagazine.co.uk

**Subscriptions**

01252 787107 (7107)  
subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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# Finding new ways to remember them

**D**ID he die in vain?

That was the difficult – probably unanswerable – question inscribed on the gravestone of South African Pte John Paul by his widow after the First World War.

It has uncomfortable echoes with the doubts posed by some families of Service personnel lost in recent operations.

Read about the inspiring way this individual and many others are being memorialised through Twitter on page 23.

Some elements of Service history have to be recorded to be remembered. Others, not so much.

The Army's dark sense of humour definitely falls into the latter category.

With banter that has barely altered in 100 years, military one-liners about "legless" amputees and suchlike can often leave civvies confused. Why would anyone laugh about such awful things?

But as *Private Eye* editor Ian Hislop points out about the conflict on page 26, "surely in four years someone made a joke".

They did... and good ones at that. Be sure to catch *The Wipers Times* at theatres this month if you are interested in discovering how satire and sarcasm helped our forefathers to endure one of the worst battles in history. 



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

## Where to find *Soldier* magazine...

○ Printed copies ...

...ARE distributed to every Army site at the start of each month.

○ Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

ALONG with news and glimpses behind the scenes at *Soldier*, we publish a link to the magazine at [www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine](http://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine) and [@soldiermagazine](http://@soldiermagazine) on Twitter.

○ Online

DIGITAL versions of current and past editions are available on the Army website at [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk). Just click on "read it now".

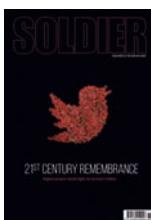
○ Purchase

IF you're not in the Army you can buy *Soldier* from your high street magazine retailer or directly from us at [subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk) (£23 for 12 issues in the UK).



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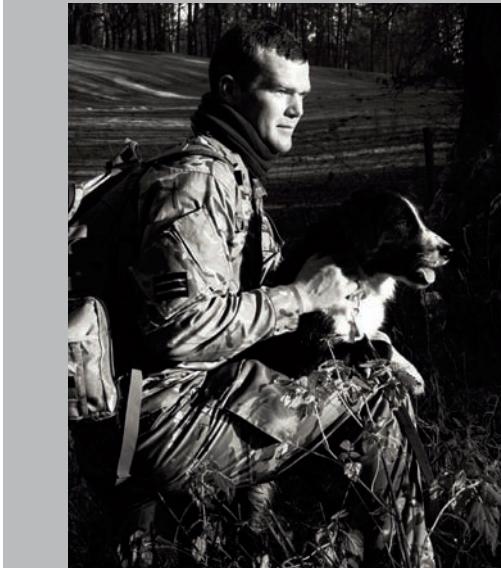
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WORLDWIDE

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# Future proofed?

Government pledges to protect deployed troops from legal action

THE prime minister and defence secretary have reiterated their determination to protect British soldiers from persistent legal claims.

During the Conservative party conference Theresa May and Michael Fallon said the government intends to effectively opt out of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in future conflicts.

The move follows a series of court rulings that have seen the ECHR's jurisdiction extended to include the battlefield.

Supposed breaches of these rights have been behind many of the cases being investigated by the Iraq Historical Allegations Team.

"My government will ensure that our troops are recognised for the incredible job they do," Mrs May commented. "Those who serve on the front line will have our support when they come home.

"We will repay them with gratitude and put an end to the industry that pursued those who served previously."

Mr Fallon added: "Our legal system has been abused to level false charges against troops on an

industrial scale.

"It has caused significant distress to people who risked their lives to protect us, it has cost the taxpayer millions and there is a real risk it will stop our Armed Forces doing their job.

"This [opt-out] will help to protect our troops from vexatious claims, ensuring they can confidently take difficult decisions."

The Chief of the Defence Staff, ACM Sir Stuart Peach, welcomed the announcement, adding that the military "will continue to be held to the very highest standards".

He continued: "UK personnel will always be subject to the Law of Armed Conflict – which includes the Geneva Conventions – and to UK Service law, which includes the criminal law of England and Wales.

"Credible allegations of criminal behaviour will always be investigated properly, so the work of the Iraq Historical Allegations Team and Operation Northmoor will continue.

"Those who've been the subject of false allegations will be cleared."

## CHIEF SPEAKS OUT ON ABUSE CLAIMS

■ THE Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Nick Carter, has voiced his concerns over investigations into historical allegations of abuse by the Armed Forces in Iraq.

In a letter sent to the MoD and senior commanders, Gen Carter said the chain of command must be as supportive as possible of troops under investigation.

He added that everyone is innocent until proven guilty, and the decision to interview someone is not "cost-free".

"It should be the subject of a risk assessment that balances the value of the potential information with the likelihood of causing trauma and long-term distress," the head of the Army said.



## 'CUT THE DRINK' DRIVE

■ THE Army is preparing to appoint alcohol advisers to every unit from 2018.

The specially-trained soldiers will be a focal point for advice and support, and will deliver so-called alcohol brief interventions, which help individuals to reduce their alcohol consumption.

A major pilot scheme is due to start early next year.

● Vet's booze battle  
– pages 45-46



## HISTORICAL ALLEGATIONS IN NUMBERS



1 USA

## CUE THE CAVALRY

SERVICE personnel from 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards have been lending their light reconnaissance expertise to a training package in California.

Exercise Diamondback saw members of C Squadron attach to America's 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team ahead of its stint as the country's theatre reserve in the Middle East.

Held in Fort Irwin deep in the Mojave Desert – perfect terrain for the British Jackal and Coyote vehicles – the serial tested the interoperability of both sides in areas such as communications and tactics and procedures while hunting down enemy groups.

Personnel from the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Military Police, Royal Yeomanry and Intelligence Corps also provided specialist support throughout the deployment.



Picture: Joel Rouse

2 USA

## WEST COAST 'COPTERS

APACHE attack helicopters from 4 Regiment, Army Air Corps conducted live-fire training stateside.

Exercise Black Alligator was held in the austere setting of the US Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Centre, also known as 29 Palms, and included a survive, evade, resist, escape package for aircrew.

3 BELIZE

## GREEN LIGHT FOR GUARDS' JUNGLE EX

TROOPS from 1st Battalion, The Irish Guards swapped their bearskins and red tunics for camouflage as they tested their operational skills on an arduous jungle warfare package.

Exercise Mayan Storm tested the soldiers' ability to survive and navigate in the rainforest and taught them how to use the terrain for both offensive and defensive operations.

Over three training phases personnel learnt basic jungle techniques as well as patrolling skills and how to conduct a hazardous river crossing.

The action-packed exercise also included tactical training at section, platoon and company level, booby trapping, close target reconnaissance, ambush drills and complex navigation, while the final stage was a live-firing scenario.



“  
It's the first  
time we've  
gone diving  
”



4 MALTA

## TOP TO BOTTOM

RESERVISTS from 32 Signal Regiment are exploring the highs and lows of Malta this month on an adventurous training expedition to develop their rock climbing and sub-aqua skills.

The personnel will return with at least a foundation qualification in both disciplines.

The country is especially well known for its wreck-diving sites including the famous HMS *Maori*.

“This will be the latest in a series of climbing expeditions we have undertaken but is the first time we've gone diving as well and we can't wait,” said expedition organiser SSgt Mark Lane.

“It will be a chance to develop and test our team spirit, leadership, and courage.”

## INTERNATIONAL AMBITIONS

Reserves embrace unit life at home and abroad – pages 32-36

Afghanistan

Brunei

5



### 5 SOLOMON ISLANDS

#### SAPPER SUCCESS

BOMB disposal troops have been helping to rid the Solomon Islands of Second World War munitions.

Working alongside members of the Royal Solomon Island Police Force, the four-man team from 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) located and destroyed the dangerous remnants of war in the jungle and waters around the Russell Islands.

Operation Render Safe was part of the Australian Defence Force's enduring commitment to explosive ordnance disposal in the Pacific, with more than 180 personnel from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK involved in this year's operation.

7 UK

#### RIO HEROES RETURN

THE Army's Maj Heather Stanning (RA) was among the 350 members of Team GB cheered on by thousands of people during an Olympic celebration in Trafalgar Square.

She and teammate Helen Glover (pictured right), managed to retain their coxless pairs Olympic gold medal in Rio – one of a number of impressive performances that produced 67 medals, second only to the United States. It made Great Britain the first ever nation to achieve more medals at an away Games after hosting previously.

The Paralympic team also enjoyed unprecedented success in Rio by claiming 147 medals to finish second in the table.

All of the team members were introduced to the crowd with fanfares from the Band of the Irish Guards, Coldstream Guards and Grenadier Guards.



### 6 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

#### JOINING FORCES WITH EUROPE

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment have thrown themselves into Exercise Quick Response 16 as part of their preparations for joining a multinational battalion of European forces (Eufor).

The package saw the unit prepare to deal with a deteriorating security situation at the request of the Bosnian authorities.

Working alongside troops from Austria, Turkey, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, the British contingent of 120 soldiers completed the three-day integration package at Camp Butmir in Sarajevo.

Drills included tactical demonstrations and familiarisation training plus more specific skills such as riot control, use of the Eufor helicopters and mine awareness. The Balkan nation remains the most "mined" country in Europe.



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**"It is the biggest connector between the military and civilians"**

– What does remembrance mean to you? page 90



## 'Hard and fast rules'

Paras praise realistic Longmoor training



**A** FAST-PACED exercise has tested the readiness of 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment as the British Army's airborne rapid reaction force.

Exercise Emerald Atlas saw around 100 members of the unit deploy without notice on a simulated mission to evacuate British citizens from a country where security was rapidly deteriorating.

After mission planning alongside helicopter crews from the Royal Air Force's 18 Squadron, the personnel were dropped into Longmoor Training Area by Chinook at night.

They secured positions and gathered a number of evacuees, while

dealing with an increasingly hostile local population.

"Hard and fast missions like this are what I joined the Paras to do and we've all shown that we're ready to do it for real," Pte Thomas Keld said.

The battalion is serving as the lead unit in the Air Assault Task Force, which has to be able to deploy anywhere in the world on a full range of operations.

Maj Jon Cox, officer commanding B Coy, explained "This is the culmination of a year of hard work that has seen us on a battlegroup exercise in Kenya, a brigade exercise in the USA and a multinational division exercise in Germany."

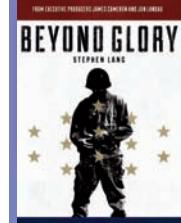
## Combat power on show

A MAJOR display on Salisbury Plain saw 3rd (UK) Division showcase its high readiness capabilities. Troops from 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment battlegroup led the demonstration, which included the live firing of a range of weapons. It also saw Reservists from the Royal Wessex Yeomanry offer armoured support, all with the aim of illustrating how the different elements would operate together as part of a vanguard armoured infantry brigade.



Picture: Cpl Timothy Jones, RLC

### IN REVIEWS



"A most unusual take on everyday heroism"

PAGES 69-75

**IN NUMBERS:  
6,000+**

Members of the Armed Forces and their families who have qualified as mental health first aiders. The training teaches participants how to spot the signs of any issues and guide sufferers towards support.



For more visit  
[www.mhfaengland.org](http://www.mhfaengland.org)

## MEDAL FOR QUEEN

■ MOANS about medal criteria may be a reoccurring theme in *Talkback* but the Queen is one person who won't have to write in to query her eligibility, thanks to a rule change.

Following the government's decision to extend the Long Service and Good Conduct medal to officers, she and Prince Philip were presented with a clutch of gongs recognising their dedication to duty.



In a ceremony held at Buckingham Palace, Her Majesty received a decoration from each of the Services, while the Duke of Edinburgh was awarded the Royal Navy medal.



## RIDERS ON TOP

■ SERVICE riders swept the board at the Army and Royal Artillery Hunter Trials.

The annual Larkhill championships are open to entries from a range of Armed Forces or civilian teams, and this year's event saw stiff competition from the Royal Navy, Avon and Somerset and Thames Valley Police and the Reserve Forces Association.

The soldiers claimed the top prize in all four categories, with The King's Troop RHA scooping the team accolade.

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- Go to the education centre to get an ELC claim form. Fill it in by hand, email the provider for the course detail – make a mistake, start again and hand it in. Wait out!
- Wait until enough people join the course before it is confirmed whether it is going ahead or not.
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## "In many ways this was my dream fight"

– Boxing debut delight, page 80



## Take them on the beaches

PERSONNEL from the headquarters of 1st (UK) Division had their stamina and leadership tested on a coastal teambuilding challenge near Whitby.

Servicemen and women battled their way through a series of command tasks including negotiating an obstacle course to gather water from the sea

and transporting a heavy weight up the cliff side, as well as taking part in a stretcher race along the beach and pulling a 4x4 vehicle over 100 metres.

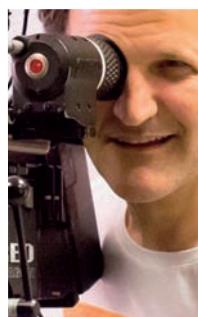
The training session, which took place in Runswick Bay, culminated in the troops taking on the 22 push-up challenge in support of veterans' mental health.

## Veterans' films on show to world

THE first UK International Veterans Film Festival will be held in Aberystwyth this month.

Staged at the National Library of Wales, the event will showcase work produced by those involved with the Veteran Films organisation, which uses creative film making as a form of therapy for ex-soldiers with mental or physical disabilities.

Bafta-nominated feature *Kajaki* will be shown on the first night followed by a question-and-answer session with one of the actors as well as Stuart Pearson (ex-Para) who won the Queen's Gallantry Medal for bravery during the battle. For more details visit [www.veteranfilms.org](http://www.veteranfilms.org)



“  
We can  
learn  
from the  
military  
”

## MEDICS TALK TRAUMA

BRITISH Army medics have been sharing their field expertise with civilian healthcare professionals at the annual trauma care conference in Birmingham.

More than 700 delegates from the UK and overseas discussed the latest advances in combat casualty care and how medical services can learn from the Armed Forces.

Prof Kay Fawcett from the Royal College of Nursing said: "We can learn from and apply the same principals as the military with both sides learning from one another."



## STONEWALL SOLDIERS

ARMY bosses are urging personnel to get involved with National Anti-Bullying Week, which will run from November 14-18.

Soldiers are being encouraged to promote Stonewall's "no bystanders" initiative by posting selfies with the campaign pledge on social media using the hashtag [#nobystanders](#).

Large posters adorned with the campaign pledge are due to be sent to Army units.

To report bullying call the Army's confidential helpline on military 96770 4656 or 0306 7704656 or email [army-speakout@mod.uk](mailto:army-speakout@mod.uk)

# FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



## CONQUERING THE COAST

EXTREME runner Cpl Martin Wilson (1PWRR) battled with beaches and hills to complete the 78.6-mile Atlantic Coast Challenge.

The soldier ran from Padstow to Land's End in three days carrying 20kg of extra weight.

"If I hadn't been fundraising for such an amazing cause I might have quit early," he said.

Money raised:  
£1,100  
For: **Blind Veterans UK**



## SLEEPING AT THE STONES

LARKHILL'S Royal Artillery Garrison joined forces with Sodexo for a Big Sleep event at Stonehenge, which saw participants sleep overnight at the iconic site in Wiltshire.



## "Being so coarse in civvy street can cause problems"

– Akabusi on hurdles after the Army, pages 52-53



### GETHIN HITS NEW HIGH

■ A SERVICEMAN is celebrating becoming the youngest ever Welshman to summit the world's eighth highest peak.

Capt Gethin Davies (R Welsh), 26, of Port Talbot took around a month to trek to the top of Mount Manaslu in Nepal.

The peak stands at 8,163m above sea level – nearly eight times higher than Mount Snowdon in the officer's home country.

The feat saw the adventurer raise funds for his regimental charity, Ty Hafan Children's Hospice.



### FRENCH CONNECTION

■ EVER-CLOSER ties between the British and French Armies have continued at pace with the appointment of a French officer to the role of deputy commander 1st (UK) Division in York.

Brig Hervé Bizeul is undertaking the three-year tour as part of an agreement between the two countries to exchange senior military personnel.

The officer, whose last role in France saw him involved in national operations against terrorism, has spent most of his career as an officer specialising in mountain infantry.



A PERSONAL VIEW FROM SARA BAADE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE ARMY FAMILIES FEDERATION...



Picture: Shutterstock

### FLEXIBLE WORKING A MUST FOR FAMILIES

ONE of the most common enquiries our organisation receives is about spousal employment and how to make it work alongside a mobile Army life.

Many partners want a job but are unable to obtain one because of the ever-changing nature of our locations.

Recent research done in Scotland by McNeill and Stone showed that 84 per cent of spouses are keen to work but only 58 per cent actually do.

This broadly echoes some of our own findings.

The barriers are well known, with childcare and lack of family support being right at the top of the list together with frequent moves.

At the Army Families Federation we are trying to establish what more can be done to tackle these issues.

We recently surveyed those spouses who manage to make a career work for them.

Unsurprisingly, what was discovered was that most find success through sheer grit and determination, not by any specific measure put in place.

But with the future accommodation model we could see more of us living in our own homes and paying

66  
WE WILL  
CONTINUE TO  
PUSH FOR  
THIS  
99

mortgages, which means a second income will often be needed.

It is therefore essential that spousal employment issues are taken seriously and clear measures put in place to enable families to meet the dream of property ownership and employment.

We do not yet have a clear picture of what that support needs to look like, but one thing is obvious from our survey – the need for the Army to have more flexible working patterns so that soldiers can support their partners with childcare.

Our findings showed that only 23 per cent of troops with working spouses were occasionally able to do this to help.

Interestingly, the proportion of officers with this option was significantly larger than that of privates and corporals.

It is reassuring to know that the Service is already trialling flexible working and we will continue to push for this.

We will also look into other options to help spouses meet their aspirations.

[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)



Picture: Cpl Jonathan Lee van Zyl, RLC

### A SUB-AQUA SALUTE

■ ROYAL Engineers divers mounted a salute with a difference to welcome the Queen to Chatham.

Two soldiers dressed in full sub-aqua gear and immersed in a water tank stood to attention as their colonel-in-chief arrived at Brompton Barracks.

Her Majesty's visit marked the culmination of a year of commemorations celebrating the 300th anniversary of the founding of the corps.

# "I thought anyone who didn't enjoy a beer was a bit strange"

– The slippery slope of alcohol, page 45-46



## Troops crack Cambrian quest

Annual event proves to be 'unforgettable' for its participants

**S**OLDIERS from across the globe descended on Wales for one of the most anticipated events of the British Army training calendar.

Exercise Cambrian Patrol saw 128 teams slog across the Cambrian Mountains undertaking various challenges including a muscle-sapping 55km march with full personal kit and equipment – weighing in at some 60lbs.

Troops from Kosovo were welcomed to the event for the first time this year, along with personnel from countries as diverse as Mexico, Nepal, Canada, Pakistan, Chile and New Zealand.

"Typically, around five per cent of teams gain the top award and that tells you what patrols are up against," said exercise director Brig Alan Richmond. "Those who take part never forget their time here."

Cambrian Patrol began in 1959, when a group of Welsh Territorial Army soldiers designed a weekend training event. Today it is run by 160th Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Wales.



Pictures: Cpl Paul Shaw, RLC



### DID YOU KNOW ?



SOME 50 years ago troops on Exercise Cambrian Patrol faced an unexpected challenge in the shape of the devastating Aberfan disaster, in which 116 children and 28 adults were killed by a tide of coal waste from a nearby spoil tip.

The exercise was abandoned once news of the tragedy broke, and volunteers instead deployed to assist with the rescue effort.

"It was a sobering sight to witness men who had, without doubt, given their all in the rescue effort," recalled John Dart, a former member of 6th Battalion, The Welch Regiment, afterwards.

“  
It was a  
sobering  
sight  
”

## Body armour boost

A NEW concept that in the future could allow soldiers to detect the tiniest fracture to their body armour at the push of a button has been developed by boffins.

A firm called Plextek has worked alongside Defence Equipment and Support to create the initial design for a simple indicator that could be used on the battlefield.

Currently, faults are usually only discovered during routine inspections before a mission. Compromised kit is then sent away for x-ray.

However, cracks to ceramic plates can be difficult to spot with the eyes so the new system is designed to save both lives and time in coming years by allowing a more accurate on-the-spot check.

At the height of operations in Afghanistan some 9,000 body armour plates were returned to the UK for analysis and refurbishment after each tour – a costly procedure that could take weeks.

That process could prove far simpler on future operations.



### GOOD DRILLS

#### TOP-CLASS TUTOR



CIVVY Kay Whitehouse has been given an award after helping thousands of soldiers to improve their maths and English. The Army wife delivers lessons to 250 troops a year at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick and her efforts saw her named Northern Region Inspirational Tutor.

#### WHAT A WOMAN

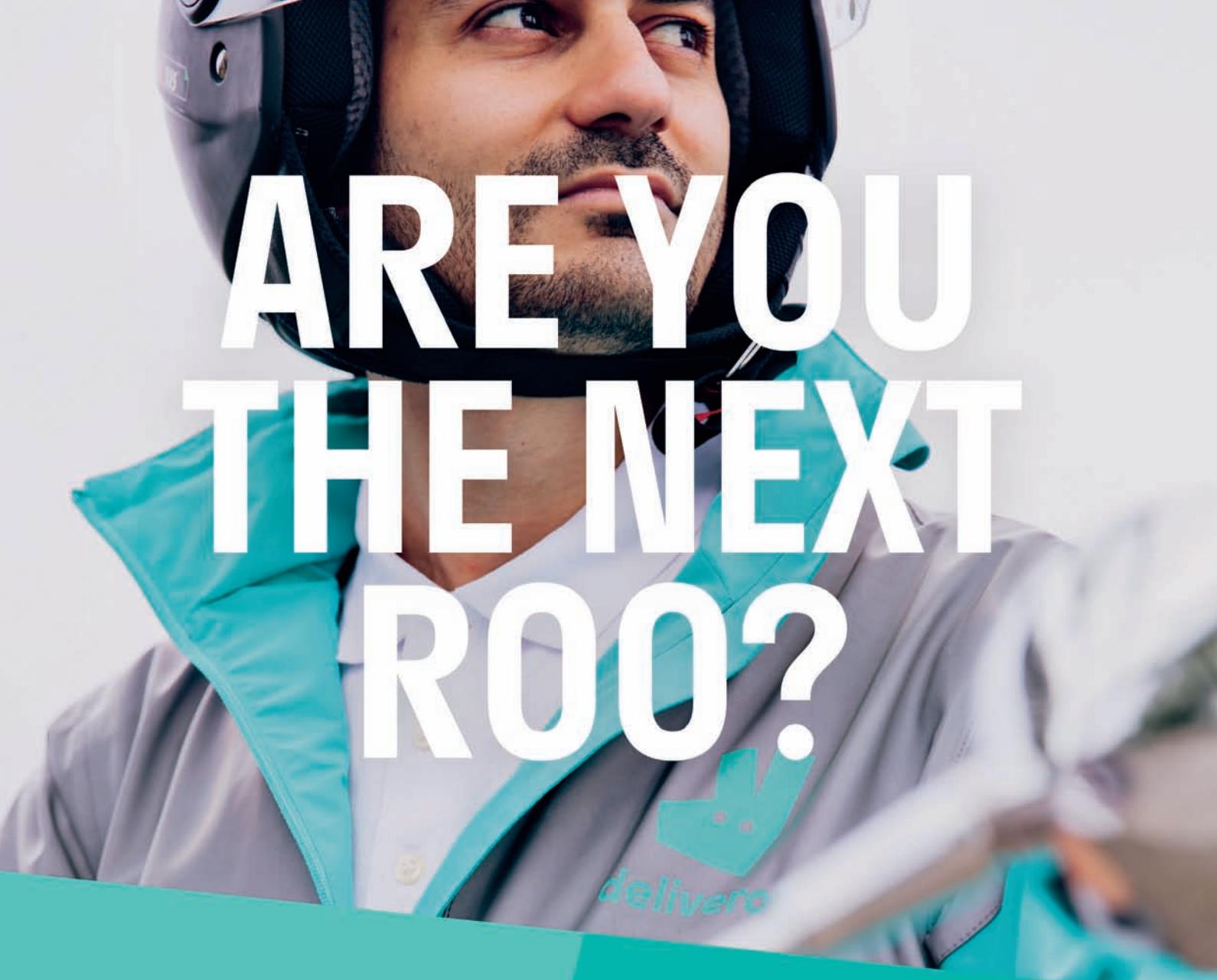
THE first female to command the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst's New College has been named Woman of the Year at a defence awards ceremony. Lt Col Lucy Giles (RLC) won praise for her work to introduce mixed male and female platoons at the institution.



#### BETTER LATE...

THE head of Scotland Yard has finally apologised to Lord Bramall, the former Army chief and D-Day veteran who was falsely accused of child abuse. Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe said sorry in person 19 months after officers raided the 92-year-old's Hampshire home as part of an inquiry into high-profile figures. "I have never complained about their right to investigate me but about the stupid, inept and possibly improper way they carried out the investigation," Lord Bramall said.

### BAD DRILLS



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# "The wind was horrendous; we had to have full control at all times"

– Cyclists brave the elements, page 89



## End of a yachting era

Forces fleet makes 'challenging' journey back to UK

**T**HE British Kiel Yacht Club in Germany, which has been instrumental in training hundreds of thousands of UK Service personnel in sailing, has closed after 71 years.

Its fleet of ten Hallberg Rassy 342s have now been moved to the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre in Gosport (pictured), where they will continue to be used for adventurous training and to enable military personnel to gain sailing qualifications.

It follows the reduction of British Forces in Germany.

Geraint Howells (ex-Royal Welsh), skipper's mate aboard *Pochard*, was one of those among the historic flotilla of vessels returning to the UK last month.

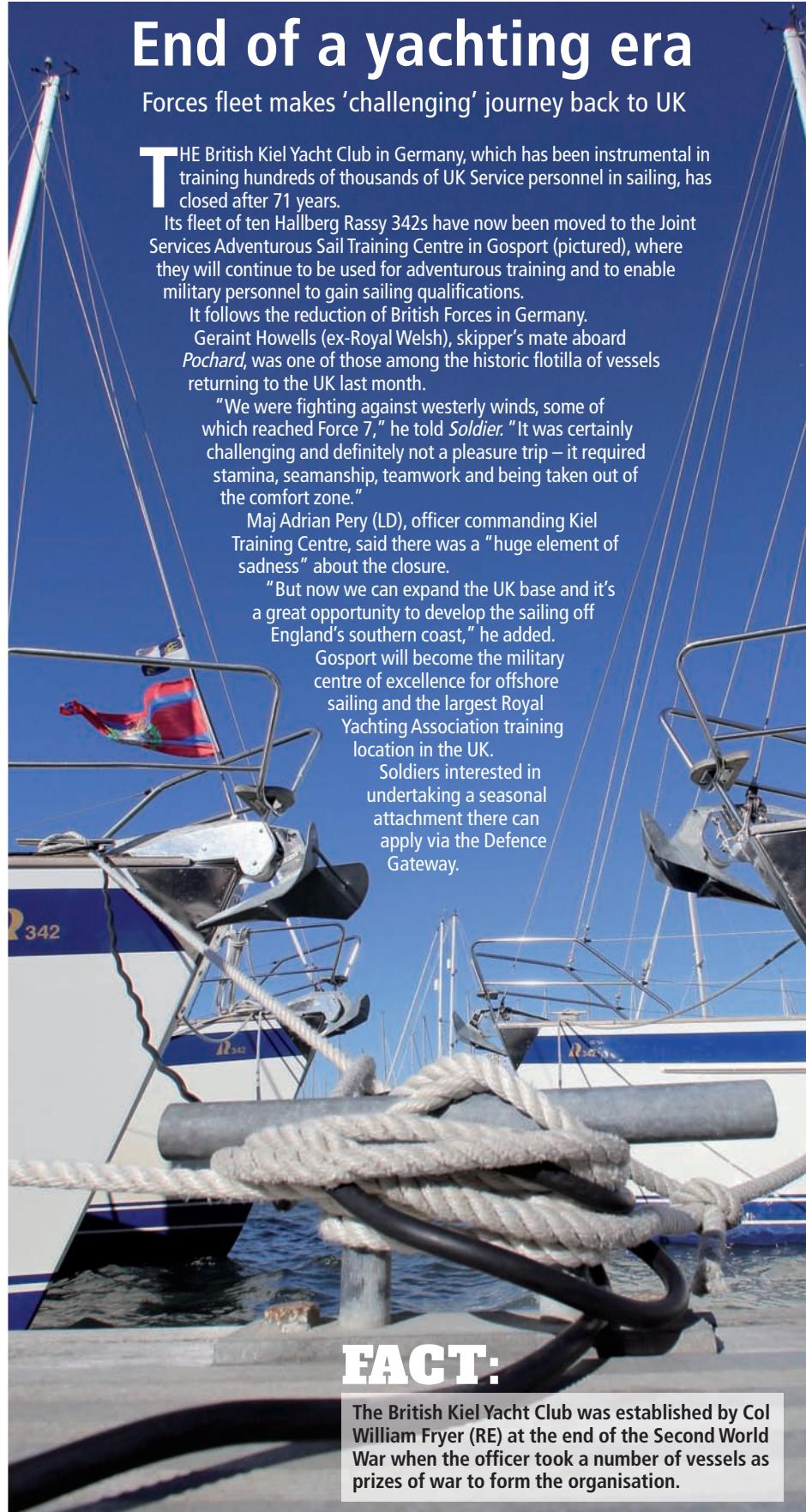
"We were fighting against westerly winds, some of which reached Force 7," he told *Soldier*. "It was certainly challenging and definitely not a pleasure trip – it required stamina, seamanship, teamwork and being taken out of the comfort zone."

Maj Adrian Pery (LD), officer commanding Kiel Training Centre, said there was a "huge element of sadness" about the closure.

"But now we can expand the UK base and it's a great opportunity to develop the sailing off England's southern coast," he added.

Gosport will become the military centre of excellence for offshore sailing and the largest Royal Yachting Association training location in the UK.

Soldiers interested in undertaking a seasonal attachment there can apply via the Defence Gateway.



### FACT:

The British Kiel Yacht Club was established by Col William Fryer (RE) at the end of the Second World War when the officer took a number of vessels as prizes of war to form the organisation.

Picture: Steve Dock

A stunning poppy canvas print



LAST month's spine line clues are likely to have been recognised by anyone following the progress of Army rugby star LCpl Semesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG).

(Nick) Auterac, (Tom) Homer, (Anthony) Watson and (Jeff) Williams are all members of Bath Rugby's first team squad alongside the 29-year-old flier.

This month, courtesy of photographer Craig Churchill ([www.craigchurchill.co.uk](http://www.craigchurchill.co.uk)), we have a stunning A1-size canvas photograph of a poppy field worth £199 to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning this striking image taken in rural Oxfordshire, just tell us what links the words on the side of this magazine.

Answers to the usual address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by November 30.

### TOP OF THE TOWER

■ FORMER Chief of the Defence Staff, Gen Sir Nicholas Houghton, has been appointed the 160th Constable of the Tower of London.

The retired officer will act as the Queen's representative at the 1,000-year-old palace in a role that dates back to the Norman Conquest.

A formal installation ceremony included a procession by the Yeoman Warders while Reservists from 253 Provost Company, 4 Regiment, Royal Military Police oversaw the landmark's guard duties.





## "Is Army culture so threatening people won't speak openly?"

– More *Talkback* throwdown, pages 57-60



### PRISON PURSUIT

■ SOLDIERS leaving the Army will be targeted in a new recruitment drive to bolster the Prison Service, Justice Secretary Liz Truss said.

Speaking at the Tory party conference she announced plans to hire 400 ex-military personnel at a cost of £14 million to help combat spiralling levels of violence.

"Who better to show what you can achieve in life with courage and integrity?" she said.

"They will help our prison officers lead the change."

Figures show there were 5,423 attacks on prison staff last year – more than 100 a week.

### TO THE RESCUE

■ SOLDIERS of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment are being trained to deal with cardiac arrests, allergic reactions and breathing difficulties by the East Midlands Ambulance Service.

The first responders scheme in Rutland, set up by WO2 Lee Pearce in 2015, now has 22 members.



Picture: Cpl Michael Strachan, RIC

### HEBSON'S CHOICE

■ A RESERVIST from Devon pedalled 170 miles on a static bicycle to raise funds for Blind Veterans UK.

Simon Hebson, 43, from Exmouth, rode for more than nine hours straight and raised over £700. To donate go to [justgiving.com/simon-hebson2](http://justgiving.com/simon-hebson2)



### IN MUSIC...



"It made me want to climb a mountain and launch it off the side"

PAGE 74



## Servicemen laid to rest

■ TWO unknown soldiers from the First World War were laid to rest in France with military honours following the discovery of their remains earlier this year.

The bodies were found in Auchy-Les-Mines in February and July but despite the best efforts of researchers from the MoD's Joint Care and Compassionate Centre, they could not be identified.

One was confirmed to be a member of the Leicestershire

Regiment, which played an early role in the Battle of Loos in 1915, but the second Serviceman's cap badge could not be ascertained.

In keeping with protocol they were buried under headstones marked "Soldiers of the Great War, known unto God" in Haisnes military cemetery during a ceremony officiated by the chaplain of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment and a bugler from the formation's band.

## Tunisian training team teed up

THE Army is to provide more training for Tunisian security forces as part of ongoing efforts to nullify the threat posed by Isis.

Personnel were sent to the country in late 2015 and earlier this year to build the 1st Tunisian Brigade's border security capability.

However, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon announced that a third training mission, led by 4th Infantry Brigade, will be required.

Around 40 troops will provide expertise on operational planning, intelligence and surveillance and

mobile patrolling to help Tunisia deal with illegal cross-border movement from neighbouring Libya.

British soldiers will also extend their stay for up to a year to provide more counter-IED courses.

"We are determined to support our Tunisian allies to defend against terrorists who slaughtered innocent Britons on a beach there last year," commented Mr Fallon.

"Our training will help Tunisian forces strengthen their border security and stop the spread of Daesh along the coast."

## SCHOOLS READY TO GROW CADET NUMBERS

THE Defence Secretary, Michael Fallon, has announced plans to create 150 new Army cadet units in state schools, with the latest wave of 25 launched last month. The government's cadet expansion programme is targeting establishments in less affluent areas.

*"Thanks for your detailed and easy-to-understand pension breakdown. I amended my PENI where I had ticked the box to inversely commute my '15, thinking it meant the same as commuting my '75."*

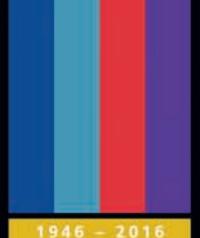
Phil Babbington, FPS Member



## INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

At the Forces Pension Society, we value our independence. It enables us to serve the interests of our Members as the Armed Forces Pension watchdog. We hold governments of the day to account, arguing for better pensions and campaigning against unfairness in the schemes. For example, our 2015 campaign won the right for all widows to retain their pension on remarriage.

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AND THEIR FAMILIES

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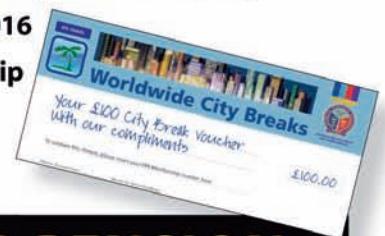


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# THE BIG PICTURE





> CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE

## FOR THE FALLEN

WHEN Western Europe's countryside was blasted, bombed and fought over during the First World War the landscape quickly turned to mud, where little could grow. But delicate, resilient poppies grew in their thousands, flourishing among the chaos and destruction. The scarlet flower was adopted by The Royal British Legion as the symbol for their Poppy Appeal in 1921. Picture: Craig Churchill Photography

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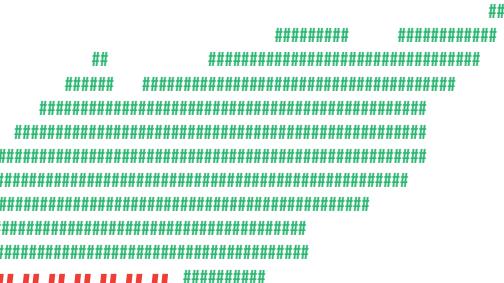
The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

\*Military Saving programme available to current and ex Service Personnel including veterans and retired members of the UK Armed Forces. Customer savings of 5% to 20% available across the Ford range (excluding KA+, Mustang and Focus RS) on vehicles contracted from 1st October 2016 to 31st December 2016 and registered between 1st October 2016 and 30th June 2017. At participating Ford dealers – for terms and conditions, eligible models and customer savings visit: [www.ford.co.uk/militarysales](http://www.ford.co.uk/militarysales)

THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD  
AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD  
AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM  
NOR THE YEARS CONDEMN  
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
AND IN THE MORNING  
WE WILL #REMEMBER THEM #####

# TWEETING IN ##### TRIBUTE #####

THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD, AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD  
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## REMEMBERING THE FALLEN THROUGH MODERN MEDIA

EVERY month, some 313 million people around the world take to Twitter to voice their thoughts.

From the trivial to the profound, the only restriction is the platform's 140-character limit.

But imagine having just 66 letters to express your grief and pay tribute to a loved one killed in battle.

This was the task facing the families of those who fell in the First World War.

In a controversial decision, the Imperial War Graves Commission announced that the dead would not be repatriated and that every headstone would be of a uniform appearance with a brief epitaph, a move that many saw as the state dictating how people should grieve.

So, in the absence of a body to bury or an individually chosen gravestone, the inscriptions became the only way for the families to make a lasting personal tribute to the fallen.

One hundred years on, a Twitter project is shedding light on the words those relatives chose.

Every day throughout the centenary of the four-year conflict, author and archivist Sarah Wearne is tweeting the epitaph of a casualty to, in her words, "take us back into the hearts and minds"

of the bereaved.

Talking to *Soldier* about the concept, she described how those left behind selected the words that would memorialise their loved ones.

"The Bible was a big source of inspiration, as were popular hymns, songs and poems," she explained.

"Some of them seem enigmatic or obscure to us now, but would have been familiar to people at the time.

"Many wrote their inscriptions in foreign languages – Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Zulu, Finnish, Danish – all reflecting the national origins of the casualty."

Reflecting on what the inscriptions reveal about the mindset at the time, she continued: "I think it's surprising to see how they viewed the death of their next of kin – it's not how we necessarily look at things now.

"We tend to think of the dead as victims, but amidst the sadness they saw it as a duty and were proud of them."

Whether sentimental or stoic, ambiguous or even political, each epitaph tells a story about the soldier who died and those he left behind.

The ten inscriptions that follow are for troops who died during the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD  
AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD  
AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM  
ND THEY WILL NOT SINK



**2nd Lt William Forbes,**  
**Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry**  
died September 3, 1916, aged 23

He saw beyond the filth  
Of battle, and thought death  
A fair price to pay  
To belong the company  
Of these fellows

Shakespearian in tone, this epitaph was composed by the officer's father, who was an artist. At 91 characters (109 if you count the spaces and the comma) it is considerably longer than the 66 letters specified by the War Graves Commission. At 3½d per letter, many families couldn't afford an inscription at all. Less than 40 per cent of Somme casualties are thought to have one.



**Pte Lyell Pocock,**  
**Australian Infantry**  
died August 15, 1916, aged 17

In dreams we see you  
On the battle plain  
Wounded, calling in vain

The parents of 17-year-old Pte Pocock never found out the circumstances of their son's death. Their choice of a quote from an American Civil War song for his epitaph reveals their fears over his last moments.



**Pte Robert Purves, Royal Scots**  
died on August 29, 1916, aged 31

At rest in peace

This simple inscription gives no indication that the Serviceman had killed himself. In his suicide note he wrote that he was doing so "because I cannot stand the hardship and sufferings of this life any longer and there is no chance of getting home to see my parents whom may God comfort in their trouble".



**Pte Richard Fowler,**  
**Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers**  
died on July 1, 1916, aged 19

He died for Ulster  
We gave our best

This inscription reflects the political situation in Ireland where, but for the outbreak of the conflict in Europe, the question of Home Rule had very nearly brought the opposing sides to civil war. The combination of Fowler's epitaph, his regiment and his home town, Omagh, indicate that he – or at least his parents – were Ulster Unionists.



**Pte Frank Hitchin,**  
**Machine Gun Corps**  
died September 22, 1916, aged 18

If this is victory, then  
Let God stop all wars  
His loving mother

In her grief, Pte Hitchin's mother must have come close to being censored by the War Graves Commission. This inscription was allowed but among those they refused to engrave were any references to "Huns" or suggestions the Germans were unjust or uncivilised.

AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
WE WILL #REMEMBER

THEM

IN

MEMORIAL

AND IN THE MORN

ER THEM

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Pte John Paul,  
South African Infantry  
died on July 18, 1916, aged 36



## Did he die in vain?

The widow of this soldier asks an unusually direct question, implying that his death was futile. Pte Paul's body was not discovered until 1935 so the inscription was composed at a time when disillusionment was beginning to creep into society.



2nd Lt Harry Butters,  
Royal Field Artillery,  
died on August 31, 1916, aged 24

## An American citizen

This officer enlisted in 1915, long before his country joined the war. In the days prior to his death he wrote to an Army chaplain to ask that, in the event of his demise, his nationality would be marked on his grave. Technically, Americans who fought in foreign armies were no longer citizens, but his epitaph leaves no doubt of his allegiance.



Dvr Thomas Hamilton,  
Royal Field Artillery  
died October 3, 1916, aged 22

## Ye babbling winds Through silence sweep Disturb ye not Our loved one's sleep

A reference to a Robert Burns poem, this inscription was for a soldier who was executed for striking an officer. In 90 per cent of cases, death sentences were commuted but Fd Marshal Haig decided an example needed to be made of Dvr Hamilton and he was shot by firing squad.



Maj William Congreve,  
Rifle Brigade  
died on July 20, 1916, aged 25

## Legion d'Honneur In remembrance of my Beloved husband And in glorious expectation

Billy Congreve and his wife had only been married for seven weeks before he was killed. The officer – a recipient of the Victoria Cross, Distinguished Service Order, Legion d'Honneur and Military Cross – was described in a letter of condolence as "glorious". Nine months after their wedding she had a baby daughter, whom she called Mary Gloria.



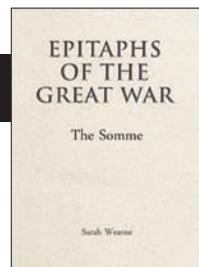
Capt John Denning,  
Lincolnshire Regiment  
died September 26, 1916, aged 23

## You may rest assured That I shall have Done my duty

Capt Denning's parents chose this quote from their son's last letter home for his epitaph. "Always remember it is better to live in honour than to die in shame," he had written.

Follow @WWInscriptions on Twitter

The book accompanying the project, *Epitaphs of the Great War: The Somme*, by Sarah Wearne is published by Uniform and priced £10.99



**D**ARK jokes have long been used to cope with the grim realities of war. And if anyone knows how to make a crack at the expense of the establishment, it is

Private Eye editor Ian Hislop.

Along with acclaimed cartoonist Nick Newman, the razor-sharp journalist has brought to stage the story of a remarkable publication from the First World War.

*The Wipers Times* was the brainchild of Capt Fred Roberts and Lt Jack Pearson who served with 12th Battalion, The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment).

The officers came across a printing press in a bombed-out building on the front line of Ypres, or Wipers as it was known by troops, and after a comrade was able to get it working again they decided to start producing a monthly magazine.

"It was like a forerunner of *Private Eye*," explains Newman, when *Soldier* meets the pair at *Private Eye* HQ in London.

"They are bloody good jokes from very smart men; now they're getting the laughs that they deserve from a live audience."

Hislop first uncovered the astonishing tale of the publication while working on one of his history documentaries.

Now, after a successful outing as a BBC dramatisation in 2013, *The Wipers Times* is being enjoyed on stages across the UK.

"It took about ten years of banging on about it, saying it was an interesting story, with television companies responding that 'people are not bothered about the First World War,'" Newman continues.

"But then *War Horse* came out."

Hislop chips in: "So we said, this is an amazing story without the horses and with real people and jokes!"

"Eventually we got on TV."

What is particularly impressive to *Private Eye*'s satirists is the fact that *Wipers* was put together against a backdrop of war.

"These were not writing men, they were not public schoolboys penning elegant poetry, they were sappers. But the jokes are fabulous," Hislop continues.

Via humorous sketches, songs and clever wordplay his stage production shines a light on the hilarious banter found in *Wipers*.

"We are keeping their memories alive," the *Have I Got News for You* stalwart continues.

"I think we slightly forgot that, yes, there were one million casualties in the First World War but four million people came home."

"And when they arrived back someone else was doing their job and there was nothing to do."

Report: Joe Clapson  
Picture: Graeme Main



# Survival of the funniest

Trench humour given new lease of life by sharp satirists

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IF SO BE SURE TO FIRST INSPECT OUR NEW LINE OF VELVETEEN  
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"Legs Make The Officer."

ARE YOU A VICTIM TO  
**OPTIMISM?**  
YOU DON'T KNOW?  
THEN ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

- 1.—DO YOU SUFFER FROM CHEERFULNESS?
- 2.—DO YOU WAKE UP IN A MORNING FEELING THAT ALL IS GOING WELL FOR THE ALLIES?
- 3.—DO YOU SOMETIMES THINK THAT THE WAR WILL END WITHIN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS?
- 4.—DO YOU BELIEVE GOOD NEWS IN PREFERENCE TO BAD?
- 5.—DO YOU CONSIDER OUR LEADERS ARE COMPETENT TO CONDUCT THE WAR TO A SUCCESSFUL ISSUE?

IF YOUR ANSWER IS "YES" TO ANYONE OF THESE QUESTIONS THEN YOU ARE IN THE CLUTCHES OF THAT DREAD DISEASE.

**WE CAN CURE YOU.**

TWO DAYS SPENT AT OUR ESTABLISHMENT WILL EFFECTUALLY ERADICATE ALL TRACES OF IT FROM YOUR SYSTEM.  
DO NOT HESITATE—APPLY FOR TERMS AT ONCE TO:—

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TELEGRAMS: "GROUSE."

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Are now opening their book on the **Summer Meeting.**

**THE OLD LIBERAL PRICES ARE ON OFFER.**  
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**I-3 ATKINS and ANZAC.**  
100 I THE FLYING HUN.

**Do not trust financial crooks,**  
Put it on with Nunthorpe, Cox.

**Telegrams: "REDTABS."**

**Telephone: Six Lines, "102 Back'um."**

**Mr. HOWFIELD**

Begs to notify his many kind Patrons that he and Mr. CAULETT have DISSOLVED PARTNERSHIP owing to a little difference of opinion and he is carrying on business in NEW and COMMODIOUS PREMISES with

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**AND REMEMBER THAT**

If you're going o'er the bags,  
Come and see our new glad rags.

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ALLOWED OUR CUSTOMERS  
AS HITHERTO.

123

‘Gallows humour kicks in at times of great terror’

**QUESTIONS A  
PLATOON COMMANDER  
SHOULD ASK HIMSELF.**



ENGRAVED BY SAFFER COUZENS R.E.  
**I: Am I as offensive as I might be.**

Haupmann Van Horner,  
In trench traverse corner,  
Once heard what he thought  
was a "goer";  
But he was mistaken  
Said Fritz Carl Von Haken,  
"I'll write to his widow, I know  
her."

**CUPID'S CORNER.**  
By "CYNTHIA."

**A**S THE Editor has been so troubled with correspondence from loverly members of the Division, and feels that he is not qualified to deal with this section of his readers, he has deputed me to deal with them, and I shall be pleased to give advice in all little difficulties relating to "affaires de cœur."

**ANSWERS  
TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

**TROUBLED.**—Your letter is rather obscure. Am I to understand that you have actually proposed, or, that you are merely waiting an opportunity. As you appear to be in a position to marry, I think it is your clear duty to do so at once. Remember no girl of spirit likes to be played with.

**RED TAB.**—Thanks for the enclosed photo. You appear to be a very nice-looking boy. I am sorry to disappoint you, but if the young lady whom you call Tina has already refused the attentions of two generals, then do you not think it would be better to dismiss her from your thoughts. It may hurt now, but will soon be over.

**CLARA.**—Yes, I think the major treated you very badly indeed. But do not worry, forget him, and anyway he is only a major.

**GINGER.**—I am surprised that you should address such a letter to a lady! You ought to write and beg her forgiveness at once. But please let me know what she answers.

**CYNTHIA.**  
THE "LOVE EXPERT."

"These men were forgotten."

Add to that the fact that much of the poetry and prose of 1914-18 was not necessarily from a soldier's perspective, and the duo's motive for offering an alternative view is easy to understand.

"All the literature of the period is of the same tone; straight-down-the-line tragedy and loss," Newman says.

"It is very moving but we thought *The Wipers Times* is truer to human nature. Gallows humour kicks in at times of great terror."

Hislop adds: "Nick said at one point that in all of these First World War dramas people look out of the window and cry, but surely in four years someone made a joke."

"Someone must have smiled at some point!"

The personnel who produced the magazine might have had soldiering credentials over journalistic ones – a Military Cross each, in fact – but Hislop and Newman believe it is the raw experience that makes for such outstanding reading.

"When we found it we thought 'bloody hell, you're good,'" recalls Hislop. "And we're not being patronising saying 'it's funny for the time it was written' – people are laughing out loud in the audience every night."

There is no doubt that this stage show has been a labour of love, and the original trench magazine's parallels with the irreverent *Private Eye* are obvious.

When it comes to penning so-called offensive articles on war, Hislop has form.

He recalls being lambasted by the great and the good when he published a spoof poem following the British Army's exit from Basra.

"We ran a fake *Charge of the Light Brigade* ode and various military people said it was appalling," he says. "But I was later approached in the street by a young soldier who said he had been serving in Basra at the time.

"He told me it was the funniest thing he'd ever heard, which was wonderful."

"Something valuable we learnt from *The Wipers Times* is that you don't pretend to the people who know better."

Clearly this play will appeal to history buffs and those hunting for something fresh in a packed First World War genre, but Newman insists its humour reaches much further.

"We hope it's for everyone, especially kids, because it brings the war to life and it's funny," he adds. "I think it's important for young people to see it."

Hislop concludes: "If you want to hear the authentic voice of the troops you don't get that from history books, which have the benefit of hindsight, you get it from here."

"They were writing it as it happened." ■



**PERFORMANCES**

**Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield, November 3-5**

**New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich, November 7-12**

**Salisbury Playhouse, November 14-19**

## The Army's National Charity

Last year, we spent some £8.4million on delivering grants to nearly 5,000 soldiers, veterans and their immediate families, and provided funding to 88 charities, which deliver specialist support on our collective behalf.



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# THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

When commemorations for the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme began, *Soldier* editor Sarah Goldthorpe never imagined it would trigger a fresh discovery close to home...

My dad and I chat about most things.

From the quality of my breakdown cover to the pros and cons of Brexit, there isn't much that doesn't get verbally dissected in our family.

So when a tiny diary from the front line of the Somme is dropped into our conversation during July's First World War commemoration at the Thiepval Memorial, I am rather taken aback.

Apparently my great, great-uncle, a member of the Bradford Pals battalion, was one of those to carefully record events leading up to the battle – which came to an end 100 years ago this month.

Luckily for him, Cpl Norman Goldthorpe survived to tell the tale. And ever since the former newsagent's death in 1979, the pocket jotter in question has been sitting in his daughter's house.

Years later the Serviceman even committed more of his recollections to tape and this too remains in the family's possession.

I am astounded.

How has that passed me by?

Dad seems as stumped as me; he assumed I knew.

Perhaps I thought that in a family whose military



Report: Sarah Goldthorpe



heritage is limited to a few episodes of national service, anything like this would have been common knowledge.

Or perhaps I just expected that dad would have pointed it out to me as the conflict's 100th anniversary grew in prominence and given my job.

Whatever the reason, this tiny, mud-stained relic from the darkest chapter in the British Army's history had remained a complete mystery.

According to Anthony Richards, Head of Documents and Sound for the Imperial War Museum, such tales are not uncommon.

His organisation has been collecting first-hand accounts of the conflict since 1917 and often that process begins when family members stumble across something that surprises them.

"It's really nice when things like this come to light," he says. "Since the First World War centenary we have had a noticeable rise in diaries and accounts offered to us.

"The commemorations often remind people that they have items in the family, and there is probably also an element of people not realising that what they do have is particularly significant."

At a family celebration a few weeks later I find myself shut away from the party, instead thumbing through the notebook of Cpl Goldthorpe.

Some pages contain very little – if any – detail.

Others are so succinct that you can't help but be transported back to the chaotic conditions of the battlefield.

"Weather still bad," a short entry for June 8 reads.

The following day: "Had to retire into trenches. Germans fire rifle grenades. Very narrow escape."

The briefness afforded to such dangerous encounters tells more of a story than the words themselves.

But it is the entry on

the evening of June 30 that really sends chills down my spine.

"Entered trenches at 1100" it states.

After a bit of technical wizardry, the audio file of Cpl Goldthorpe describing the conflict in his own words is emailed over to me.

And his recollection of the opening hours on July 1 makes for rather difficult listening.

"At 0820 I remember saying a little prayer and just before we climbed out, our officer Lt Foizey said 'I know that I will not come back,' he explains solemnly.

"I told him to believe he would as I certainly believed I would.

"I scrambled out behind Lt Foizey.

"Having not travelled more than 30 yards or so the section was reduced to four men.

"Lt Foizey ordered his small party to take cover behind a small hillock, whilst he went forward to see what was happening, but he was killed covering only a couple of yards.

"I saw [him] tumble over the back of a trench, wounded in the thigh.

"I made him comfortable, and had his wounds dressed, and placed him in a traverse at the back of the trench.

"Soon afterwards a terrible explosion took place, throwing up all the sandbags and earthwork in the immediate neighbourhood and burying several men, together with

Lt Foizey."

Although not unique, discovery of material like this is vital in building a better understanding of conditions on July 1, 1916.

"The value of these diaries is in the personal experiences they reveal," Mr Richards continues.

"You can have lots of accounts written at the same time, describing the same thing, but each one paints events in a different way. Put together, they give a bigger picture."

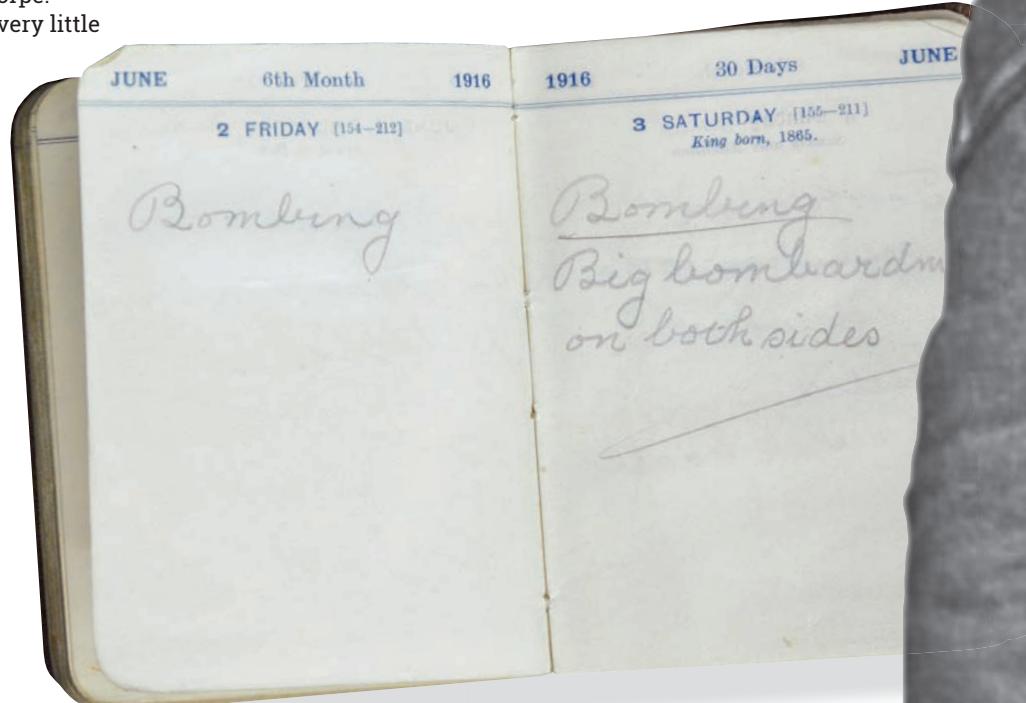
Remembrance Day seems to have more of an impact on me with every year I continue to work for *Soldier*.

But this month in particular I will spend the two-minute silence feeling slightly regretful that – just for a moment – one of my own relative's brave deeds were forgotten.

I hope the brief telling of his story on these pages goes some way to address that. ■

## UNCOVERED YOUR OWN BATTLEFIELD TALE?

Tell the *Soldier* team by writing to us at the usual address or emailing [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk)





Month

1916

JUNE

FRIDAY [160-206]

First Quarter, 11.50 p.m.

Terrand  
ound by  
Batt. Bombers  
Leather still  
had.

1916

30 Days

FRIDAY [161-205]

Easter Law Sittings end.

Went over Sid  
Sgt. Wounded  
Had to retire  
into trenches  
Germans fire  
Rifle Grenades  
Very narrow  
escape

Some of Cpl Norman Goldthorpe's diary entries leading up to the Battle of the Somme, in which 1.2 million troops died

Having not travelled more than 30 yards or so the section was reduced to four men

# 'It has to be a

# B

ETWEEN the commute, work, family and leisure time, modern life can be pretty full-on.

So giving up your weekends and holidays to be a soldier is no small order.

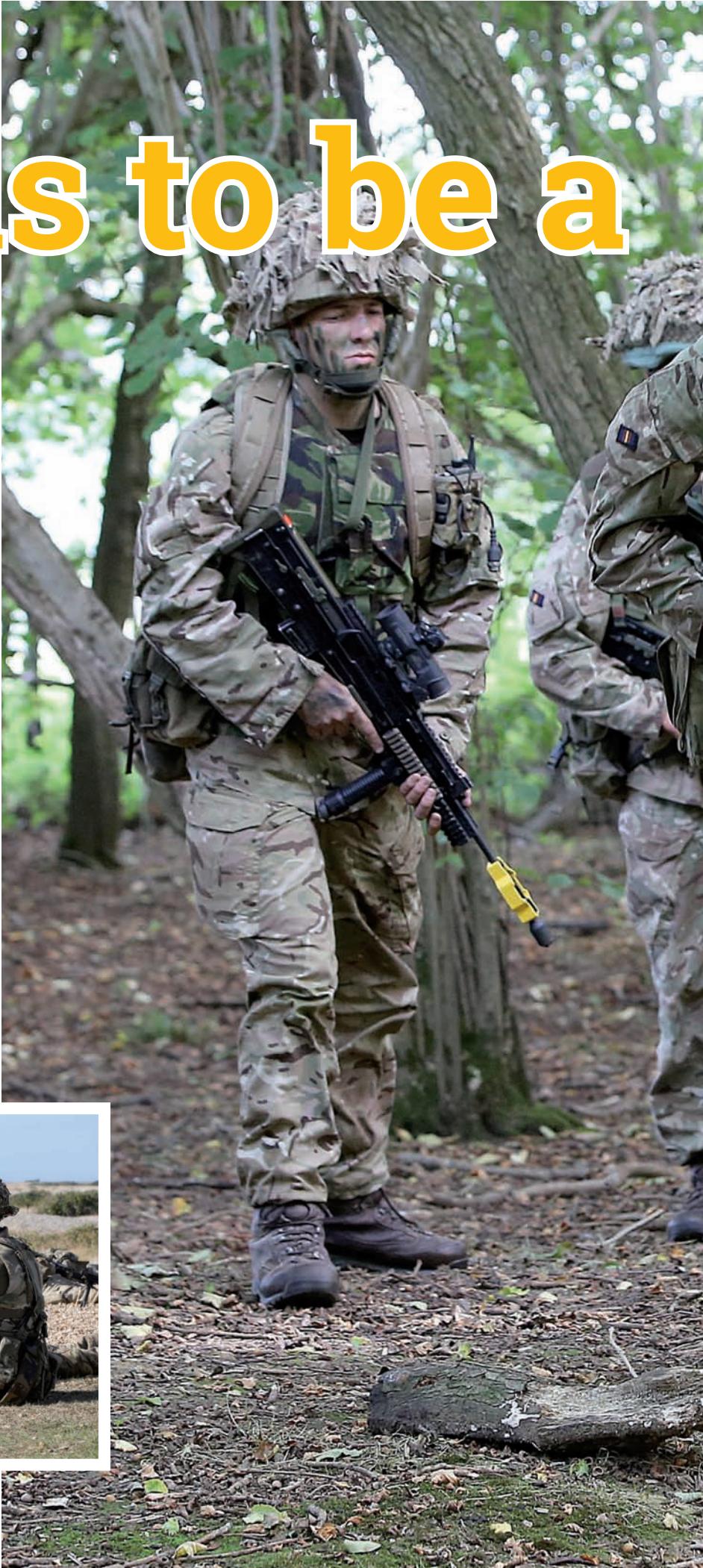
But that is the choice Reservists make every time they put on their uniform.

In recognition of these competing priorities, one formation has set out to ease the decision for its personnel.

Determined to boost recruiting and retention, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment has introduced what is known as the "whole Army experience" – put simply, a plan to make the military as central to Reservists' lives as it is for their Regular counterparts.

*Soldier* spoke to the man behind the idea, Lt Col Keith Spiers, during the unit's annual training camp on Lydd ranges.

While his troops went through their





# way of life'

**What makes a Reservist join up and stay for the long haul? This unit might have the answer...**

drills, the commanding officer explained how he launched the concept to ensure the battalion meets its target of reaching full operating capability in time for 2020.

"It's not enough just to be recruiting well; we have to retain well," he said.

"So we had to start understanding why people were struggling to attend and the external pressures they face.

"There's work and family obviously, but for me one of our biggest competitors is the entertainment industry; TV, cinema, computer games, paintballing or whatever – all the things that take up their spare time.

"The next thing was for us to look at what we can do to mitigate against that. For example, rather than joining a gym a soldier can use our one for free, or if someone plays for a local football team instead they can play for ours.

"That way their friendship group starts to be within the battalion itself, not outside it, and there is less to pull them away."

Having built up a picture of troops' personal commitments as well as their thoughts on their Reserve activities, those at the helm set about increasing the military, sporting, social and adventurous training opportunities available to them.

Among those charged with implementing the scheme was WO2 Oz Wilson, company sergeant major of Norwich-based Number 1 Company and a former member of the Army Air Corps.

With 24 years as a Regular under his

belt, the 44-year-old thought fostering a similar mentality among his Reservists may prove difficult.

"To be honest, I expected it to be more of a marathon than a sprint when I arrived," he said.

"But the company has gone from strength to strength. The first exercise we deployed on we had eight or nine soldiers, which was poor, but now we have an average of 40 easily.

"We have a better ethos and we're setting the pace for the rest of the battalion – people are looking to us."

Key to the growing numbers has been a programme of activities aimed at friends and relatives.

"We've put on lots of events for the families," he continued. "We hired a coach and took 100 people to our regimental day at Duxford, we have parties around Halloween and Bonfire Night and summer and Christmas functions too.

"It's trying to create that family atmosphere that is second nature in the Regulars but we're now starting to get it in the Reserves as well."

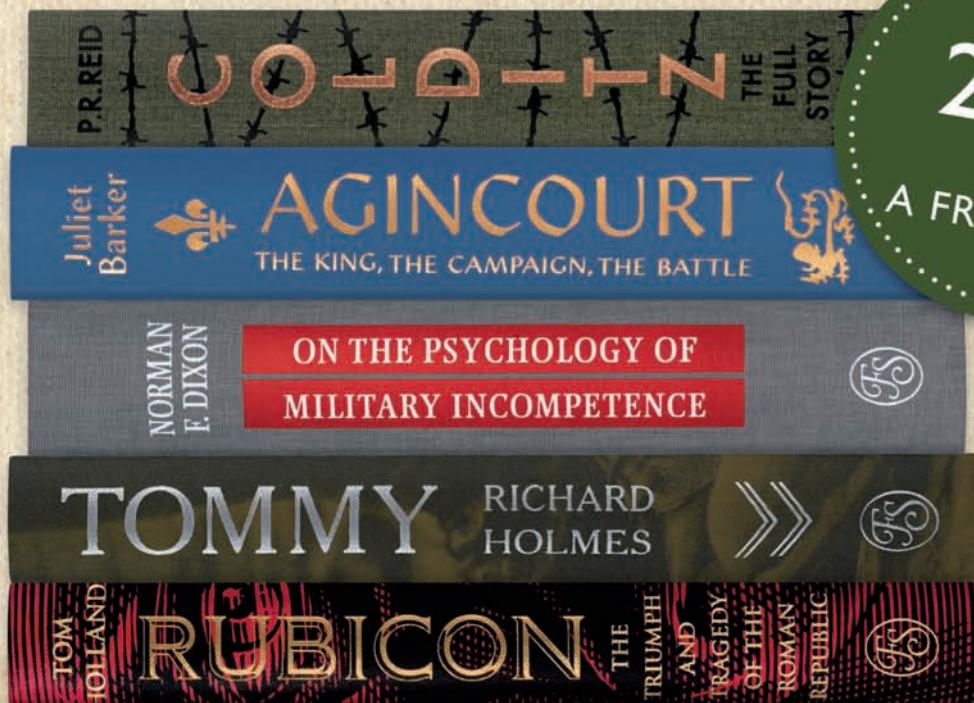
With numbers on the up, providing personnel with career progression has also been a major focus and those who want to work their way up the ranks are given every chance to do so.

"Right now I have two lads in Brecon on their promotional course and six whom we're in the process of developing," said WO2 Wilson.

"Last week I had three guys promoted in front of the battalion, which is good because everyone is there to see it and

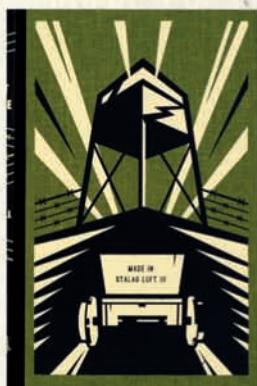


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“

We're regularly running at 110 in training

”

appreciate what can be achieved.

“Before, I had to put the brakes on because I'd have too many NCOs and not enough lower ranks but now I have that cohort coming in behind them I'll have an abundance of private soldiers and I need that leadership in place.”

As well as regular training nights and weekends, recent overseas deployments have taken troops to countries such as Germany, Kenya, Nigeria, Canada and the Falkland Islands, and last year's annual camp saw the battalion become the first British Army unit to go on exercise in Slovenia.

In another positive development, it also became one of the first Reserve formations to add a fourth company to its establishment, enlarging an existing platoon based in North Lincolnshire and centring it on Grimsby. But Lt Col Spiers is taking nothing for granted.

“We want to be the best recruited, best retained, best attended and best trained battalion in the Reserve,” he said.

“Since April alone 78 people have joined and we expect to be in triple figures before the end of the year.

“We're regularly running at around 110 to 120 in training at any one period so we're exceptionally strong, but it's more about attendance.

“It would be really easy for me to try and meet my numbers in time for 2020 by not discharging people but that becomes counterintuitive if the soldiers aren't actually turning up for months on end.

“So if I was required to support a UK resilience operation I know that I really do have perhaps 230 of my 250 who are around, willing, able and dedicated, whom I can call on, not 150 out of 300 because half of them aren't attending on a regular basis.

“In order for that to happen the Reserve has to become a way of life, and that's what the whole Army experience is about.”

Having himself spent 30 years as a part-time soldier, Lt Col Spiers has certainly followed that mantra.

Whether the personnel joining 3 R Anglian in 2016 will stay the course for quite as long remains to be seen but those who do sign up will find plenty to keep their interest in the near future. □



● Known as The Steelbacks, 3 Royal Anglian has company locations in Bury St Edmunds, Norwich, Leicester, Chelmsford and Grimsby. If you think life as Reservist might be for you and you want to know more, call WO2 Richard Stevens on 01284 718468 or email [3ang-roswo@mod.uk](mailto:3ang-roswo@mod.uk)



# Opportunity knocks

**Troops on making the most of what part-time service has to offer...**



## DEPLOYMENTS

**Pte Rob England**

**Age: 42**

**Role: Machine gun section**

**Time in unit: 18 months**

“Earlier this year I was attached to 1 Royal Anglian for four months, including eight weeks down in the Falkland Islands as the Roulement Infantry Company.

We were working as the quick reaction force and also patrolling out to settlements and along the coastline to make sure no observation posts or landing sites had been set up.

To work alongside the experienced guys was brilliant for me and also to tread the ground that our soldiers walked in 1982.

I'm hoping to go to Brecon and do the fire team commanders course soon, which will be my first step towards becoming a junior NCO.

I've been in nearly two years now so it's my time to step up.”



## SPORT

**LCpl Fran Cross**

**Age: 31**

**Role: Class 2 Combat Medical Technician**

**Time in unit: 2 ½ years**

“My other half is in the same battalion; we went through basic training together.

The best thing is that we've done so much in so little time.

We're both yellow belts so we go and do the martial arts competitions.

There have been lots of opportunities to get involved with AT too, such as sailing and skiing.

I work in the recruiting team and I can tell people about all the stuff the Army gives you, because I've actually done it all.”



## ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

**LCpl Paul Evans**

**Age: 36**

**Role: Machine gun section**

**Time in unit: 4 years**

“I've seen some positive changes in the last 18 months, for example I've been sailing three times.

It's an opportunity for the lads to get a competent crew qualification and it also helps them to bond.

It's not a holiday camp but the stuff where the guys can get together, where it's less intense and they're not getting thrashed all the time gives them an opportunity to get to know each other better.

The closer knit they are the less likely they are to leave. We're much more of a group now.

Maybe a year or so ago we weren't sure who would turn up to training and now there's a core of lads who are there every Wednesday or weekend and that's great.”

## Is your unit doing better?

Let us know via Facebook, Twitter or by emailing [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk)



# Buffalo

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# PICTURES THAT PACK A PUNCH

A selection of the best images from this year's Army Photographic Competition

**I**T has been another sparkling year for the Service's camera-wielding fraternity with the bar arguably set higher than ever before in the Army Photographic Competition.

The annual click-off is open to all Regular and Reserve personnel, staff and cadets of the Combined Cadet Force, Army Cadet Force, University Officer Training Corps (Army), and MoD civilians and contractors.

However, command master photographer WO1 Will Craig believes it is the proliferation of devices able to produce high quality images as much as the stratospheric levels of interest in the contest that are responsible for the high standard this year.

"I'm hugely impressed with the quality of imagery, there was a lot of debate when it came to the judging," he told *Soldier*.

"The insight the images give us of the day-to-day life of a British soldier is unique.

"This year has seen the highest number of amateur entries we have ever had.

"We had personnel using their phones and larger-format cameras to capture some really great pictures.

"The professionals had to work a little bit harder in some of the new categories, which have challenged even the most experienced operators."

Judge for yourself whether the cream of the competition have done themselves proud...

**1. 'ARMY BOXER'**  
BY CPL PAUL SHAW, RLC  
BEST OVERALL ARMY PR IMAGE

**2. 'BLACK SUN'**  
BY BDR MURRAY KERR, RA  
1<sup>ST</sup> AMATEUR PORTFOLIO

**3. 'INTO THE NIGHT'**  
BY OCOT HARVEY MARSDEN, HMS  
*FORWARD*  
2<sup>ND</sup> AMATEUR SPORT

**4. 'READY TO GO'**  
BY SGT RUPERT FRERE, RLC  
1<sup>ST</sup> PROFESSIONAL STORY

**5. 'BITING BACK'**  
BY GRAEME MAIN, *SOLDIER*  
2<sup>ND</sup> PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERING

**6. 'JUNGLE WARFARE'**  
BY CPL TIM JONES, RLC  
1<sup>ST</sup> PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

**7. 'FULL THROTTLE'**  
BY CPL IAN CHAPMAN, RE  
1<sup>ST</sup> AMATEUR SPORT





**A**S the autumnal sun beats down on Llanbedr Airfield all appears normal at the quiet Welsh outpost. Keen spotters gather at the perimeter to catch an excited glimpse at the military aircraft that come and go, while the soldiers inside the wire calmly congregate in an empty hangar to enjoy some downtime.

But from the rugged terrain of the surrounding hills every move in this seemingly unspectacular routine is being closely observed.

This task has been handed to Reservists from the Honourable Artillery Company, whose personnel have descended on Snowdonia National Park as part of their annual two-week training period – Exercise Vambrace Warrior.

The airfield, along with the disused Trawsfynydd power station, form critical infrastructure in a fictitious country on the brink of destabilisation.

With a strong military presence at each site soldiers from 1 Squadron have been deployed in a surveillance role to monitor day-to-day activity and push their findings up the chain of command.

This work is meat and drink for the committed observers, who hail from the Army's only Reserve surveillance and target acquisition (STA) regiment.

To make things more interesting their counterparts from 2 and 3 Squadrons are helping to defend the airfield and power station with the skills that will see them track, monitor and, hopefully, expose their foe.

In another twist, troops from Japan, the USA, Malaysia and Ireland are out on the ground while assets including air defence systems, a light electronic warfare team, military working dogs,

intelligence analysts and a quick reaction force from the Grenadier Guards have also been thrown into the mix.

This is a complex and wide reaching exercise with Reservists at the fore.

"It is a force-on-force scenario," explained commanding officer Lt Col Mark Wood. "The STA patrols group has been deployed to get an oversight of this infrastructure and those based at the locations are in a force protection role.

"The beauty of this exercise is that they know there is a live and capable enemy trying to get up close and personal.

"There is a huge amount of rivalry between the squadrons as nobody likes losing. That is really positive as it pushes the guys on to bigger and better things.

"We have got to push hard and expect to make mistakes; if we don't do that we're not learning."

Those on the outside are equipped for the long game. They can operate at a range of around two kilometres for up to seven days unsupported and are masters of avoiding detection.

Their rivals form the regiment's light STA capability, which sees the detachments conduct short-range, short-duration surveillance and target acquisition operations using radars, thermal imaging kit, optics and radios.

"We were pushed out as an advance team to secure the power station, dominate the ground and keep it in friendly hands," WO2 Amanda Wheeler, squadron sergeant major of 3 Squadron, told *Soldier*.

"We have found signs of an enemy observation post up in the hills and have seen evidence of close-range reconnaissance activity.

"The great thing about this exercise is the fact we are training in a real scenario.

"We are working around civilians who are going about their daily lives and this power station is a genuine facility."

## Surveillance specialists from the HAC test their mettle in Snowdonia

# We're wat



Personnel patrol the Llanbedr Airfield perimeter in search of enemy forces





6  
The great  
thing  
about this  
exercise  
is the fact  
we are  
training  
in a real  
scenario  
9



"Having multinational troops and other Army assets involved widens our perspective. It is very exciting for the guys to see how our capacity feeds into the bigger picture."

The move away from traditional Army proving grounds was a key requirement for Lt Col Wood and he believes the switch to a civilian backdrop will offer valuable lessons for his soldiers.

It also posed challenges at the planning stage, with local authorities, police and private landowners having to be consulted on a regular basis.

"We have got a fantastic military training estate but we are used to operating in that," the officer said.

"We wanted to put our people in an environment they are not familiar with and train the same way as we would fight on an expeditionary operation.

"This is unforgiving and challenging terrain that will test them to their limits.

"In all my years of Regular service this is probably the biggest regimental exercise I have been involved with in terms of complexity and scope. It is fantastic



Picture: Cpl Jamie McAllister, RLC

ching you

► to be part of it."

Like a number of Army units, the HAC has been re-roled in recent times and the light STA tasking is a new concept to many.

The Welsh adventure was the first time this capability had been fully tested in the field and the early results show lessons have been quickly learnt.

"Warfare is complicated," explained CSgt James Martin, of 2 Squadron. "Afghanistan was all about holding ground but as the Army moves to a conventional footing it is important we are prepared for all eventualities.

"This is a really young squadron and

two thirds have only been in the Service for around four years. But that is actually a good thing.

"We have people who are accepting of change and keen to get stuck into developing this new capability."

This test will leap to a new level next year when the HAC deploys to California on a reconnaissance and surveillance exercise alongside the US National Guard.

The complexity of these operations highlights the evolution of the Reserves and integration with multinational partners, as well as wider Army assets, means they will be ready to step up if, and when, their skills are required for real. ■

# Talking training

**Personnel from the Honourable Artillery Company share their thoughts on Exercise Vambrace Warrior...**



**Tpr Chris Lavallee**

“It is about picking up on suspicious behavior, monitoring things and passing information to the relevant people who can turn it into intelligence.

On a training weekend we will work on surveillance tasks but out here it is a real life scenario. It is challenging terrain and we are away from that sterile environment.

I would never normally get to go and use ground sign detection but out here I've been on early morning patrols with the guys from Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards and have done exactly that.

The good thing about this exercise is that we don't know when the

enemy is coming or where from. If we don't do our job properly we will not catch them. ”



**Tpr Peter Obolensky**

“This is the first time we have been integrated with other units in the Army. It is really interesting to see what they do and how we all come together as a cohesive unit.

If I was to ever to deploy on operations that experience would be invaluable.

Our training has really focused on what we will be doing here.

It is about setting up observation posts, knowing what to look for and having a view of what is going on around you.

We are more mature

soldiers. We have different experiences from the civilian world and that contributes in a variety of ways. I think it is one of the strengths of the HAC. ”



**Tpr Thomas Tarn**

“I'm part of the troop that runs the signals element for 3 Squadron headquarters. There are always one or two things that do not go to plan at the start, but we have got good comms for the guys on the ground.

It is really exciting and more challenging compared to what we are used to. It is a completely different environment and there are lots of moving parts.

It is nice to get out and do the role we train for. ”

“

It is great for us to see many different assets working together

”



# Artillery advance

THE complexity of the exercise allowed scope for other Reserve units to join the fold and it was an invitation that was gladly accepted by the troops of 106 Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Personnel from 265 Air Assault Battery manned LML high velocity missile systems at the airfield and power station alongside their Regular counterparts from 12 Regiment.

"We don't normally get the opportunity to join multinational exercises so this is great experience for our guys," said battery commander Maj Ian Sivyer.

"Because we have so many qualifications to complete our annual training period can be nothing but courses. To get away on a proper field exercise is fantastic."

Detachment commander Bdr Domenic Sidonio was another to sing the praises of the Welsh mission and explained how it offered valuable experience on the Pinzgauers used to transport the missiles.

"We have just managed to get the vehicles so this is our first opportunity to use them in the field with the proper cam nets," he added.

"I've also had the chance to learn the

role of a detachment commander and the guys have been able to set up the LML, spot different aircraft and report what they have seen.

"They've also done a lot of dry tracking. With fast jets that is difficult to do so it is good training for them."

Another of the regiment's assets to be tested was the tracked Stormer vehicle, which also comes equipped with high velocity missiles.

Reservists from 295 and 457 Batteries arrived at Llanbedr after a week of low-level training at the Castle Martin ranges.

They performed recce patrols around the airfield and offered an immediate response to the threat posed by enemy attack helicopters.

The thermal imaging equipment on-board also provided a valuable asset to the HAC soldiers in their pursuit of opposition forces.

"We had a couple of young troopers come out with us and they were so focused and professional; they really knew their trade," commented SSgt Steven Williams.

"For us, the kit is used for tracking targets but they were looking for heat signatures at observation posts – it worked really well."

"It is great for us to see so many different assets working together."



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# IT'S A SNEAKY THING, ALCOHOL.

IT CREEPS UP ON YOU SO SLOWLY THAT YOU DON'T NOTICE IT.  
BUT WHEN I TRIED TO STOP I COULDN'T.



Interview: Sarah Goldthorpe Picture: Steve Dock

**T**HE story of ex-gunner Glyn Owen is enough to stop any casual drinker in their tracks.

At 17 he joined the Army a bright young man with a thirst for adventure.

But when he left four years later he was on a dangerous path to alcoholism, one that would deprive him of his health, his family and a career in civvy street.

Now in recovery, the former member of 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery is using his experiences to help other members of the military community at the Tom Harrison House addiction treatment centre in Liverpool.

Here, the support worker explains his story and why the Army's effort to tone down a culture of heavy drinking is so important...

When I joined civvy street people commented that I drank too much.

But I disagreed. I thought anyone who didn't enjoy a beer was a bit strange.

I'm not blaming the Army for what happened to me.

I used to go to the pub as a civilian, but in the military in the early nineties the drinking culture was massive. →

## 4 REASONS

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1



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2



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3



PEOPLE WHO DRINK HEAVILY ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

4



BOOZING TO EXCESS CAN MAKE GOOD SEX DIFFICULT. MEN MAY STRUGGLE TO GET AN ERECTION AND WOMEN CAN FIND IT HARDER TO ORGASM.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Any downtime we had, we were in the bar drinking.

It was literally finish work, straight to the bar; endex, straight to the bar.

As a young lad I thought that's just what you did.

Alcohol felt like a reward; I worked hard and I'd earned it.

After a couple of overseas postings I came back to England and the job became more nine-to-five so I decided to leave.

But the drinking culture stayed with me.

I moved into the building game and it got to the point where I started losing work because of it.

I was losing friends, too.

Then a close family member died and I hit the beer badly.

I remember thinking 'this is ridiculous' but when I tried to stop I couldn't.

I had cravings, shakes, the lot.

That's the point I tried to get help.

My first port of call was the GP who put me on a reduction programme but it didn't work.

Looking back, I probably wasn't being honest about how much I was drinking.

When in uniform it's instilled in you not to show weakness; you just crack on.

So we are less likely to ask for help.

Support groups didn't work for me; I didn't fit in with the people or staff.

You get let down a lot in civilian life and as a soldier I wasn't prepared for that.

There's an honesty and bond between the Forces that doesn't exist elsewhere. But to beat addiction you need that trust.

I had 15 years of hell.

At one point I even went into anaphylactic shock because I withdrew too quickly.

I knew I couldn't drink any more because I was killing myself and hurting too many people but I couldn't live without it.

Eventually I managed to get myself into a detox clinic where one of the staff overheard me speaking to another veteran. That's when they told me about Tom Harrison House.

I made a phone call and have never looked back since.

I came here and there was a feeling straight away – I felt safe.

With other ex-Service personnel you know they have your back; you know you won't be ridiculed.

I did the centre's 12-week treatment course in January 2015 and it certainly wasn't easy but I passed.

It recreated that spirit you get in the Forces and that helped me through.

Dealing with alcoholism is a lifetime job but helping others reminds me that I am an alcoholic, and that's a good thing.

I have come to terms with the damage it has caused in my life and am going to try my damnedest never to have another drink again.

My life is so much better now.

Before treatment I was a frustrated, sad, desperate individual.

I was isolated, my wife split from me and I had a young son who I couldn't see because I was so mentally unstable.

But I enjoy life now; I take part in life and am building bridges with people.

Sometimes my son asks why I haven't been living at home.

I tell him it was because I was drinking too much and he's aware it caused problems.

Looking back I am glad my wife threw me out and he wasn't exposed to it all.

He was part of the reason I wanted to get better, but in the end you have to do it for yourself and not others.

It's difficult because I don't think the military would be the same without the togetherness you get when you all have a drink.

But guys need to be aware of the progressiveness of it.

It's a sneaky thing, alcohol. It creeps up on you so slowly that you don't notice it.

But when I tried to stop I couldn't.

The amount that some people drink in the Army is not normal.

I know squaddies reading this now will roll their eyes – I would have done back then – but if this story makes an impact on anyone, that's progress.

The beer takes you away from your real self, and from there you lose just about everything.

I can see all this now because I have had time to think about it.



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# STREET WISE

THE NEW TECHNOLOGY THAT COULD REVOLUTIONISE URBAN OPERATIONS

**J**UST about every major study in recent years on the nature of future conflict has concluded that there is a strong possibility the Army will be drawn into highly complex operations in densely populated urban areas within the next couple of decades.

It's no surprise then that one of the most intriguing projects currently being conducted by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), along with Roke Manor Research, is looking at providing infantry troops with advanced technology that could change the way war fighting is conducted in this intricate landscape.

The proposed dismounted close combat sensor system would be carried by each soldier and is, essentially, a collection of sophisticated detectors, lasers, helmet cameras and GPS equipment that combine to enhance situational awareness for each individual and the unit commander.

In a combat situation it sends a stream of data between personnel and also back to the section leader who can track the troops on screen as they move around a built-up area, even when they've entered a building or tunnel complex.

This has the potential to make missions in this landscape more efficient and safer than they are at present.

"Going into a complex urban setting

where the enemy knows the environment better than you adds considerable risk to any operation," says Dr Ken McEwan, the project's principal engineer at DSTL.

"This technology won't eliminate that risk but it will help mitigate it because of the greater situational awareness it brings and the ability to coordinate the troops' movements and fire, reducing the blue-on-blue threat as well."

So how does it work? Well, imagine a section of troops conducting a search of a large office block.

If the GPS transmitters in their packs cease functioning because of the nature of the structure, the system uses helmet cameras and something called inertial sensors – a combination of gyroscopes and movement detectors of the type used in mobile phones. The data from these two sources allows the equipment to calculate the soldier's movement and position.

This information is transmitted via the military radio network to a commander's tablet, allowing the officer to track the troops' progress at all times.

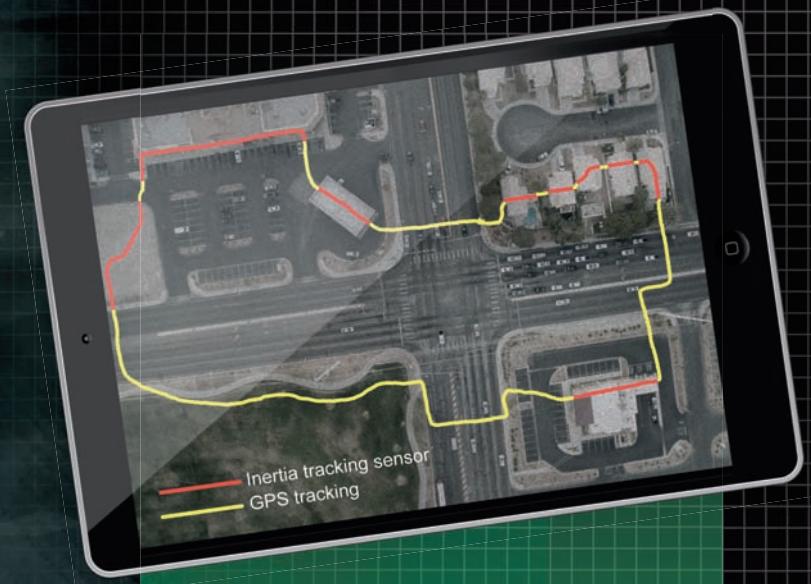
The system isn't just focused on tracking personnel, though.

GPS, inertial and magnetic sensors are also mounted on each weapon to indicate where they are pointing. The technology will then alert the commander if friendly troops are being targeted.

Also, each soldier will have a weapon-mounted display, a small screen linked



Soldiers wearing the system identify targets to each other with a laser and through their weapon-mounted display



► The dismounted close combat system combines data from movement sensors and video images when GPS signals are not available. Using information based on the last known GPS-captured location, the equipment calculates the soldiers' progress so the commander can view his troops' position in the horizontal and vertical planes in buildings and tunnels.



to his weapon's sensors and also to the other members of the section – their view of the battlefield through this piece of kit is, in effect, networked.

A soldier will be able to fire a laser mounted on his rifle to highlight an enemy position.

The system calculates the GPS position of the laser dot and takes visual references from his weapon-mounted camera to identify the target's location.

It then shows this position in his colleagues' weapon-mounted displays. A series of graphic symbols on the screen then guide the troops to the target's location, allowing the group to coordinate fire on to a single point.

The position can also be communicated to supporting unmanned aerial vehicles or aircrews in Apaches and fast jets who are armed with compatible equipment.

Other aspects of this fledgling technology are just as ground-breaking.

For example, it can detect fire from a hidden position – a sniper in an unlit window or on a rooftop, for example – by using highly sensitive acoustic and camera technology to locate the muzzle flash and sound of a gun's discharge.

Graphics on the weapon-mounted display immediately alert the soldier to the presence of enemy fire, even if the personnel haven't seen or heard the shot.

They also guide the troops towards the source of the attack.

"Identifying the enemy's position and coordinating a response will be quicker, easier and less confusing than giving verbal instructions in this environment; it will also be extremely accurate," adds Dr McEwan.

"But the technology has civilian applications too, in earthquake or fire situations for example, where rescuers can be tracked as they extract people from burning or collapsed buildings."

The system is still in the early stages of development but DSTL and the Roke Manor team leading the project believe it will be ready for testing in simulated combat around 2020.

If the military strategists' crystal balls are telling the truth about the nature of conflicts to come, this prototype can't become operational a moment too soon. ■



Soldiers can identify the enemy position to each other and communicate it to air support assets

The logo for Haix, featuring the brand name in a stylized, blocky font. The letters 'H' and 'A' are dark blue, while 'i' and 'x' are light blue. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located in the top right corner of the 'x'.

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# Hard-won lessons

**This month the Olympic athlete-turned-television personality tells us what life has taught him...**

**Name:** Kriss Akabusi

**Age:** 57

**Dates of service:** 1975-1990

**Cap badges:** Royal Signals and later

the Army Physical Training Corps

**Standout operations:** No active service

**Current status:** Now running his own motivational speaking company, the former sprint and hurdling star and father of four still finds time for regular television appearances including Sky News.

**THE ARMY CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.** If I hadn't been a soldier I doubt I would have been an athlete. I joined for a sense of belonging. I didn't have a home and for me the military was family. I learnt a lot. There's an earthiness and camaraderie that I've never found anywhere else, even in the sporting world.

**DISCIPLINE IS CRUCIAL.** I was a disobedient child; easily led and a daredevil. But joining the Army gave me a reason to be different and the importance of discipline has stuck with me ever since. The military teaches you that you are a small cog in a massive machine. I am very self-controlled today. I run my own company and my own life.

**TIME MOVES FAST** and Army life comes to an end much more quickly than you think. You sign up then – boom – you're outside. I was a world-class athlete with sponsorship but the biggest shock was handing in that ID card and having no right to get onto camp any more.

**PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE** and start making links in civilian street. When I was a soldier I had no worries about a roof over my head or food in my belly. But the world isn't like that. You have to be aware you will be on your own and organise yourself beforehand.

**YOU CAN DO MORE THAN BEING A DOORMAN OR A LORRY DRIVER.** Great if those are things you want to do, but there are other things too. The military equips you wonderfully for life in the civilian world. On the other hand, that change can cripple you. Soldiers have to choose which one.

**IT'S EASY TO OFFEND.** As a soldier you talk directly, but being that coarse in civvy street can cause problems – especially in a more softly softly environment. You can't start singing *Heartbreak Hotel* to someone with cardiovascular disease in civvy street. I still meet up with PT corps guys and we talk about stuff that you just can't do elsewhere.

**THE FIRST 25 YEARS OF YOUR LIFE ARE A TEMPLATE FOR THE REST.**

If you join up at 16 there's stuff you will learn over nine years that you will come back to when you're 50 or 60.

**'The military teaches you that you are a small cog in a massive machine'**

**[VETERAN INTERVIEW]**



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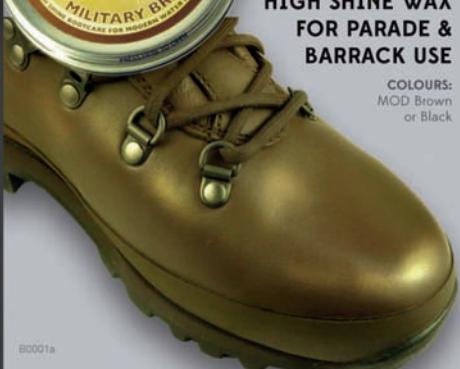
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# WE WIN

*Soldier* shares the love to keep the home front happy this Christmas

**I**T'S the same old story. You're either busy winding up jobs ahead of the Army's Christmas exodus or trying to ignore as much festive cheer as possible as the prospect of a December operation looms. Either way, trying to find the perfect present for the other half is not always top of the priority list. It should be, let's be honest. Army families are often as married to the job as their soldier. But when reality takes over there's never the time to say thank you properly.

Enter *Soldier*...

This year we have decided to do the hard work for you and source a host of brilliant Christmas prizes which you can use to fob off – ahem – put a smile on the face of your partner, wife, mother, boyfriend or best mate.

Whoever you have to thank for all the moral support in 2016, make sure you "like" us on Facebook to see updates on how the giveaway will work.

With diamond jewellery, spa days and gift vouchers among the prizes up for grabs, you could end up bagging a present that will score some major brownie points... as long as you don't give the game away by leaving your copy of *Soldier* lying around.



[facebook.com/soldiermagazine](https://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine)

# Queen Ethelburga's - Girls and Boys

**Thorpe Underwood, York. YO26 9SS. Tel: 01423 333 330 Email: [info@QE.org](mailto:info@QE.org). [www.QE.org](http://www.QE.org)**

Living as a member of a Forces family is an unusual experience and not normally one understood by those unfamiliar with Service life. Civilians find it difficult to imagine a job where you can be moved at little or no notice and where you can be sent into a hostile zone with no regular means of contacting your family.



Rest assured, we understand the pressures that your family has to go through. About a fifth of our pupils come from Forces backgrounds and we work hard to support those children and the difficulties they face being away from home and worrying about their serving parents.

The College has seen another outstanding year with its A level results. 87% of grades at A level were A\*-A and 98% were A\*-B.

The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's, which offers students the opportunity

to do more vocational subjects at BTEC, celebrated some of its best results ever. 84% of grades at A level were A\*-A and 96% of grades were A\*-B. The Faculty's 91% Distinction\*-Distinction pass rate at BTEC (equating in UCAS points to an A/A\* grade at A level) shows equal strength in these qualifications.

Over the last few years our Combined Cadet Force has gone from strength to strength and we have a thriving contingent with cadets split between the Air Force and the Army.

With the backing of The Collegiate Charitable Foundation we are able to guarantee that your contribution to fees is no more than £895 per child per term. This makes us one of the most competitively priced boarding schools in the United Kingdom for Forces children.

With our investment now standing at £100m, 2016 has seen more facilities come online including 8 new grassed sports pitches with over 100 floodlights, state-of-the-art gym and Activity Centre with further

developments underway for 2017. Please see our dedicated sports village website ([www.sportsvillageqe.org](http://www.sportsvillageqe.org)) for further information, including Elite Rugby (supported by Yorkshire Carnegie) and Netball (with Yorkshire Jets). With the number of young people we have living on campus it is important that there is always a range of things to do in their spare time. This is the idea behind our new Activity Centre, packed full of all the favourite things young people like. It combines outdoor energetic activities and challenges such as a huge climbing tower, assault course, trampolines, roller boating, go-karts, Segways and a professionally built BMX track with indoor activities like electronic games, musical activities plus much more. Don't just take our word for it, pay us a visit and see for yourself.

**Call us on 01423 333330 for a prospectus and DVD.**

**Next Open Day is 19th November 2016.**

## UK's 2016 Top 20 Independent Schools

based on Telegraph rankings for % A\*/A grade A levels

1	Cardiff Sixth Form College	92.96
2	Westminster School	89.91
3	Magdalen College School	87.85
4	North London Collegiate School	87.44
5	Queen Ethelburga's College	86.86
6	Wycombe Abbey School	85.81
7	King Edward's School, Birmingham	85.59
8	The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's	83.67
9	Guildford High School for Girls	83.64
10	James Allen's Girls' School	82.91
11	Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls	81.89
12	Withington Girls' School	81.43
13	The Perse School	80.22
14	St John's College, Cardiff	80.17
15	Brighton College	79.13
16	The Stephen Perse Foundation	79.03
17	Royal Grammar School	78.49
18	Concord College	78.47
19	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	78.46
20	King's College School (KCS)	76.99



► **Your parental termly contribution is only £895.**

This extremely low, termly, parental contribution of £895 means we rank as one of the most competitively priced schools for UK Forces. Childcare Vouchers also accepted.

► **Queen Ethelburga's College is league table ranked as the 5th best UK independent school for academic results and our Faculty is 8th.**

We accept a broad range of abilities. As one parent said: "QE has the ability to turn the average youngster into well above average academically and have them also turn out as happy and well-rounded." 95% of Year 13 students go to university with majority to Oxbridge, Ivy League or Russell Group universities.

► **Our boarding facilities are the best in Europe. No one else even comes close.**

Every bedroom has its own private shower and toilet plus telephone, voice mail, large plasma TV/DVD player + gaming port (on timer), a Sony PS3, fridge, microwave, trouser press and hot drinks facilities. House staff are friendly and caring.

► **A vast amount of fun-filled activities and trips out.**

Each week we run 150+ non-sports and sports extra-curricular activities. Fun packed weekends.

► **£30m Sports Village with 7 Astro-Turfs + 250,000 sq feet of indoor facilities.**

QE is Regional Performance Coaching Centre for: England Basketball, England Hockey, England Netball, and Regional Centre Developing Player Programme England Rugby, plus QE Cricket Academy is in association with Yorkshire County Cricket Club. In 2015 QE won the British Colleges Rugby National Cup Final.

► **More British Forces children than any other boarding school - because we care.**

We understand the needs of Service families with staff who are married to serving members of the Forces. With years of experience in ensuring our 300 + Forces children settle well, are confident and successful. Easy to get to by road, rail and air. Dedicated, professional, friendly and helpful staff go the "extra mile" to ensure your child is happy and doing well. We have Forces families from all over the UK.

► **Over £100m invested in new facilities in the last 8 years.**

Why choose an independent school education for your child if you qualify for CEA? If you made a list, the same reasons would keep appearing. We think the list might include: happy children, academic results, a personalised approach, top quality teachers with specialised expertise, good discipline, latest technology and superb facilities, excellent pastoral care, excellent sport, first class boarding accommodation, diverse experience, small classes, university success, excellent career prospects, first class confidence and self assurance. If you want the best for your child, and to stand a chance of achieving most of this list, we believe you would need to pick one of the top 10 UK Independent boarding schools as ranked by the Sunday Times. BUT, most importantly of all, we unashamedly also offer TLC - tender, loving care!

“

# TALKBACK

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

## ‘Car purchases left me out of pocket’

**D**URING a two-year assignment with the US Army the MoD refused to ship my personal vehicles to America, which meant I had to sell them and then purchase two new cars over there.

When my posting came to an end I was not entitled to ship my vehicles back to the UK at MoD expense so I had to sell them at a further loss and purchase new cars when I arrived back home. The financial losses extended to hire cars as well.

When I first arrived stateside I was given a vehicle for ten days to allow me time to purchase my own – but this was not the case when I returned to Britain.

I understand the cumulative sum of the local overseas allowance (LOA) during the posting is supposed to offset any losses but in reality the degree of financial pain my family and I have absorbed over the past two years will stop us from accepting any such postings in the future.

While I agree that individuals serving on overseas assignments should not profit from these moves, equally they should not have to suffer significant personal financial loss either. – **Maj Robert Grant, RDG**

**Brig Chris Ghika, Director Personnel Capability, replies:** The MoD recognises there are additional costs associated with overseas service and carefully monitors this expenditure to ensure soldiers are not financially disadvantaged and treated fairly.

The allocation of LOA for service in



many foreign countries has increased recently to compensate for Sterling's fall in value, while disturbance expense (overseas) for accompanied personnel rose from £1,041 to £1,420 last year.

The shipping of personal vehicles to overseas destinations is an individual choice and no MoD provision exists for this service. However, the costs of selling your existing car and buying another at the new duty station are included in LOA.

For the USA, the price of two specified family cars are included in the allowance calculation and paid as an average over

a typical two-year assignment.

Those relocating overseas may also take advantage of an advance of up to four months' pay, which can be taken interest-free and repaid over 12 months to help with start-up costs.

While you received a hire car to assist with establishing yourself in the US, this provision does not exist for a return to the UK because it's assumed the start-up costs incurred here are not as burdensome as they are abroad.

Disturbance expense can be used to offset these costs, however.

## It's a money mess

● I AM intrigued to know why the vast majority of people who write to *Soldier* prefer to remain anonymous. Is Army culture so threatening that personnel fear speaking up openly? – **Robert Higgins, People Policy, MoD, London**

**Army Sergeant Major Glenn Haughton replies:** Anybody can write to *Soldier* if they so wish and it is entirely up to them if they decide to withhold their details. The fact that they want to remain anonymous is more likely down to fear of their friends' reaction than that of the Army.

Anonymity is a sign of the times and you'll find it in many other publications.

If soldiers have a problem they should first attempt to obtain an

answer from their chain of command.

If they do decide to take their concern elsewhere, then they should have no fear of repercussions from identifying themselves in a letter to this magazine.



**Col David Wheeler, Assistant Head of Personnel Services Group, responds:** Queen's Regulations state that every officer of a unit is to be a member of the respective mess, if there is a facility.

Taking leave, either during your assignment or towards the end of it, is immaterial as you are still a member of your current mess and are entitled and encouraged to use its facilities until you arrive at your new unit.

When you start your next posting you will begin to pay mess subscriptions for your new officers' facility.

## RANT OF THE MONTH

Get it off your chest and on social media



[www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine](http://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine)

**LAST MONTH'S FEATURE TO MARK BLACK HISTORY MONTH, "SKIN DEEP", HAD OUR FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS SEEING RED...**



**Phil Rule**

Wearing thin now...a soldier is a soldier, skin colour doesn't come into it. We all bleed red and many white, black and Asian soldiers have spilt their blood for our country.



**Naico Macbeth Andreoli**

Black month? What about white month? Or yellow or brown? We want to educate people and the young that we're all the same but we create specific racial divisions with the banner of trying to create equality? It's like a knife fighting a knife.



**Enid King**

Who notices colour? All our friends have Christian names, part of a huge Army family. Our family. Who needs a label?



**Carl Lander**

Identifying one ethnic group over another is overtly racist. Makes me sick.

## Ex-CGS' minority report



66  
WE NEEDED TO FORM A SPECIALIST SQUAD  
99

I WAS very interested to read the article "Skin Deep" in the last issue of *Soldier*.

I noted that UK-born ethnic minority men and women make up approximately five per cent of the Army and that, with the exception of the behaviour of one NCO in the past, WO1 Henry and Sgt Sale had not experienced any trouble during their distinguished service.

I also realised that WO1 Henry

joined the Service when I was chief of the general staff in the late 1990s and may have been recruited by an outfit I formed to try and improve the percentage of soldiers from these communities serving in the Army.

In 1997 they made up little more than one per cent of the Service, a figure that was clearly not representative of the general population of the country.

I had a variety of discussions with people including Dame Kelly Holmes and Kriss Akabusi, both of whom had served and were particularly helpful.

It was largely down to their suggestion that we needed to form a specialist squad drawn from many different sections of society that led me to create the ethnic minority recruiting team.

By the time I had completed my tenure as CGS in 2000 that group had succeeded in raising the figure to five per cent.

Not only were we trying to increase the proportion but also attain sufficient numbers for the men and women recruited from those ethnic minorities not to feel that they were unusual, which had often led to problems in the past.

I understand that particular team no longer exists but hopefully it laid some foundations for the work currently being done in this vital area.

— Sir Roger Wheeler

## The truth about a European ban

● THERE is a rumour going around our unit that when you are serving your last six months in the Army you're not allowed to be deployed outside the European community.

Is this true? — **Name and address supplied**

**Brig John Donnelly, Head of Personnel Services Group, responds:** This rumour probably stems from the policy on resettlement which says that personnel who have served for more than six years must have six month's service left before they leave the Army following their return from operations.

Those who have completed less than this should have a minimum of four months left.

Where, for operational reasons, a



unit has difficulty in meeting these entitlements it may be possible to defer discharge with the relevant manning authority's agreement and the individual's consent in order to undertake resettlement.

There is no clause concerning serving inside or outside the European community.

## 'We're not over the hill'



**C**AN somebody explain to me what the future of the vehicle support specialist (VSS) trade is?

In 2005 we were aligned to the supply trade and had to complete supplier courses but shortly afterwards we were moved to the driver trade.

There is widespread concern that the Army doesn't know what to do with us. We have no clear direction as a collective or as individuals and we are overstretched owing to continual tours, detachments and the workload.

Those who can deploy are often required to sign waivers due to nights out of bed, with a lot in the high amber and red zones.

Such is the level of undermanning our trade was opened to personnel up to the rank of corporal for those wanting to switch careers.

Many are now being pushed through training and will lead teams without having any real experience.

Not surprisingly, many of the long servers are leaving – out of 108 VSS personnel worldwide 12 are about to join civvy street, with many more considering their futures.

Surely this is an unacceptable figure as the military struggles with recruitment and retention. – Name and address supplied

**Lt Col Stuart McCormack, Manpower Plans, Department of Manning (Army), replies:** Your letter is a reminder that perception can differ from reality and the chain of command needs to ensure information is passed up and down the ranks effectively. Vehicle support specialists are

in a strong position and the trade proved its worth on Op Herrick. I can assure you it is here to stay.

The challenge, as with many logistics disciplines, is to find gainful employment when not deployed. Your trade loses three or four soldiers a year, which equates to just over three per cent of its personnel.

This is well below the Army average of six per cent and suggests the day job is fulfilling.

You rightly state that your role is not easy to pigeonhole because of its wide capability but there are good opportunities for promotion and employment.

This is partly a result of undermanning and the reason why transfers were accepted at the rank of corporal.

I agree with your comment that this imposes some level of risk as these troops are expected to lead teams even though they have limited experience.

However, at the time the greater threat was the lack of commanders within the trade and soldiers eligible to promote.

This problem has been addressed and corporals are no longer able to transfer in.

You rightly state you are busy supporting operations and 17 per cent (19 soldiers) are on amber or red nights out of bed.

But the head of trade has informed me that the recent waivers were signed by volunteers who wanted to deploy and there is no indication we are struggling to meet requirements.

## Singles need help as well

● I HAVE purchased a house with the Forces Help to Buy scheme and live with my fiance and daughter.

I moved post at short notice recently and while married troops in my position receive involuntarily separated privileges, I do not.

I don't have the option to move my loved ones to local Service family accommodation, which means I have to fund the cost of my commute and close to £200-worth of single living accommodation charges on top of my mortgage.

It's time the Army recognised all homeowners and parents, regardless of their marital status?

— Name and address supplied

THE ARMY  
DOESN'T  
KNOW  
WHAT TO  
DO WITH US

**Col David Wheeler, Assistant Head of Personnel Services Group, responds:** By using the Forces Help to Buy scheme you are not eligible for Service family accommodation, and would not be even if you were married.

Assistance with the cost of the weekly commute is available through the get you home (travel) allowance.

This contributes towards the cost of your journey from the duty station to a qualifying residence – which in this case is your own home.

It is not intended for reimbursing a train ticket or paying for a hire car.

The entitlement equates to 24 journeys per year and is calculated by mileage and delivered as a daily rate through your pay account.

I agree that the additional costs of single living accommodation on top of paying a mortgage will be challenging for many but you should have reviewed this situation when you took the decision to buy your home.

It is likely that the future accommodation model, which aims to provide greater choice on how troops wish to live, will alleviate some of your current concerns.

# ‘Why can’t we use a duty vehicle?’

**W**HEN I joined the Army in the early 1990s the prospect of living in barracks or MoD housing and receiving a large lump sum with my pension were major reasons for signing on for 22 years.

But house prices increased rapidly over the next decade and our lump sum payment didn’t rise with them, which made it a far less attractive incentive.

As a result I invested in property years ago and have been a landlord ever since.

I was recently posted and admitted I owned a property situated within 50 miles of my new duty station.

I was told I wasn’t entitled to MoD housing and, as a result, I had to remove my tenants and place my family into the house.

This in itself wasn’t a huge problem.

However, when I looked at public transport options they were not realistic for early starts, late finishes or flexible working and my new home wasn’t within 90 minutes’ travelling time of my work place.

I enquired with my chain of command about using a duty vehicle and was told no entitlement exists and that I should buy a car.

My wife has a vehicle but needs it for the school run and to get to work.

I relented and purchased a second vehicle and rather than buy an old banger opted for the cheapest new car I could find for reliability.

I received disturbance allowance on moving and I benefit from home-to-duty travel allowance (HDT) as I drive 45 miles each way to work, but when the cost of fuel, car loan, road tax, insurance, tyre wear, services and MOT are added up I am approximately £250 a month worse off.

Have I been given accurate information? Are military vehicles with Trimble available to use by personnel to prevent fraudulent use?

And is there a separate fund or claim based on receipts and bank statements to compensate for using your own vehicle for duty? – **Name and address supplied**

**Brig Chris Ghika, Director Personnel Capability, replies:** Addressing your points in order, the Armed Forces pension scheme’s (AFPS) lump sum is governed by



Wear and tear costs can gobble up your HDT allowance...

benefits accrued during an individual’s career and it is not possible for the system to track the property market.

The very significant upside of AFPS is the ability to forecast the amount of money you will receive when you draw your pension, enabling you to make sound financial plans.

In contrast, most private pensions require regular personal contributions but the eventual amount received cannot be accurately predicted since it is subject to investment performance.

Regarding the stipulation on being eligible for Service housing, the MoD is responsible for spending taxpayers’ money as efficiently as possible.

I assume you bought your house with a long service advance of pay or the Forces Help to Buy scheme and that in doing so you agreed to live in the property.

This is to prevent personnel buying a home subsidised by the taxpayer that they subsequently rent out.

Next, travel to work in the Army, in common with most civilian professions, is your own responsibility and the MoD does not, therefore, allow use of military vehicles for personal use.

If it did, this would be seen as a benefit in kind with associated liabilities in the same fashion as company car tax.

However, HDT assists Service personnel with the costs of daily travel between home and place of duty.

It is a contributory allowance and is non-taxable, a concession that recognises there is often limited choice over accommodation in relation to the place of work. This is why, almost uniquely amongst employers, the MoD continues to provide this form of financial support.

## Carbon cop-out

● I PARTICULARLY enjoyed the letter entitled “Blind carbon copy cop-out” in the September issue.

But complaining that “if the individual lacks the moral courage to say something face-to-face... they are deficient in a fundamental component of what earns them the privilege to serve” while not divulging your own name is standout hypocrisy that you couldn’t make up.

Surely this is some sort of wind-up. – **Maj Tarquin Shipley, R Signals**

**The managing editor replies:** It’s no wind-up. Aware of the irony, I did ask the author why he was unwilling to be named and his response was that a senior officer, who has a lot of influence over his career, was quite embarrassingly caught out over this very issue.

“He will directly equate my comments with his behaviour and I would therefore publicly have called him cowardly and lacking moral courage,” he said.

## Why cartoonist ‘Dickie’ was a delight

● I WAS so sad to read of Col John “Dickie” Bird’s passing in the October issue. His cartoons were an editor’s dream: funny, challenging, insightful, original and always on time. He was a natural from the very first illustration he posted to *Soldier* and rapidly became indispensable.

I always looked forward to our telephone calls to discuss his offerings for the next edition. He was charming, unfailingly kind and always generous in spirit. I’m also pretty sure the cheques we sent him over the years were donated to the regimental fund of his beloved Queen’s Lancashire Regiment. – **John Elliott (former *Soldier* editor)**

# BULLET POINTS

BITE-SIZED DATA TO KEEP YOU IN THE KNOW



## CAREERS

**Veteran Employment Transition Support** programme, aimed at connecting ex-Forces personnel with employers. For details visit [www.veteranemployment.co.uk](http://www.veteranemployment.co.uk)

**Transition Force** provides personalised career support to ex-Service personnel nationwide. To register visit [www.transitionforce.com/events](http://www.transitionforce.com/events)

**Ex-Military Recruitment** helps veterans of specialist technical regiments trained in electrical and mechanical engineering, logistics and telecommunications to find similar civilian careers. For details visit [www.xmr.co.uk](http://www.xmr.co.uk)

**HighGround** is a charity providing land-based skills to serving and former Army personnel, helping them move into civilian life. Log on to [www.highground-uk.org](http://www.highground-uk.org) for more



## COMPETITIONS

**Spine line winner:** Sjt Ronnie Grundy, Ward Barracks, Bulford

**10 Extraordinary True Stories**

**DVD:** Jayne Hawkes, Credenhill, Hereford; Scott Loveridge, Jellalabad Barracks, Tidworth



## DIARY

**November 13:** Remembrance Sunday. For more details on the national service of remembrance at The Cenotaph visit [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**Until November 18: War Map: Pictorial Conflict Maps 1900-1950** exhibition at The Map House, 54 Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge, London SW3 1NY. A collection of some of the most powerful graphic imagery of the last century. Admission free. Visit [www.themaphouse.com](http://www.themaphouse.com)

**November 26-27:** The Birmingham International Tattoo, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham. Military bands, exciting displays and a spectacular grand finale. For further details visit [www.birminghamtattoo.co.uk](http://www.birminghamtattoo.co.uk)

**Until January 8, 2017: Real to Reel: A Century of War Movies** at the Imperial War Museum London. Marking the 100th anniversary of the documentary film *The Battle of the Somme*. Using costumes, props, scripts and set designs, the exhibition goes

behind the scenes of some of the most iconic war movies. Adults £10; children (15 and under) £5; concessions £7.



## DIRECTORY

**ABF The Soldiers' Charity:** 0845 241 4820

**Armed Forces Buddhist Society:** Chaplain 020 7414 3411; [www.afbs-uk.org](http://www.afbs-uk.org)

**Armed Forces Christian Union:** 01252 311221; [www.afcu.org.uk](http://www.afcu.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Muslim Association:** Chaplain 020 7414 3252; [www.afma.org.uk](http://www.afma.org.uk)

**Army Families Federation:** 01264 382324; mil 94391 2324; [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

**Army LGBT Forum:** [www.armylgbt.org.uk](http://www.armylgbt.org.uk); chair@armylgbt.org.uk

**Army Libraries:** 01252 340094

**Army Ornithological Society:** [www.armybirding.org.uk](http://www.armybirding.org.uk)

**Army Welfare Service:** 01904 882053; [www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support)

**Big White Wall:** [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

**Blesma, The Limbless Veterans:** 020 8590 1124; [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Blind Veterans UK:** (formerly St Dunstan's) 020 7723 5021; [www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk)

**Career Transition Partnership:** 020 7469 6661

**Children's Education Advisory Service:** 01980 618244; [dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk](mailto:dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk)

**Combat Stress:** 01372 841600; [www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

**Defence Humanists:** [www.defencehumanists.org.uk](http://www.defencehumanists.org.uk)

**Erskine:** 0141 814 4569; [www.erskine.org.uk](http://www.erskine.org.uk)

**Family Escort Service:** 020 7463 9249

**Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity:** 07713 752901 [www.felixfund.org.uk](http://www.felixfund.org.uk)

**Forcesline:** UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services \*201;

from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854

**Forces Pension Society:** 020 7820 9988

**Help for Heroes:** 0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459; [www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

**Heroes Welcome:** [www.heroeswelcome.co.uk](http://www.heroeswelcome.co.uk)

**HighGround:** [www.highground-uk.org.uk](http://www.highground-uk.org.uk)

**Joint Service Housing Advice Office:** 01722 436575

**Medal Office:** 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

**Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group):** [www.mutualsupport.org.uk](http://www.mutualsupport.org.uk)

**National Ex-Services Association:** [www.nesa.org.uk](http://www.nesa.org.uk)

**National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:** 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; [www.ngfa.org.uk](http://www.ngfa.org.uk)

**Poppyscotland:** 0131 557 2782; [www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk)

**Regular Forces' Employment Association:** 0121 236 0058; [www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

**Remount:** 01451 850 341; [www.remount.net](http://www.remount.net)

**Royal British Legion:** 0808 802 8080; [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**Royal British Legion Scotland:** 0131 550 1583; [www.legionscotland.org.uk](http://www.legionscotland.org.uk)

**RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:** 01622 795900; [www.rbl.co.uk](http://www.rbl.co.uk)

**Scottish Veterans' Residences:** 0131 556 0091; [www.srvonline.org](http://www.srvonline.org)

**SPACES (Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services):** 01748 833797; [www.spaces.org.uk](http://www.spaces.org.uk)

**SSAFA:** 0845 1300 975; [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

**Stoll (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation):** 020 7385 2110; [info@stoll.org.uk](mailto:info@stoll.org.uk); [www.stoll.org.uk](http://www.stoll.org.uk)

**The Not Forgotten Association:** 020 7730 2400 [www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)

**The Poppy Factory:** 020 8940 3305; [www.poppyfactory.org](http://www.poppyfactory.org)

**The Royal Star & Garter Homes:** 020 8481 7676; [www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)

## The Veterans Charity:

01753 653772; [info@veteranscharity.org.uk](mailto:info@veteranscharity.org.uk)

## uk4u Thanks!:

01798 812081; [www.uk4u.org](http://www.uk4u.org)

## Veterans Welfare Service:

0808 1914 218 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas); [www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service)

## INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)

**ABN 134/16:** Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

**ABN 133/16:** Individual Development Branch – initial operating capability reached

**ABN 132/16:** The Sun Military Awards 2016

**ABN 131/16:** Officer recruiting campaign – With Hearts, With Minds

**ABN 130/16:** Issue of Army doctrine publication land operations

**ABN 129/16:** Your Say survey 2016

**ABN 128/16:** Reserve eligibility for promotion

**ABN 127/16:** The Army 'Do Something' Gems campaign

**ABN 126/16:** Annual fitness test assurance audit

**ABN 125/16:** Noise-induced hearing loss policy

**ABN 124/16:** Changes to unmanned air systems command structure

**ABN 123/16:** Changes to TV licence requirements to include BBC iPlayer

**ABN 122/16:** National inclusion week

**ABN 121/16:** Nominations open for continuous improvement and innovation awards 2016

**ABN 120/16:** School of Infantry delivery of Army Reserve phase three

**DIN 2016DIN01-156:** The Army Reserve reinforcement group

**DIN 2016DIN01-155:** Armed Forces transition fair, Wrexham, February 9, 2017

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

## INTELLIGENCE CONTINUED

**DIN 2016DIN01-154:** 2016 Government knowledge and information management professional skills framework released

**DIN 2016DIN01-153:** MoD/NHS agenda for change grades pay award

**DIN 2016DIN01-152:** Mentoring in the MoD, a new approach

**DIN 2016DIN01-151:** Selection, training and employment of Royal Navy/Royal Marine/Royal Air Force NCO applicants to become Army pilots

**DIN 2016DIN01-150:** Defence language award scheme

**DIN 2016DIN01-149:** Alternative to personal cheque encashment for Service personnel deployed overseas

**DIN 2016DIN04-183:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents – inclusion of fibrinogen concentrate in Role 2 and CCAST modules

**DIN 2016DIN04-182:** Declaration of obsolescence – precision lightweight GPS receiver

**DIN 2016DIN04-181:** Distress signalling when sea kayaking

**DIN 2016DIN04-180:** Declaration of obsolete – Project Tetrapole

**DIN 2016DIN04-179:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents – August 2016

**DIN 2016DIN04-178:** The use of commercially available, off-the-shelf unmanned air systems in the

defence aviation environment

**DIN 2016DIN04-177:** Defence Equipment and Support strategic transport and air-to-air refuelling Voyager project team

**DIN 2016DIN04-176:** Charge demolition slab PE8 L22A1

**DIN 2016DIN04-175:** Disposal of CRARRV trailer

**DIN 2016DIN04-174:** Reduction in fleet size AVRE trailer

**DIN 2016DIN04-173:** Recall of Black Hornet nano unmanned air system and associated spares

**DIN 2016DIN04-172:** Notice of immediate withdrawal of all cartridge IR seduction Mk 245 A2 with the BKI suffix R or RS

**DIN 2016DIN05-031:** The establishment and capability of the Centre of Defence Pathology at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine

**DIN 2016DIN05-030:** Revised controls on expenditure on advertising, marketing and communications activity

**DIN 2016DIN05-029:** Defence Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Search Branch

**DIN 2016DIN05-027:** Formation of the maritime information exploitation group

**DIN 2016DIN06-028:** The MoD major accident control regulations competent authority

**DIN 2016DIN07-128:** 2016/17 Defence cyber practitioner courses

**DIN 2016DIN07-127:** Information management courses for September 2016-July 2017 at the Defence

Academy of the UK – Shrivenham

**DIN 2016DIN07-126:** Judgemental training instructors course dates, January-December 2017

**DIN 2016DIN07-125:** Joint battlespace management course and tactical air battlespace management courses 2017

**DIN 2016DIN07-124:** Authority for Army orienteering 2016/17

**DIN 2016DIN07-123:** Army European winter activity instruction

**DIN 2016DIN07-122:** Detachment armament officer course 2016/17

**DIN 2016DIN07-121:** Qualified space instructor course 5 – call for applications

**DIN 2016DIN07-119:** School of Aerospace battle management courses

**DIN 2016DIN10-046:** Nato Chess Championship 2017 UK qualifying tournament

**DIN 2016DIN10-045:** Army Martial Arts Association winter competition 2016

**DIN 2016DIN10-044:** Army Martial Arts Association open championships 2017

**DIB29/16:** MoD Your Say survey 2016 is now open

**DIB28/16:** *The Sun* Military Awards – nominations now open

For details email [k.brookusher@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:k.brookusher@hotmail.co.uk)

## ARMY APPRENTICES NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST ANNUAL REUNION

weekend on May 6-7, 2017 at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire. AGM in the Poppy Room at 1300 on May 6 followed by gala dinner at the Hallmark Mickleover Court Hotel. The annual drumhead memorial service will be held at the Army Apprentices Memorial at 1200 on May 7. All ex-apprentices welcome to attend. For further details contact [mohope118@gmail.com](mailto:mohope118@gmail.com)

## ROADSHOWS

### THE ARMY ENGAGEMENT TEAM

wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a reception, is followed by a presentation, questions and culminates with refreshments. There will be a range of military personnel on hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 412880 or email your name and address to [armymediocomm-aeg-mailbox@mod.uk](mailto:armymediocomm-aeg-mailbox@mod.uk) with the event you are interested in attending.

**November:** 16, Rugby; 23, Rotherham; 30, Northampton

## SEARCHLINE

Tim White is looking for video footage of **2nd Battalion, The Royal Irish Rangers** trooping the colour in Berlin in 1983. If anyone can help contact [subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

NO. 900

## JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

TEN details have been changed in this picture of a Challenger 2 at Copehill Down urban operations training area.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 900**, *Soldier*, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU no later

than November 30.

A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted.

First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers.

The results will be announced in the

January magazine and usual rules apply.

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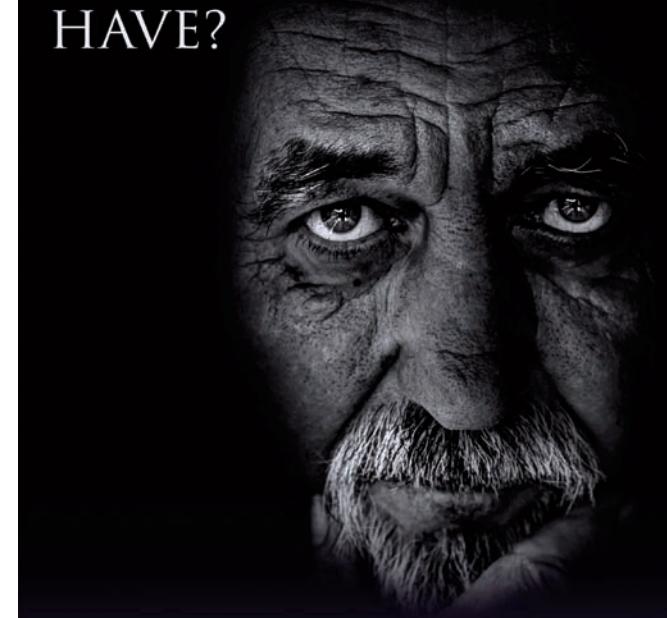
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*Ajax has enabled me to find a way to accept love as an emotion again...*

Lee, Fire Service & Army Veteran, about Ajax (below), his PTSD assistance dog in training



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The poster features a large, stylized title 'LIVING and WORKING' in green, with 'North Wales' in a bold, sans-serif font below it. A circular badge in the top right corner reads 'for all SERVING PERSONNEL and VETERANS'. Below the title, text lists exhibitors: 'OVER 60 EXHIBITORS INCLUDING:- LOCAL GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH, HOUSING, WELFARE'. The date 'Thursday 9 February 2017' is prominently displayed, along with the venue 'Glyndwr University Sports Hall, Wrexham'. The bottom right corner contains a circular badge with 'FREE ENTRY' and 'FAMILIES WELCOME'.

The image shows a close-up of a red and blue striped necktie. A heraldic crest featuring a lion and unicorn is centered on the tie, with the text 'NORFOLK & WAVENY B' and 'PRA' visible around it. To the right of the tie, the text 'silk to polyester ties, bow ties, clip on ties, skinny ties, standard ties & cummerbunds' is displayed in a white, serif font.

## Notice to readers

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# REVIEWS

## NOVEMBER'S NUMBERS

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GAMES

## VIRTUAL REALITY HERO

Batman Arkham VR for Playstation 4

I'VE generally stayed away from the whole VR scene as I've often regarded it all as a bit of a fad, much like 3D movies or toothbrushes designed to clean your tongue. But Rocksteady Studios have developed a bespoke Batman game for Playstation's VR headset, utilising the world of the popular Arkham series. ➤

## GAMES



Once you don the kit you step into the digital shoes of the famed superhero, where you get to experience Gotham in all its virtual glory and explore the city first-hand while embarking on some essential crime-solving activity.

Becoming Batman means donning the cape and cowl. But instead of just turning up to a crime scene, Rocksteady have made the process of getting ready an occasion in itself.

No other title places this much emphasis on becoming someone else. But that's ramped up to eleven as you equip yourself with the familiar black and grey suit and a host of legendary gadgets.

Unlike most other VR offerings where detail is overshadowed by the overall experience, the developers have dedicated their time to recreating the elements of Gotham that you would not usually see.

Everything is included – and I truly mean everything. From the details on the Bat Cave and the suit that you wear, to the reflection in the puddles and the garbage that litters the darkened alleyways, the city is brought to

**VERDICT:**  
Virtual reality  
never looked  
so good

★★★★★

life in a way you have not seen or sampled before.

The game involves all of the great detective elements from the regular Arkham franchise, without reducing it to nothing more than a point-and-click adventure.

Think of it as the moments between punching people in the face, all beautifully captured in a fully convincing and immersive environment. And to top it off I caught sight of a Bat Garage. And we all know what that means, don't we.

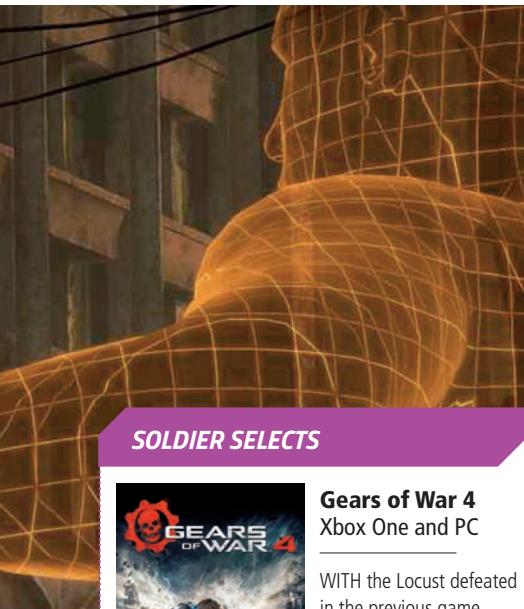
The visuals are stunning and the audio also plays an important part in presenting a convincing environment for you to explore.

If you enjoyed the other releases in this series, you will love this.

The catch? The game isn't as long as a regular Arkham offering and the price of the headset, console and peripherals is around £650.

However, unlike Xbox Kinect you don't need a fairly large room to use VR. You could play it in your shed. ■

**REVIEW: DAVID McDougall, CIVVY**



## SOLDIER SELECTS

**Gears of War 4**  
Xbox One and PC

WITH the Locust defeated in the previous game, humanity's peace is disrupted when a new threat emerges, and it's down to you as the son of Marcus Fenix to investigate and

frequently shoot things in the face. This iteration of Gears doesn't feel quite as full-on as the previous offerings, which certainly isn't a bad thing. It is a thoroughly enjoyable romp. The familiar style of play is back – using the cover system and cleaving foes in two with the chainsaw on your Lancer rifle. Though it looks and sounds superb the initial level feels a tad padded out but this proves useful as a means of reintroducing players to the setting and the gameplay. The rest of the title is a well paced and thought-out experience but it would definitely benefit from a more reckless approach. *Gears of War 4* is a deserved successor to the original trilogy.

Cpl Adam Jackson, Para

**World Rally Championship 6**  
Playstation 4, Xbox One and PC

THE previous iteration of *World Rally Championship* struggled to keep up with the likes of *Dirt* and the more open approach of *Forza Horizon* but this

sixth instalment is definitely a step forward. The visuals are a nice complement to the fast-paced world of rallying although, on the whole, it still falls behind its competitors. The gameplay certainly delivers though; it's not a perfect experience but this is a robust title that delivers the high-octane action on your doorstep. The campaign aspects are superb and demanding to say the least – a definite test of your abilities – and the focus is very much on the top tier of the sport. But a more open approach would be beneficial, such as more cars or including championship customisation for those who like to create their own interpretation of rally. Not the finished article but it's getting there.

David McDougall, civvy



## PICK OF THE MONTH:

**THE DOG'S****Nicholas Cage crime thriller scores highly**

► DIRECTED by visionary filmmaker Paul Schrader (*Taxi Driver*, *Dog Eat Dog* – out in cinemas on November 18 – is the story of three ex-cons who are desperate to keep themselves out of prison at almost any cost.

An absolutely cracking film from start to finish, its plot centres on Troy (Nicolas Cage), Diesel (Christopher Matthew Cook) and the suitably-named Mad Dog (Willem Dafoe), whose personal demons lead him from one nightmare situation to the next.

The gang's efforts to adapt to "normal" life outside prison prove difficult and the lure back into the criminal world is too strong to ignore.

When they are offered a job by an eccentric mob boss, there are some very serious – and at times hilarious – repercussions.

With huge amounts of swearing, gore, violence

## VERDICT:

Not to be missed



and drug-taking from the word go, it is hard to describe any specific encounters in this title without causing offence.

But this all ties in with its black and almost farcical humour, which really works well.

Basically, this is a *Pulp Fiction*-style film without the soundtrack.

Certainly not for the young or anyone easily offended, the performances are brilliant.

In my view you couldn't choose three better individuals to play the parts; their own particular style of acting is hilarious throughout and they all seem to bounce off each other.

The narrative almost seems ad-lib at times, but this pays dividends and the film flows very smoothly.

This is definitely one to watch if you get the chance. ■

## REVIEW: RODGE TAPPY, EX-RE



## DVD RELEASES



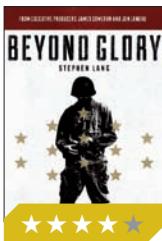
### Absolutely Fabulous

Out December 5

EDINA and Patsy are back, along with all the original

cast, in a title that includes just about anyone in the world of celebrity. The plot centres on the accidental death of **Kate Moss**, but by sticking to its tried-and-trusted formula *Ab Fab* certainly pleased the mainly-female audience I saw it with. It is consistently funny and if you are a fan of the show you will love it. If you're not it will probably still entertain.

**Jools Finch, ex-MPGS**



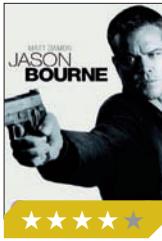
### Beyond Glory

Out now on digital

A MOST unusual take on everyday heroism, **Stephen Lang**

stars in this one-man-on-stage show, delivering an alternative angle on the US military's finest moments. Lang, also the writer of this title, is the master of his craft, variously playing Medal of Honour recipients in their twilight years. At times he is touchingly personal, in other scenes he is deadpan and matter-of-fact as he recounts experiences from combat to life as an abused POW, and across battlefields from the Second World War to Vietnam. A British equivalent would resonate powerfully.

**Maj Neil Johnson, AAC**



### Jason Bourne

Out November 28

MATT Damon is back in the next chapter of the *Bourne*

franchise, operating as a bare-knuckle fighter in some of the less savoury parts of the world. The actor is on top form here: serious, sullen and driven. People are on Bourne's trail – an assassin has been dispatched – and he must once again keep a step ahead of his enemies. This film certainly provides the action-packed adventure we all love to indulge in from this franchise.

**Janet Dornan, ex-R Signals**

## PICK OF THE MONTH:

# BOOTS ON THE GROUND

### Ex-Service chief charts 70 years of British Army history

AT the end of the Second World War the British Army stood at just under three million strong.

Fast forward to 2016 and the Service looks very different, both in terms of its size and composition.

Just how much the organisation – and the country – have changed in the intervening decades is the topic of a new book by Gen the Lord Dannatt, chief of the general staff from 2006 to 2009.

*Boots on the Ground* charts its transition from a vast Army of occupation – made up largely of conscripts – in post-war Germany, to a force numbering less than 82,000 Regular troops, but one that has moved with the times and will soon see women standing shoulder to shoulder in combat with men.

Speaking at the title's launch, the retired general said: "The main point is how Britain has transitioned over the last 70 years and the Army has been there in every chapter of that story.

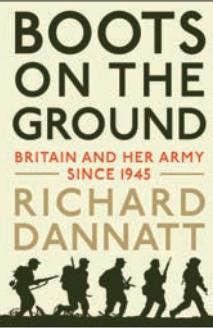
"A good subtitle would have been 'tales of the unexpected'.

"All the major things we've been involved in most recently have come out of the blue.

"Whether it was the Berlin Wall coming down, 9/11, the Argentinians invading the Falklands or the Arab Spring, these things just happen and the important thing is that we are ready to respond."

But in a country that has – in the author's words – "morphed from a world superpower to a European nation with a bit of an identity crisis", the question of response is a thorny one. The recent lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan have made politicians wary of deploying the very boots on the ground that inspired the book's title.

Addressing the likelihood of another large-scale operation, Dannatt



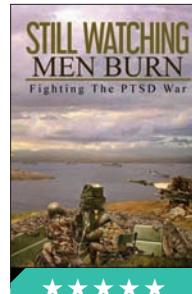


“

**I'd hacked off the Navy, I'd hacked off the civil servants, and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown wanted to get rid of me but I'm afraid that's the penalty of leadership**

”

#### SOLDIER SELECTS

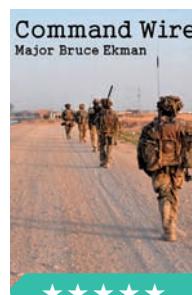


**Still Watching Men Burn**  
by Tony McNally

WHY doesn't post-traumatic stress disorder affect every veteran that has seen the horrors of conflict? Tony McNally, an anti-aircraft missile operator in the Falklands War, goes a long way

to try and explain. On June 8, 1982 his equipment failed and he could only look on as Argentinian jets attacked the RFA *Sir Galahad*, with the loss of nearly 50 lives. This compelling book was written to try and come to terms with that event and he even goes so far as to apologise to the families of the dead and injured. I can safely say that Tony McNally, you have nothing to apologise for. You did your duty in horrific circumstances.

**Tony David, ex-RE**



**Command Wire**  
by Maj Bruce Ekman

THIS utterly gripping novel comes to us courtesy of Maj Bruce Ekman (RLC) of 16 Air Assault Brigade, who was wounded by an IED strike in Afghanistan in 2011. A professional yet very personal tragedy sends Royal Engineers

search adviser Capt Mark Warren on a mission to find the father of a dead comrade. His quest delivers him to a gorilla sanctuary deep in Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where he joins the battle against poachers. Masterful storytelling brings Warren's deep remorse and guilt to the fore. This is a compelling adventure about seeking forgiveness and changing Western views.

**Janet Dornan, ex-R Signals**

continued: "We're not engaged in any major campaigns at the moment but if you look back at history since the Cold War ended 25 years ago we've been involved in so many events in this very unstable world and I can't believe that we won't be again, maybe in Africa, maybe elsewhere."

"There will come a point in the not-too-distant future where it will be absolutely the right thing to do to deploy the Army in large numbers again and we must be ready."

Those expecting the same candour that characterised his tenure and his 2010 autobiography, *Leading from the Front*, won't find it in this offering.

This is a dispassionate analysis of history, not a personal insight into his role in shaping the Army of today.

But reflecting on his controversial decision in 2006 to openly criticise the government while new in post, he told *Soldier*: "It was a difficult period.

"We were in the midst of our greatest intensity in Iraq and Afghanistan and I could see the pressures on people and units; the short tour intervals, not the right equipment.

"We were undermanned and if we hadn't gripped the situation quickly we'd be going over a cliff edge."

"I decided to speak publicly, just so the Army knew that the boss understood and was doing something about it."

"In hindsight was it the cleverest thing to do? In the short term, yes, for leadership reasons, but it made my life an awful lot more difficult in trying to win the argument within the MoD."

"I'd hacked off the Navy, I'd hacked off the civil servants, and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown wanted to get rid of me but I'm afraid that's the penalty of leadership."

Perhaps predictably, his next job was the largely ceremonial post of Constable of the Tower of London.

"After three years as CGS there was no question of me going on to be chief of the defence staff," he quipped.

"Instead, they sent me to the tower."

#### INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK

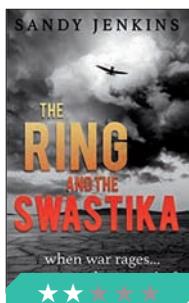
##### VERDICT:

A comprehensive, if dispassionate, account of the Army's changing role

★★★★★

★★★★★

Janet Dornan, ex-R Signals



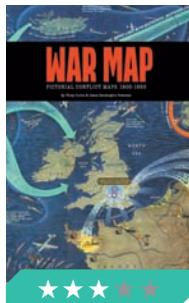
### The Ring and the Swastika

by Sandy Jenkins

SET around the Second World War in the UK, Norway and Russia, this historical novel combines fiction with fact, combining several stories into one. It is this mash of stories that makes it

a difficult read. The hero is recruited by the British to work with the Norwegian Resistance, especially regarding information about the *Tirpitz*. The section on the ship's sinking is taken from an eyewitness account and this real-time factual material does not sit well alongside the fictional plot about Russian gold. Overall, I did not like this at times overly complicated book and found it difficult to empathise with the characters.

Andy Kay, ex-RS



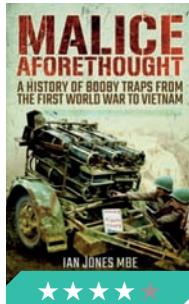
### War Map

by Phillip Curtis and Jakob Sondergaard Pedersen

THIS book charts the global conflicts of the 20th century through beautifully depicted maps, from the Boer War of 1899-1902 to the Korean War in 1950-1953 and pretty

much everything else in-between. The majority of the illustrations fall under the banner of propaganda, showing the range and lengths countries have gone to to win the war of public opinion. By tapping into the Map House of London – the oldest and largest gallery of its kind – the authors have put together a truly impressive, if very specialised, guide to history. This will keep the military buffs engrossed for hours.

Tony David, ex-RE



### Malice Aforethought

by Ian Jones

IF blowing things up is your bag then this book is a must. It provides a fascinating study of how soldiers turned ordnance into booby traps from the First World War to Vietnam. As a reference

book for understanding how to construct crude but effective weaponry using the most basic of resources, this will be of interest to any aspiring Royal Engineers. Should the author decide to chronicle the rest of the world's improvised bombs right up to the present day and to the same level of detail, it would no doubt make a superb series of books.

WO1 Dave Henley, Int Corps



Follow @kidcutuk on Twitter for more details on the release date of *Back to Church*



### PICK OF THE MONTH:

## SUPERSTAR DJ

### Dance star extends repertoire with release of new material

Having starred on the main stage at the Ministry of Sound nightclub, dance supremo Maj Nick Burdick (RA) is now plotting the next step on his musical journey.

The officer, who performs under the name **Kid Cut**, is about to unleash new single *Back to Church* and with the tune being pressed to vinyl it marks a true highlight in his fledgling career.

It comes hot on the heels of debut offering *The Prohibition EP*, which was released online following his success at the Brighton Music Conference earlier this year.

"It is a chance for producers and DJs to come together," he told *Soldier*. "They also run a competition and I managed to win it."

"Part of the prize was a record deal and that is how I got that first EP out there."

"It was quite a small release and there is no big marketing team behind me. It was available on iTunes but they are producing 1,000 copies of the single on vinyl so I want to get the word out."

"I'm influenced by big beat and house, people like **Fat Boy Slim**, so it is sample-driven dance music."

"It has a good groove and there are some familiar sounds so it should do well."

Burdick started his journey at the London Sound Academy, where he used an Afghan tour bonus to study the art of production.

"I had the money in the bank and wanted to do something creative; to make my own sound," he explained.

"After the Ministry of Sound I went on to play other clubs in London, such as Egg. I've also performed everywhere from the officers' mess to the junior NCOs' bar."

"It gives me something to talk about with the soldiers as they tend to be interested in the style of music I play."

"It is a nice talking point and everyone has their own favourite label or producer."

In his day job Burdick is an instructor on the junior officers' tactics course, which means his musical ambitions have to fit around his work schedule.

Fortunately, he has a studio in his room and this allows him to work on developing new beats and sounds when the time allows.

And focusing on his own material means public performances have been put on hold, but that could all change in the future.

"For the moment I'm concentrating on the production side of things," he said. "But if I work hard on that more gigs will follow." ■

### INTERVIEW: RICHARD LONG

### SOLDIER SELECTS

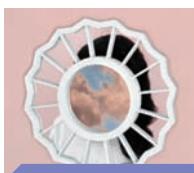


#### Brothers in Farms

by Steve n Seagulls

THIS is the second album from **Steve n Seagulls**, a Finnish bluegrass band who play heavy rock covers. They became a YouTube sensation in 2014, when their version of **AC/DC's** *Thunderstruck* received 30 million views. Here they include a number of classics such as *You Could Be Mine* by **Guns N' Roses** and **Steppenwolf's** *Born to Be Wild*. The songs are all well arranged, well performed and melodic. Some of them gain from this innovative treatment, others don't. The cover of **Deep Purple's** *Burn* stands out but the best track is the second **Guns N' Roses** offering *November Rain*, which has an emotional intensity that rivals the original. Bluegrass versions of rock songs is an interesting concept but for me the novelty wore off after a couple of plays.

Pat Jordan, ex-RAMC



#### The Divine Feminine

by Mac Miller

THE combination of spoken word, rap and synthesisers neatly organised over jazz piano and horns is certainly an odd one. Even odder is how **Mac Miller** seems to think it would work. On every song, especially *Cinderella* and *Soulmate*, you could be confused into thinking this artist is trying to be a modern-day Casanova with the subtlety and politeness of **Gordon Ramsay** confronted with an undercooked omelette. Even the appearance of **CeeLo Green** on *We can't save this offering*. I can only assume that Miller plans to make this the next "teenage make-out" album. The only thing it made me want to do is climb a mountain and launch it off the side. In summary, it's awful – simply awful.

LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



#### Signs of Light

by The Head and the Heart

**THE Head and the Heart** hail from Seattle but unlike their grunge rock contemporaries they have a softer, more folksy side akin to **Fleet Foxes**. This is their third release and is a major departure from their previous two efforts in that they've ditched acoustic for electric guitars. In fact, the entire album just glows with summer vibes to warm us all up this autumn. Instead of the ballads found on previous offerings we have rock efforts like the gorgeous *Rhythm and Blues* and the feel-good opener *Oh My Dear*. But there's still room for some quieter moments, the beautifully harmonious *Library Magic* has some wonderful touches and *Colours* just ebbs and flows throughout. This is a great record to end a summer of musical disappointments with.

Damian Hern, ex-AGC (SPS)



#### Let It Be You

by Joan as Police Woman and Benjamin Lazar Davis

I ONCE bought an album which I didn't like. I tried to sell it, but had no luck. So I continually played it and found that I really liked it. This is how I feel about this offering. Upon the first listen I wasn't quite sure what genre and audience they were aiming at. Joan has a mellow voice but the music from Benjamin, which is predominantly electronic, is not what you would expect as an accompaniment, but it sort of works. Some tracks are reminiscent of early **John Foxx** and have hints of **Portishead** and **Massive Attack**. The single *Broke Me in Two* is available now and, like the rest of the record, it may well be a grower. Definitely worth checking out.

Martyn Timmis, civvy



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# SOLDIERSPORT

Sports Editor: Richard Long

Photographers: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

**King of the ring:** LCpl Chez Nihell (1 PWRR) made a sensational start to the new boxing season by winning an England Title Belt at York Hall. Read about the superheavyweight's success on page 80...



**LOG ON:** ➤ FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE SENIOR TEAM AND ITS PERFORMANCE OVER THE SEASON CAN BE FOUND



# DOWNHILL DELIGHT

## Reds maintain grip on Services trophy with dominant display in the Welsh countryside

THE steep rock jumps and super-fast sections of the Antur Stiniog course proved to be a happy hunting ground for the Army's mountain bike stars as they powered their way to another Inter-Services downhill title.

Having won the competition for the previous three years the Reds headed to North Wales as firm favourites and star man Cpl Chris Borrowdale (RE) inspired the team to further collective glory.

The rider finished two-and-a-half seconds clear of his nearest rival and with the soldiers forming a dominant force in the other race categories they recorded a commanding overall victory.

Cpl Joe Robson (REME) won the masters' event ahead of teammate Sgt James Heal (RTR), while the Service claimed the top three places in the veterans' class.

"We wiped the floor with our rivals," Maj Justin Revell (RLC), secretary of Army downhill mountain biking, told *SoldierSport*.

"It was close in a couple of categories but we deserved the win. The turnout was very good; we had greater numbers and

at the end of the day our team has the faster riders and that's what it comes down to.

"Antur Stiniog is a proper track; it is almost a national-level facility. The courses we have used previously have been shorter and easier to ride, so this is a step above.

"But our guys have been consistently competing on the national stage this season and that meant they did very well."

More than 50 Service riders attended the event, which doubled as the Army Championships, and a wide range of talent was on show.

Revell said: "Around a third of the guys had never been on the course before and many had never seen anything so technical.

"It's not just about winning prizes but getting people to come and see what downhill is all about.

"Over the last four years we have gone from strength to strength, from local-level events to the national stage and we expect to go further.

"We are still the biggest

team that enters the British series."

Champion Borrowdale is among the top 25 riders in the country at senior level and will step up to the expert stage in 2017.

But his progression may not stop there and Revell believes the athlete could go on to challenge at the

very top.

"He is still quite young," the officer added.

"Depending on how well he does next season he could potentially reach elite level, which features the top professionals in the world.

"We'll have to see how he fares in the expert class as it is hugely competitive but that is the aspiration for the Army downhill set-up."

Despite posting such impressive results there is room for improvement and new blood is needed, particularly among the under 30s.

The team has also issued an appeal for more females.

Lt Erika Exelby (RAMC) has achieved podium finishes in the UK's regional competitions this season and the powers-that-be want to see other

Servicewomen matching her achievements.

"We are doing well," Revell explained. "Next season we will bring some new blood onto the team which means those who have been slacking off will need to pull their fingers out if they want to be involved once again.

"We are trying to encourage more female participation. We've had some expressions of interest but we need to get the word out there and show they can be successful in the sport.

"I'm sure there are girls who can ride. Erika was an absolute novice last year and is now on the podium at some of the top events in the country."

A key date for newcomers is Exercise Welsh Epic, the Army Cycling Union's annual training camp in the early part of next year, which offers a week-long package where novices can meet the team and learn the basics of the discipline. ■



For more details on this and how to get involved visit the British Army Downhill Development Team Facebook page





Comeback king

» **BOXER** Sig Chris Hobbs (R Signals) makes his long awaited comeback next month after recovering from a dislocated shoulder.

The light heavyweight will face Hasan Karkadi for the vacant Southern Area Title on December 10 and he hopes victory will propel him up the professional ranks.

"I am buzzing," the soldier said. "This is the first big title you can win as a boxer and plenty of top fighters have won it before going on to bigger and better things."

"Hasan is a good opponent. He is a tall southpaw who likes to box so there should be plenty of action."

"I've been working hard in the gym and it's great to be back training after my shoulder surgery."

The bout will be held at the Liquid and Envy nightclub in Portsmouth.

For ticket details and further updates follow @chrishobbsboxer on Twitter



## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



**S**UPERHEAVYWEIGHT star LCpl Chez Nihell (1 PWRR) made a sensational start to the new boxing season by claiming an England Title Belt in his first bout of the campaign.

A stunning run of form in 2015/16 saw the fighter earn a slot in the England team that faced the ETS Knights last month and his victory over Jeame Tshikeva saw the coveted silverware head to the Army's training base in Aldershot.

The duo have become familiar opponents in recent times and their clash at York Hall was the third bout between the two in less than 12 months.

Tshikeva took the first contest on a split decision

before Nihell gained his revenge in the final of the Haringey Box Cup in June.

"We both had one win each so I knew this would be a close fight," the champion told *SoldierSport*.

"It was the last bout of the evening and I took it on a unanimous verdict – I was delighted with the result."

"In many ways this was my dream fight. To get my first England vest and win a national title on the same night is brilliant."

Nihell's selection came on the back of an action-packed season that saw him win a fourth Combined Services title and reach the final of the Amateur Boxing Association (ABA) Championships, where he lost on a split decision.

He was then invited to a trial with Team GB and subsequently welcomed into the England fold.

"There are dual matches coming up with other nations and I'll be attending the squad's regular training camps," the soldier added.

"I've had a really good start to the season and I want to continue that form."

"The England Title Belt is a brilliant competition. Previously there was just one national title – the ABA – which you could only box for once a year."

"Now there are regional and national titles up for grabs all year round."

"My next goal is to unify this belt with the ABA crown – that would be amazing." ■



Picture: Cpl Jonathan Lee van Zyl, RLC



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## MONTH in sport

November's key fixtures...



**WHAT:** Inter-Command/Inter-Services Indoor Hockey

**WHEN:** November 9 and 10

**WHERE:** Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre

**COMMENTS:** The Army women and under-25s will be looking to defend their titles from 2015, while the men will be hoping to avenge their defeat to the Navy



**WHAT:** UK Armed Forces v Bath RFC Rugby Union

**WHEN:** November 21 (1945)

**WHERE:** The Rec, Bath

**COMMENTS:** The annual remembrance fixture sees the Services resume their rivalry with Bath, having lost 35-7 last season. The women face a Welsh Select side in Cardiff on November 11



**WHAT:** Inter-Corps Water Polo and Swimming Championships

**WHEN:** November 30

**WHERE:** Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre

**COMMENTS:** Records tumbled in the pool last season as the Army Medical Services claimed three team titles. Fast times are expected again this year

## HEROES OF HAWAII

Service stars test powers of endurance on Ironman's global stage



Picture: TriTrainingHarder

**T**HE daunting prospect of the Ironman World Championships proved of little consequence to the Army athletes who travelled to Hawaii for one of sport's most punishing races.

Sgt Becky Hoare (REME, pictured top left) was the outfit's standout performer as she won the women's military event in a time of 10hr 54min 11sec - finishing more than nine minutes clear of her nearest rival.

Teammate Capt Valerie O'Regan (Int Corps) was seventh, while 2nd Lt Henry Eaton (AAC, pictured bottom left) claimed ninth place in a highly competitive men's race that was won in a stunning time of 9hr 10min 38sec.

The Ironman course consists of a 2.4-mile swim, followed by a 112-mile cycle stage and concludes with a 26-mile marathon. It is contested in temperatures of around 35 degrees Celsius and 80 per cent humidity.

"It was an amazing performance from Becky," Eaton told *SoldierSport*. "She looked really strong and had a great marathon to cap things off.

"Ninth place was not as good as I hoped for. The swim and cycle went very well but I fell apart on the run.

"I didn't get the nutrition right when on the bike and that had a knock-on effect.

"I was around 30 minutes slower than I wanted to be so I was never really in contention but having said that it was a pretty good race.

"I did the world championships in 2012 and took 65 minutes off my time from then so I'm fairly happy.

"But to hit Hawaii in top form you need to spend a year focusing on the event; that is hard to do when you're juggling a career." ■

## Talent on the table

A TOTAL of 32 players descended on Aldershot for the latest Army Table Tennis round robin competition.

The event was boosted by the presence of high performance coach and former England number one Alison Broe, who ran a series of training sessions ahead of the contest.

Rising star Rfn Samir Thapa (RGR, pictured), who represented the Army B team at this year's Inter-Services, claimed the men's title, with LCpl Suman Limbu (RE) runner-up for a second successive season.

"The influx of some new faces on the table shows continued interest in the sport with good prospects for the future," said Army coach WO2 John McFaul (R Irish).

The set-up is actively recruiting new players. For more details visit the British Army Table Tennis Facebook page.



# Game brief

Date: October 19, 2016

Competition: Southern Counties Cup

Venue: Army Military Stadium, Aldershot

## Army

		Horsley	1
	Brown	4	Wright
Trowbridge	2	5	Askins
Treharne	6	8	Sloan
Stewart	7	11	Murray
Aldridge	9	10	Dixon

**Subs:** Keane, O'Donnell, Gwilliam, Foreman, Rea



## Head coach's comments

**W**e really want to challenge in this competition and I think we are more than capable of winning it. We made hard work of things in the first 15 minutes but after that we quickly got up to speed and there were some great individual displays. Olivia Dixon (pictured) and Kelly Aldridge linked up really well. Kelly is the only player we have in the Women's Super League and she gets through a serious amount of work.

WO2 Mags McAtee (AAC)



**Goal-den touch:** Striker Cfn Kelly Aldridge (REME) calmly converts to seal the soldiers' win over Middlesex

## Aldridge shines in cup success

### Southern Counties

Army 2  
Middlesex 1

**G**OALS from WO2 Krissy Wright (AGC [RMP]) and Cfn Kelly Aldridge (REME) steered the Army women to a 2-1 win over Middlesex in their first competitive match of the 2016/17 season.

The Reds headed into the Southern Counties Cup opener on the back of a successful trials week and took the ascendancy with a dominant first-half showing.

Aldridge was the first to threaten when she latched on to a long ball downfield and dragged a shot wide before Cpl Zoe Stewart (AGC [SPS])

saw a speculative effort from distance sail just over.

The winger threatened again moments later as she sparked a rapid counter-attack from a Middlesex corner but after exchanging passes with LCpl Olivia Dixon (AGC [SPS]) she fired into the side netting.

However, the soldiers' pressure was rewarded on the half-hour mark. A corner from the right caused panic in the opposition box and when the ball dropped to Wright she volleyed into the top corner.

Dixon almost doubled the advantage when she rounded the keeper before shooting wide and Aldridge went close after powering through the Middlesex defence on the stroke of half-time.

The Army failed to find the same tempo after the break and that allowed the visitors back into the contest.

Substitute Helen Capewell wasted a gilt-edged opportunity when she glanced wide from a free header but she made no mistake with her next effort.

The hosts failed to deal with a low cross from the impressive Ashley Cheatley and the midfielder rifled a low drive beyond the grasp of keeper Grn Jess Horsley (RA).

But the Reds were not to be outdone and striker Aldridge grabbed the winner when she latched onto a pass from Cpl Hayley Sloan (AMS) before calmly converting.

The goal capped an impressive display from the team, with Aldridge and Dixon looking particularly potent in attack. The hard-working Stewart also caught the eye while LCpl Terri Trowbridge (AGC) offered a composed presence at fullback. ■



## Rivalry resumes as Germans return

THE Army's footballers will lock horns with the German Armed Forces this month as they take to the pitch for the Game of Remembrance.

A goal from LCpl Calum Wilkinson (RLC) gave the soldiers a 1-0 win when the sides last met and the latest match commemorates the 100th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Somme.

It will be played at Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium on November 16 (1945 kick-off). The Army women play their German counterparts at St George's Park at 1430.

# TOUGH TIMES ON THE TRAILS

**M**ECHANICAL problems scuppered the Army's hopes of victory in this year's Inter-Services cross-country mountain bike championships.

A puncture in the early stages saw defending champion Capt Bruce Spilsbury (RLC) slip down the field, while a snapped chain thwarted the Reds' number two as the rugged terrain of the Aldershot training area took hold.

These setbacks handed the initiative to their rivals and it was the Royal Air Force who were celebrating after their riders took the top two places.

"Once that happened it was a case of damage limitation," said WO1 Jason Marriott (Rifles), team rider and secretary of the cross-country set-up.

"It was a tough course. There was a really difficult climb at the start of the lap and if you went too hard early on you paid for it later.

"You have to get your head down and stay in the sweet spot. It is important you don't over-cook it but at the same time you can't take it easy."

The race came at the end of a long season for the Reds that started in February with races in Cyprus.

In that time SSgt Graham Rodgerson (RE) has cemented

a place in the top 15 in the country at veteran level, while Maj Angela Laycock (RE) finished sixth in the national series' expert class.

"It is quite difficult for us to peak for the Inter-Services," Marriott added.

"Our main focus is the national championships that are staged in July/August.

"It is a lot of hard work. You can only have one or two peaks in a season, any more than that and you risk burn-out."

The Forces showdown also provided the backdrop for the Army Championships and the final leg of the inter-unit series and events such as these form a stepping stone to the full senior team.

"We are already planning for next year," Marriott added. "Those who have done well in the Army series will be approached and we will evaluate their achievements.

"It is really difficult to get the young lads to come and compete, mainly because of the expense, but they should be able to approach their units for bikes. The same applies to women as well."

The team's next commitment is a training trip to Cyprus next February, followed by the Army Cycling Union's annual camp – Exercise Welsh Epic. ■



## AWARDS SEASON



» THE Service's karate stars head the list of nominees in this year's Army Sports Awards.

Pte Chris Rowan (Para) and Capt Karen Owen (AGC (ETS)) have been shortlisted in the sportsman and sportswoman categories respectively, while the squad as a whole is in contention for collective honours.

They will face competition from the Army ladies rugby union and hockey teams.

The other individual nominees include wakeboard ace Sgt Dale Crossley (RE) and jiu jitsu's Maj Don MacIntyre (Int Corps), with cricket player Sgt Amanda Potgeiter and boxer Cpl Steph Wroe (both REME) completing the roll call.

Prizes will also be presented in the rising star, official and adaptive athlete categories.

The ceremony will be held at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on November 8.

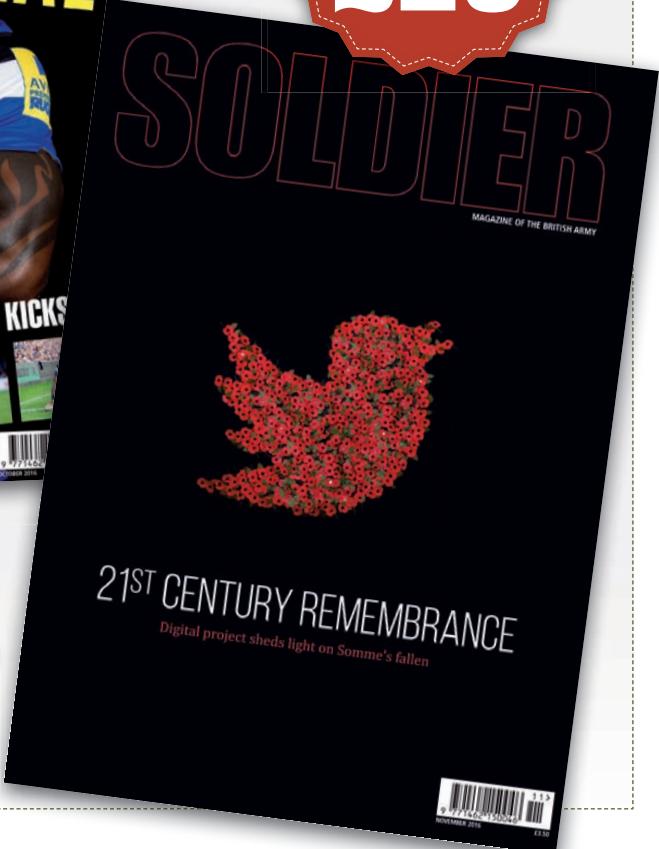
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## SPORT SHORTS



Down and out

THE Army suffered a comprehensive defeat to the Royal Air Force in the final fixture of the men's 2016 Inter-Services rugby league campaign.

Having lost 25-12 to the Royal Navy in their opening match the Reds needed to win by 18 points to claim the overall title but the target proved too much as they were beaten 40-18 in Hull.

The game was the final commitment for the side's head coach SSgt Liam Garside (AAC), who leaves the Army in the coming months.



Players wanted

AN appeal has been made for new blood to join the Army rugby union academy set-up.

The team is in the midst of its competitive season and takes on the United Hospitals in Aldershot on November 11, followed by a home tie against the Royal Navy on November 16 and a trip to Halton to face the Royal Air Force on November 23.

To get involved call head coach Maj Nigel Hinton on 94475 2321.

Picture: Steve McCormick

## Team of the month

### Army Women's Rugby League Team



Pictures: RAF News

THE curtain has come down on another hugely successful campaign for the stars of the Army women's rugby league team.

A run to the semi-finals of the Challenge Cup was followed by an Inter-Services double as the Reds secured the nines title before taking the honours in the game's full format.

Unfortunately, the Royal Navy were unable to field a side in 2016 meaning the silverware was decided in a one-off match with the Royal Air Force – which the soldiers won 24-4.

"This is the competition we prepare for throughout the year so it was disappointing to only have one game," said head coach Sgt Chris Abel (RAVC).

"But we have had a great season in getting to the semis, where we only lost by two points.

"We've been playing against civvy clubs on a regular basis and that has

helped our development.

"We've trained with teams like the York City Knights and have had coaches from St Helens and the Widnes Vikings taking sessions so it has been a busy year."

Unlike rugby union, there is no corps structure in place meaning new players go straight into the Army fold instead of learning their craft at a lower level.

"We have an open door policy," Abel added. "Anyone can come and have a go.

"Most of the girls have a background in union but they are not part of the Service set-up.

"The Army women's union team toured the USA in the summer which meant those players were not available.

"But to be honest it has worked well. We have got a really good atmosphere in the squad and the girls want to come, work hard and earn their shirt.

"The recruitment drive will start again next year and we

will look to get new players on-board to complement what we have."

Further evidence of the formula's success was witnessed when 15 players were called up for the UK Armed Forces squad, while Grd Jade Newman (RA) was included in England's development set-up.

A fixture against Wakefield Trinity Wildcats has already been planned for March.



Inter-Services Rugby League

Army Women 24  
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# STEPPING UP A GEAR

Women's team plot new course as cycling boom sees Service set-up make significant strides

**A**s the road cycling season came to a close last month the Army women's squad have been reflecting on another successful chapter in their rapid rise.

Having re-launched in 2014 the riders went on to win the Women's Team Series 12 months later before scooping the prestigious team of the year accolade at the Service's annual sports awards.

The latest campaign saw athletes competing on the national stage, while the outfit's emerging talent gained valuable experience in the Cotswold Series.

"We started out with a three-year plan but we achieved so much in the first 12 months we had to quickly go back to the drawing board," skipper WO2 Donna Short (RLC) told *SoldierSport*.

"We've got so many people to choose from at present."

"Two or three years ago it was a case of 'if you can ride a

bike you're on the team'.

"When I started as captain it was difficult to get girls out racing. But we have worked together to push the women's side forward."

"To see where things are now is brilliant. I can step away knowing the sport is growing and that more people are coming through."

Short is about to leave the Army and will hand over to WO2 Chanel Mason (RAPTC), who has been a driving force behind this year's success.

She set a glowing example by taking fourth place in the national series event in the Isle of Man and went on to finish 16th overall.

Pte Charmaine Porter (RLC), LCpl Alex Farquhar (AMS) and Reservists Spr Chloe Weller (RE) and LCpl Sam Wilson (RLC) joined her on the elite stage and they have all benefited greatly from the experience.

Another rider, Capt Ejay



SEEING OUR GIRLS GO TO PROFESSIONAL TEAMS IS DEFINITELY INSPIRATIONAL

WO2 Donna Short (RLC)

Harris (RAMC), has missed the Army season due to her commitments with the Podium Ambition squad – home to Dame Sarah Storey.

"It is all about inspiring others," Short added.

"Seeing our girls go on to join professional teams is definitely inspirational."

"We now have women knocking on the door and wanting to get involved. We have a four-tier system in place where they can start at Inter-Corps level then move on to Army standard."

"From there they can hopefully go on to race against the professionals and when they come back to us they can share that experience and help the sport grow." ■



For more details on how to get involved join the British Army Women's Cycling Group on Facebook



## RACING'S GOLDEN GIRL

SUCCESS at the Army Road Race Championships completed a deserved double for rising star Pte Charmaine Porter (RLC).

The athlete took the individual honours at this season's Inter-Services competition and her return to Redbridge yielded further silverware following a fierce battle with her fellow young guns on the Reds' team.

Porter was pushed all the way by LCpl Alex Farquhar (AMS) and Spr Chloe Weller (RE) after the trio mounted a strong break at the head of the field – with the outcome determined by a sprint finish.

"It was a bit different today in that two people were working against me," the victor told *SoldierSport*. "You're out there on your own so you can't blame others for any mistakes."

"This is the last race on the calendar so to finish with a win is great. I've had a really good season with the Army team and hopefully I can come back stronger next year."

"I like this track; it has everything from tight technical corners to big climbs and fast downhill sections."

"But the wind was horrendous. It meant we had to have full control at all times and that made things more difficult."

Porter also finished in the top 40 at the National Road Race Championships and was recently included in the Army and Sport England's Talented Athlete Sponsorship Scheme, which will offer unrivalled support as she moves forward in her sporting career.

"I will be working closely with the University of Bath," she explained. "I'll have access to strength and conditioning coaches, therapists, nutritionists and other experts."

"As a private soldier that will be extremely beneficial."

"Basically, it's what the professionals have. To receive that level of support is amazing."



### Army Road Race Championships

#### Men's championship

1. Maj Rich Hunt
2. Sgt Mark Robertson
3. James Bevan

#### Women's championship

1. Pte Charmaine Porter
2. LCpl Alex Farquhar
3. Spr Chloe Weller

#### Major Unit championship

1. Army HQ
2. 1 Rifles
3. JITG



» In the men's competition it was all about the cyclists from 1st Battalion, The Rifles as they looked to win a third successive team crown.

Maj Rich Hunt (pictured) spearheaded their charge with victory in the main race as his break from the peloton went unchallenged and the officer crossed the line with a huge lead.

But they were denied the collective honours as Army Headquarters took the main prize.

"I only do two road races a year as I'm a time trial rider," he said afterwards. "But I came here with a job to do and everything worked out."

"We wanted to keep the tempo super high. I know I will never win a sprint but if I get a break there are only a handful of guys who can claw it back."

"1 Rifles have won this event for the past two years and we were desperate to record three in a row – it is our key sporting target for the year."

# Final word

*Soldier asked members of 4th Battalion, The Rifles what they will be thinking about this Remembrance Day*



#### **2nd Lt Benjamin Udy**

I always concentrate on my family who served before me – my grandfather, my uncles and cousins. Remembrance Day is the biggest connector between the military and civilians, where everyone in the country stops to reflect on the past and present. It is a chance for everyone to come together and I believe that the nation wants to be involved.



#### **Rfn Mitchell Neesam**

Remembrance is a time to consider all of those who have fallen while serving in the Armed Forces. I will be with my family and friends, focusing on all of the people who have lost their lives fighting for our freedom.

**Cpl Abdoulie Saye**  
I will be remembering all of the personnel that I've served with on my tours of Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan. We lost quite a few in Iraq and Remembrance Day is a time to reflect and show that soldiers are gone but not forgotten. It is a special day.



#### **Rfn Kieran Booth**

As Riflemen the main thing that we reflect on is our regimental history, who we are and what made us The Rifles. It goes back to everything, even down to tactics, and we really think about the very first soldiers that went before us to set an example.



#### **Rfn Jack Covus**

It is very important to have every soldier who has fought for our country in our thoughts. It's good in particular to focus on those who gave their all. It's vital to me that civilians join in with remembrance and show their support for the Army.



**Rfn Donovan Dall**  
On my mind will be all of the blokes who lost their lives fighting for our today, for the lifestyles we have. It's about remembering all of the fallen, not just those from Op Herrick. We will be together as a battalion, reflecting on our forefathers.

**Rfn Chris Lines**  
I will be thinking specifically about my great-grandad, who fought in the Second World War and was shot at Dunkirk. He and my grandad were my inspirations for joining the Army. They stood up for what counted and for what was right.

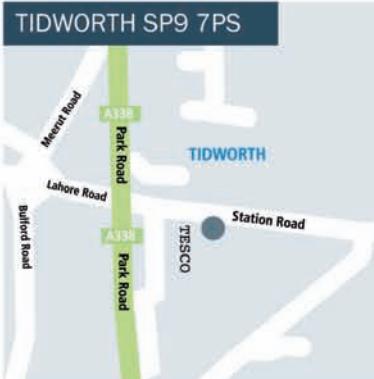
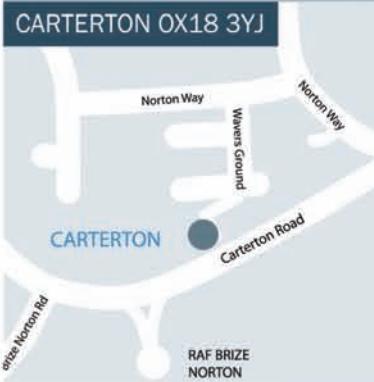


#### **LCpl Gavin Johnston**

I'll be thinking about the whole Army not just The Rifles, and all of the people that made the ultimate sacrifice for Queen and country. It is the time of year when it is most important to remember what people did for us.

# Lest we forget

In memoriam of our fallen



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