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FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

APRIL 14 1997

80p



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April 14, 1997 Vol 53/8

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Picture: Mike Weston

Cuchulain, wolfhound mascot of the Irish Guards, walks away after a St Patrick's Day photograph with the Queen Mother and the sergeants of 1 IG at Pirbright. The Queen Mother presented traditional sprigs of shamrock to guardsmen

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BOSNIAN VILLAGERS CHOOSE OFFICER AS MR MAYOR



"Mayoral" visit: Lt Charles Macdonald, Life Guards, with Bosnian pig farmer Goran Drasco

Sty's the limit as Life Guards bring home the bacon

PEOPLE in a Bosnian village are so grateful for the help given them by a troop of Life Guards that they have named their pigs after British regiments and invited the troop leader to become their mayor.

Lt Charles Macdonald, Life Guards, reluctantly declined the honour bestowed on him by the villagers of Orahova, a small town on the Bosnian-Croatian border.

He and his soldiers have returned to Windsor after six months in former Yugoslavia, but he plans to make a brief visit in the summer.

When they started their tour last August, Lt Macdonald and 1 Troop, B Squadron, The Life Guards found a leaderless and confused mixture of refugees in Orahova.

Six months later they left behind a community fast establishing small business and farming co-operatives.

Their legacy includes a pig farm, the occupants of which have been named in honour of

British regiments. So pleased was farmer Goran Drasco with the help he received from the soldiers that he called his prize sow "Life Guard".

And when Maj Gen Evelyn Webb-Carter, Commander MND(SW), visited the project he was delighted to learn that one piglet had been named "Grenadier Guard" after his old regiment.

Orahova was subjected to sustained artillery bombardments during the civil war, and when the Life Guards arrived there they discovered no one had worked for five years.

"We had to get them to help themselves," said Lt Macdonald, "and to develop a sense of community so that they were self-sustaining and not living off aid."

He identified some of the more motivated people in the village and those who showed potential to become community leaders. A flow of business plans and requests for aid were put to the Life Guards, who passed on about 50 ideas for approval and funding.

He plans to return to see how the work is progressing.

Soldiers of B Squadron will be remembered elsewhere in Bosnia for their assistance to local communities. In Seskovci, a wicker factory has opened thanks to their support and funding from the Overseas Development Administration.

Progress will be monitored by A Squadron, based at Banja Luka, which has taken over from B Squadron for a six-month tour.

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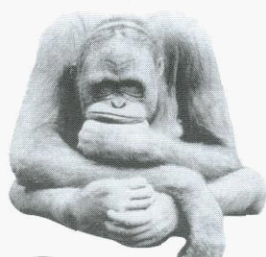
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Brig William Hurrell (left), Commander 49 (East) Brigade, presents part-time soldier Sgt Gary Branigan with the trophy for Exercise Polar Challenge. Sgt Branigan is serving with D Company,

6th (Volunteer) Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment based in Cambridge. Polar Challenge is the annual two-day military skills competition for Territorial Army units of 49 Brigade.

Report condemns racist name-calling

RACIALLY offensive language, behaviour and attitudes are a "significant feature" of life in the British Army, says a review of ethnic minority initiatives within the Service. The findings have been accepted by the Ministry of Defence.

The report, which was commissioned by the MoD following the introduction of ethnic monitoring in 1993, identifies two main challenges facing the Army: racial abuse and the recruiting of a workforce that reflects the ethnic diversity of the United Kingdom as a whole.

It found that many white personnel had a poor understanding of living and working among ethnically diverse people, and that some were openly resistant, if not hostile, to the prospect of a significantly larger presence within the Army of people from black minority communities.

"Even among officers, some quite senior, there was an overall sense that while some of the high-profile individual cases were regrettable, these were not taken to be indicative of a culture which was in general

unwelcoming of black people."

Latest figures show that 1.5 per cent of nearly 75,300 Army personnel identified themselves as "Black" or "Asian". The most senior recorded black officer holds the rank of lieutenant colonel.

The report noted a high level of consensus among black soldiers about the incidence of racially-based abuse during the stressful initial training phase.

It said black soldiers felt that they had to work harder to gain acceptance than their white counterparts.

"There was also felt to be some variance between different regiments, with the more trade or technically-oriented regiments felt to be slightly easier to survive in," it concluded.

Some white soldiers had acknowledged "that the gener-

al culture of name-calling and robust banter might be more hurtful for black soldiers, though others felt that some just "got on with it" while others made an issue of their colour.

In accepting that mistakes had been made in the past and that more needed to be done to manage ethnic diversity in the Armed Forces, the MoD said much of what had been recommended was already policy.

A spokesman said name-calling was totally unacceptable and would not be tolerated.

The new Armed Forces Bill, effective from April 1, will allow Service personnel to take complaints of racial discrimination to an industrial tribunal. Until now, complaints of this nature have been dealt with through the Service's internal complaints procedures.

Around the Houses

Pre-election Defence topics from Parliament

Recruiting successes acclaimed

WITH the trained manpower establishment of the Regular Army standing at 106,000, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames gave MPs good news on recruiting.

Answering Commons questions from Mr Norman Hogg on March 11, he said: "The Army has already recruited 664 officers from a target of 730 for the year and 13,650 soldiers from a target of 15,100 – a 50 per cent increase on the year."

He went on: "The Government are hugely proud of the Army. We have throughout had the clear objective that the Army should be brilliantly trained and properly equipped for future wars and operations, and I am glad to say that that is now the case."

Mr Soames also joined Salisbury MP Robert Key in plaudits for the Adjutant-General's "superb" advertising campaign to help recruiting. "It has won many awards in this country and abroad and we are extremely pleased with it," he said.

□ □ □

Because of "deficiencies in contemporary medical record keeping" the exact number of anthrax inoculations given to British soldiers in the Gulf War is not known, Mr Soames said in a written reply on March 17.

Answering a question by Dr David Clark, he said the anthrax programme, which started in January 1991, consisted of a course of three vaccinations over a period of seven weeks.

It's a fact

AVERAGE weekly rent in Service married quarters in England, Scotland and Wales is £56.07 for officers and £35.93 for other ranks. Rents have gone up by between 2.7 and 9.1 per cent this year, compared with 1.5 per cent in 1993-94. – Parliamentary reply.



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Army needs more wide open spaces

THE Ministry of Defence is one of the largest land-owners in Britain, but Army units based in the United Kingdom are unable to find sufficient training areas.

According to an MoD report on the management of its estates, *Striking a Balance '97*, the problem is serious and needs to be addressed urgently. The shortage is, say the authors, "adversely affecting readiness and military capability."

Requirements for the wide open spaces over which the Army can range its vehicles, artillery and soldiers increased

dramatically with the return to Britain of 15,000 troops at the end of the Cold War. Demand for training areas in Britain now exceeds supply by 34 per cent and is set to increase when the Army's Apache attack helicopters are introduced.

The MoD would like to have a further 85,000 acres, an area similar in size to Salisbury Plain, but stresses it has no plans to purchase such large tracts of land.

Small areas adjacent to the major training areas may be bought, but most of the shortfall must be made up through greater efficiency, increased use of private land, borrowed RAF training areas and facilities overseas. Canada and Kenya are noted as particularly useful foreign training grounds.

The virtual battlefield of

computer simulators will also play an increasingly important training role. More and more soldiers will complete at least part of their training without getting their boots muddy.

Striking a Balance '97 also revealed the computer technology being used to control the noisy impact of live-firing in areas located near civilian communities.

The Gunfire Noise Analysis Tool (GNAT) uses software on a conventional lap-top computer to consider weather conditions, targets, topographical features and the type of ammunition in use, and predict whether noise levels will be within acceptable levels.

The system, which is still being developed, is already in use on Otterburn ranges in Northumberland.

It's a fact

APART from English, Armed Forces recruiting publicity is printed in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and Welsh. — *Parliamentary reply.*



Challenger main battle tanks of The King's Royal Hussars on the move during Exercise Prairie Eagle

FOLLOWING the success of the 7th Armoured Brigade exercise in Poland last autumn, a battle group based on The King's Royal Hussars deployed to the Drawsko-Pomorskie training area for high intensity combined arms training.

It was only the second time since the end of the Cold War that British tanks had crossed NATO's eastern border.

Deployment of the battle group on Exercise Prairie

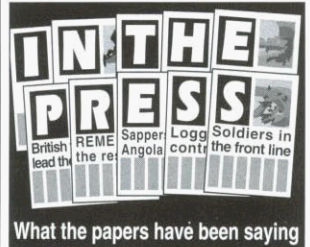
Hussars exercise in Poland

Eagle took place over two days under Bielefeld-based 24 Tpt and Mov Regt RLC.

Main elements comprised B and C Squadrons, KRH and No 3 Company, Coldstream

Guards, based in Munster. Also involved were 35 Engineer Regiment from Hameln; 4 Armcd Bde Sig Sqn from Osnabruck; and elements of 3 Battalion REME, Paderborn; and 1 GS and 2 CS Regiments RLC from Gutersloh.

Support was provided by 3 Armcd Fd Amb (Sennelager); 40 Regt RA and 32 Engr Regt (Hohne); 12 Spt Regt RLC (Wulfen); and 115 Pro Coy RMP (Munster).



Rescued eagle to be freed

A GOLDEN eagle rescued from captivity by a Royal Green Jackets patrol in Bosnia is to be released into the wild in Scotland. The bird had been shot by a hunter who planned to stuff it or sell it to a zoo. — *Times*

□ A British aid worker told how the SAS rescued him from rebel-held southern Albania and flew him to safety in an RAF helicopter. — *Daily Express*

□ High levels of the pesticides linked to Gulf War syndrome have been found on apples, peaches and oranges. One in 1,000 apples in the High Street is thought to have more of the organophosphate residues than scientists believe to be a safe daily intake. — *Daily Mail*

□ Doctors and nurses in the USA treating victims of Gulf War sickness believe they have caught the disease from patients and passed it on to members of their families. — *Sunday Express*

□ A Chinese Army rugby team in Hong Kong beat The Black Watch 12-7. — *Times*

□ The Army is reconsidering its ban on homosexuality. A new code of conduct is being drafted which may make it possible for soldiers to admit to a homosexual orientation provided their conduct does not impinge directly on their unit's operational effectiveness. — *Guardian*

□ Steven Spielberg was on the verge of abandoning plans to film a £62.5m war movie in England after the MoD had been unable to find 2,000 troops to appear in a reconstruction of the D-Day landings — *Daily Express*

It's a fact

STRENGTH of frontline infantry is about 24,200, against a corresponding establishment of 26,200. Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said: "The infantry is fully able to meet its responsibilities." — *Parliamentary reply.*

Centres of compassion

FOLLOWING my recent observations on the ideas of a man attempting to help homeless ex-Service personnel, I've met some interesting people with a variety of perspectives on the situation. I've also been introduced to the work of specialist organisations.

One such is the Ex-Service Fellowship Centres, whose London headquarters I visited in an effort to learn more about their work. I took away their annual report and, instead of glancing through it on the train, as I had intended, spent the journey engrossed in the accounts of their endeavours.

In 1932 a canteen and recreation room for destitute ex-Servicemen was opened in Belvedere Road, Lambeth. Gradually the facilities expanded and by 1969 the charity became the EFC. Today it runs several projects offering accommodation and support in Sussex and London.

The London Relief Centre, also their HQ, interviews around five people a day claiming to be ex-Service, and it helps if it can.

Grants and donations to help fund the work come from individuals and organisations such as the Army Benevolent Fund, the RAF Benevolent Fund and the Royal British Legion. A host of people give their time, money and energy to help.

Running such a charity must take guts. There will be times when the decision to help or to refuse is almost impossible to make. In the annual report there are extracts from the meticulous records. Here are a few:

● Ex-infantryman (reeking of booze) desperate to go up to Scotland to see his sister "whom he has not seen for 14 years" ... the very same sister he had not seen for 16 years last year when the coach station refused to cash in his EFC travel warrant.

● A chancer claiming to have

been an airborne soldier ... where did he do his training ... "in Angola" was the prompt reply.

● Another, claiming to have served in the Guards. What was his rank? "I was just a soldier ... never became a general."

On the positive side there are those who can be helped. Here's another extract:

"Among the ex-Servicemen we met during the year was a former officer ... a victim of alcoholism, now trying with some success to rebuild his life. His requests were modest and we did our best to help with his needs and to maintain the self-esteem he has tried so hard to re-acquire."

The London Relief Centre deals with problems at the coal-face. One man, clearly cautious about my interest, warned that everyone starts out an idealist and ends up a cynic. I agree - but even cynics can do something constructive.

Homelessness, like every other issue which affects ex-Service people, is a victim of fashion. The media picks it up and puts it down at

will. Images are carefully chosen and discarded if they don't fit the brief. But the problem is ever-present.

I think it is possible to find a way of involving serving people in projects which might help to identify ex-Service personnel who want some kind of assistance. I am also convinced that if such a project could be linked to training and qualifications it would appeal as much to the tired cynic - who would gain something tangible - as to the wide-eyed idealist.

If you would like to know more about the work of the EFC you can find them at 8 Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EP.

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



Cari's column



A medium breaker from the Combat Power Tool Kit in the capable hands of Sprs Jo Buchanan and Rebecca Scott, part of a detachment from 101 HQ Squadron (M) of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) who tackled construction projects to develop the facilities at the Overmonnow Family Centre in Monmouth

MoD committed to nursery school provision abroad

SERVICE families based overseas should not be at a disadvantage because they could not benefit from the United Kingdom-based scheme for nursery vouchers towards the cost of education of children aged four.

Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said in a written answer to Parliament that the MoD was committed to providing nursery education overseas for parents unable to use the voucher scheme to which they would be entitled in the UK.

He said: "The MoD will endeavour to provide the same standard of nursery education as that on offer in the UK, but there will be a difference in the way it is run."

"In the UK, where there will be open competition between playgroups and schools, parents will potentially have a wide choice of places to use a voucher: overseas, the Services sponsor both schools and playgroups and the choice will inevitably be limited."

Mr Soames said that rather than adopt the voucher system overseas, the MoD intended to provide direct funding to schools and play-

groups. "... nursery education will be free at source for all four-year-olds who attend an accredited provider."

Schools and playgrounds overseas will have to pass an inspection to meet Department of Education standards, with the scheme being phased in over 12 months starting in September.

In smaller, isolated detachments, the MoD would look at a form of voucher system. In areas where it was impossible to provide any facility, parents would be warned in advance of a posting, he said.

By the left, quick write

A REMINDER that the deadline for a £1,000 short story competition is fast approaching.

The Leeds-based Royal Armouries Museum and the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society are jointly looking for the best fiction or non-fiction on the topics of military life, wartime or peace.

Entries must be 1,000 words or less and submitted, enclosing a donation of £5, no later than April 30.

Full details appeared in the Diary pages (March 17).

Send them to Competition Secretary, Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, Broadway House, The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1RL.



SITTING PRETTY?

Capt Ian "Taff" Hughes of 186 (TEE) Workshop Company REME (V), runs the risk of being called a poser by his colleagues as he helps children from St Joseph's Primary School, Gateshead, in a "people who wear uniforms" project as part of an OFSTED inspection.

"As the school falls within the recruiting area of 186 Coy - based in Walker, Newcastle upon Tyne - we look forward to seeing some familiar faces in ten years' time," said Taff.

Worthy Fellows

FELLOWSHIP awards from the Institute of Financial Accountants-International Association of Book Keepers have been made to Capt Phillip Spencer, Capt Paul Hartley and SSgt Susan Dixon, the first to be granted to serving members of the Staff and Personnel Support Branch of the Adjutant General's Corps.

Spar-ring partner

NAAFI has chosen Spar as a retail partner to convert its 200 shops in the United Kingdom into a "world-class operation for the next millennium."

Worth £500m over the next five years, the contract was awarded after extensive trials with Londis and Costcutter as well as Spar.

The new partnership programme starts in May, with all UK shops scheduled to be modernised by April next year.

"Naafi's understanding of the Armed Forces, coupled with Spar's retail expertise, provides an unbeatable service to today's Service personnel," said Richard Burton, Naafi's retail director.



Picture: Terry Champion

Swings and roundabouts: Local resident Samantha Fishwick pictured with Lt Col (Retd) John Woodcliffe, area manager for Area 10, moments after they had jointly opened a new play park - part of ongoing improvement work at Church Crookham - provided for the Defence Housing Executive and Building Property Facilities Manage-

ment by Middlesex-based Recreational Supply Services Ltd.

With them at the park, which has sprung doors to deter dogs, are Samantha's son Jacob (on her right) and another youthful participant at the event. Samantha's husband, Stuart, serves with 613 TACP, HQ 5 Airborne Brigade, Aldershot.

High demand forces revamp for lodging scheme arrangements

TRANSITIONAL arrangements for the Lodging Allowance (LA) replacement scheme have been revised to ease the flow of applicants to the new Accommodation Agency.

The agency had been experiencing "considerable difficulty" in

meeting the unexpectedly high demand for accommodation since the scheme began on March 1, the MoD Project Office said.

Run by Hambro Countrywide Management Services, the agency was introduced to remove the tax liability on Lodging Allowance,

which currently costs £7m each year.

Initial transitional arrangements were aimed at transferring all existing claimants into agency accommodation by October 1 this year.

The new transitional arrangements allow all current LA claimants to continue receiving the allowance, provided they remain qualified in all respects, for the duration of their present posting or until March 31 1999, whichever is the earlier.

Although the revised arrangements will mean that the MoD will now no longer save £5m this financial year, it is expected that the ministry will still achieve a saving of more than £80m over the long-term costings period.

VACANCIES exist at an adventure training

Lake extra

hostel in Keswick run by The King's Own Royal Border Regiment.

Ideally placed for training in the north of the Lake District, the centre can accommodate

any group up to 40 people in rooms of two to 14 bunks. Charges are made for use of the hostel, but discounts are available to larger groups. Camp site facilities are also available. Ring 017687-75863 for details.

In brief

Tea-ing up for big event

IF the sergeant major invites you for a friendly cuppa on June 11, don't panic - it's in a good cause.

He will probably only be looking for an opportunity to ask you to take part in "The Big Brew Up" being held Army-wide by SSAFA Forces Help on that day.

Many of the ideas for the fund-raising event are still under wraps, but units everywhere are being asked to come up with ideas for what is being described as "T-Day".

SSAFA Forces Help, on 0171 403-8783, can give more details.

One for the book

AIRBORNE Forces are to launch their charitable fund-raising project for the year on May 11 at their old war-time home, Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire. The discount voucher booklet covers a wide selection of goods, ranging from watches to hotel accommodation, and there will be a prize draw.

Switch for SSVC TV

ON March 1, SSVC became British Forces Television (BFBS TV). The change reflects the MoD's decision to award its five-year, £60m broadcasting contract to the SSVC media group.

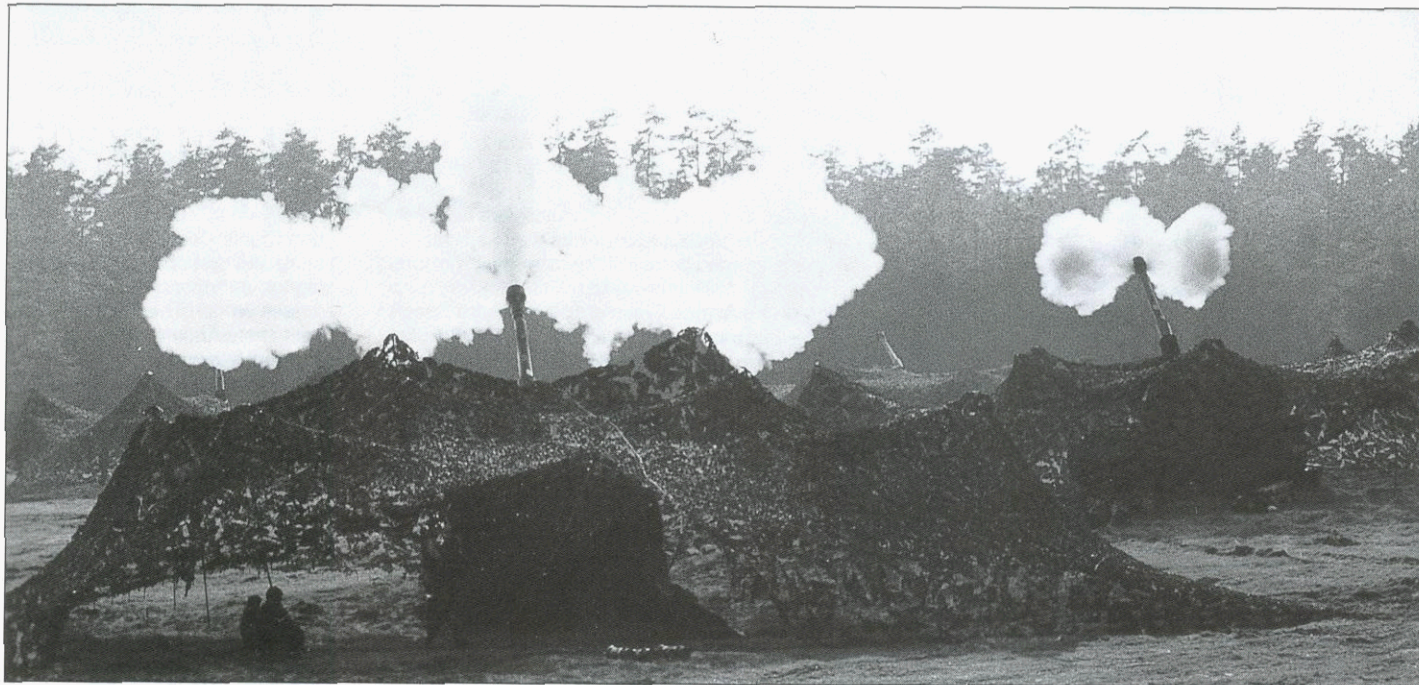
School guide

DESCRIBED as the most comprehensive directory of independent schools available, the *Gabbits Guide to Independent Schools* should prove invaluable to any parents wishing to make the best provision for their child's future.

The publication (£11.99p paperback, ISBN 0 7494 2255 6) is available from booksellers or direct from publishers Kogan Page, tel 0171 278-0433.

Kids' break

SSAFA Forces Help are organising a holiday for special needs children at Fairthorne Manor, Hants from August 9-15. This is the first year the organisation has taken on the holiday, previously run by RAF Hospital Wexham. For details contact Alison England, Volunteers Project Officer, JHQ Mil 2272 or 3392.



Pointer to the future: 129 Dragon Battery engages opposing forces with devastating firepower

Pictures: Sgt Dave Bridges and Roger Lortie, Media Ops

Gunners' spear honed in the field

GUNNERS from Germany, the United Kingdom and Denmark took part in Shell-drake Spear, the biggest field training exercise in Germany this year, when 1 (UK) Armoured Division deployed as part of NATO's rapid reaction corps (ARRC).

For many of the 2,000 troops taking part, the exercise on the ranges at Bergen-Hohne and Munster-Sud was the closest they had ever come to offensive operations.

The Royal Artillery provides a protective covering for the British armoured formation. While air defence covers the immediate airspace above and around the division, field artillery reaches out to almost 30km in front of and across the flanks. The division has its own artillery, known as the Divisional Artillery Group (DAG), under command.

Shell-drake Spear was designed to exercise the DAG throughout the depth of the battlefield – deep, close and rear operations – in all phases of war. It included live firing and manoeuvre of all gun batteries, the Army Air Corps and the Royal Air Force.

Driving force behind the exercise was Commander Royal Artillery, Brig John Keeling, who was in no doubt as to its significance.

"This is an ambitious and exploratory exercise to see how far we have come in the technological sense and to give us plenty of steers to the way

ahead," he said. "It is a major learning exercise for the players and organisers and will show us what is possible both now and in the future."

"Historically, battles have been won by armies who can co-ordinate concentrated firepower quickly and effectively around the battlefield. This exercise has demonstrated our ability to achieve this with devastating effect."

Brigade Major, HQRA, Maj Ian Bayliss was equally enthusiastic: "With computer-

generated exercises becoming an increasing part of military life, it is vital that we do not lose sight of the best training of all – in the field. Only by doing something for real, and learning from the experience, can we truly prepare ourselves for our combat role."

Central to this ability is BATES, the Battlefield Artillery Target Engagement System. Although originally conceived to counter a threat from the former Warsaw Pact, it has now been refined and reconfigured for its new role. This fully computerised system can instantly assess what is available to fire on the target and then prioritise and deliver the firepower.

With BATES, the call for fire from the Forward Observation Officer (FOO) can go almost direct to the gun in seconds. Inside the gun itself, a display unit will provide the data for barrel direction and elevation, fuse setting, and type of round. This will then be processed with additional data on wind speed and direction, temperature, air density and even rotation of the earth, to ensure that the rounds hit their target every time.

Capt Dougie MacKay said BATES had considerably enhanced operational effectiveness.

And the environment inside the gun has changed out of all recognition, as SSgt Angus Makin explained.

"For those of us used to the raised voices and frenetic activity of the old



I'm in charge: Sgt Peter Bishop, 129 Dragon Bty, prepares charges for the AS90 rounds



Above – On the road: AS90 makes a tactical move during Exercise Shell-drake Spear
Left – Ground cover: LCpl Stephen Hodge, 1 Regt AAC, provides defensive cover as a Lynx TOW lifts off for the battlefield
Below – Prepare to fire: The environment inside AS90 is strangely quiet for old hands used to older artillery systems



days, the silence is quite eerie," he said.

Brig Keeling believed Shell-drake Spear had been an overwhelming success. Inevitably mistakes were made but the learning process and training value had been immense. It also proved that despite the considerable restrictions placed upon training, particularly in Germany, these exercises can still be carried out to tremendous effect, he said.

Main elements from Germany were

Headquarters Royal Artillery (Herford), 12 Regt RA (Paderborn), 40 Regt RA (Hohne), 26 Regt and 1 Regt Army Air Corps (Gutersloh), 52 Battery, 4 Regt RA and 4 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (Osnabruck). Air power was provided by courtesy of RAF Laarbruch, with 39 Regt RA and 101 Regt RA (V) travelling from the UK.

They were supported by a Troop from the Light Dragoons and 35 Armd Engr Sqn from 32 Engr Regt (Hohne), 2 Arty Sp

Sqn, 1 GS Regt RLC (Gutersloh), Det, 14 Topo Sqn RE (Monchengladbach) and elements of 1 RMP (Herford).

For the 5th Artillery Battalion, King's Artillery Regiment from Denmark, it was a rare and valuable opportunity to train with the division. Although it had to leave its guns behind, the 50-strong contingent was able to practise interoperability and to build on the joint warfare experience of the two armed forces.

Soft touch?



Picture: Mike Weston

Pictured with just a fraction of the 12 sacks brimming with toys which members of G Bty, 7 Para RHA, are delivering to their colleagues serving in Bosnia are LBr **Stewart Strathdee** and SSgt **Mick Holford**.

The toys, which will be distributed to local children, were given to the Aldershot-based battery by June Norton, whose 16 grandchildren were happy to dig into their cupboards for such a deserving cause.

Mobile meeting

In one of his last visits as Chief of the Defence Staff, Fd Marshal Sir **Peter Inge** talks to Cpl **Ooms**, a mortar gun commander with the Netherlands 11 Air Mobile Brigade at Deelen Air Base.

In its role as the independent light rapid deployment force of the Dutch Army, 11 Air Mobile has close links with the United Kingdom's 24 Air Mobile.

Fd Marshal Inge, who has since been succeeded by Gen Sir Charles Guthrie, watched a demonstration of airmobile operations before meeting soldiers who had put on static displays for him.



Picture: Paul Kemp, CS Phot

HOT STUFF!

When they are not preparing refreshment for their colleagues at the British Army Training Support Unit in Belize, these two guys cook up some hot sounds on the BFBS station at the camp.

Cpl **Mark Walker** (sitting) and SSgt **Paul McQuillan**, both chefs with the Royal Logistic Corps, put out their own two-hour music show, *Loud and Live*, which goes out across the country.



Picture: Sgt S Wilkinson

PEOPLE

'Brake' with tradition?

Commanding officer appointments for the Liverpool and Manchester-based Headquarters and squadrons of 156 (NW) Transport Regiment, RLC (V) have until now gone to a Regular serving officer.

All that has changed with the appointment of TA volunteer Lt Col **Tom O'Brien** (top). Former CO Lt Col **Andy Anderson** (below) is taking up a new appointment as SO1 RLC MCM Division in Glasgow.

Tom, who will also hold the appointment as Deputy Commander Merseyside Garrison, was formerly 2iC of the regiment and, before that, one of the commanders.



Dal-ighted to meet you!

Giving an informal briefing at Colchester on the Infantry Light Support weapon to 1st Lt **Diana Verweis**, Dutch 11th Artillery Battalion, was Cpl **Dal Longstaff** of 24 (Airmobile) Brigade's Combat Services Support Battalion.

The lieutenant was a member of a delegation from the Multi-National Division (Central), which included Gen Zeh, its chief of operations and planning, which paid a visit to the battalion.



Picture: Chris Fletcher

Speaker cornered

Students and staff from 22 Army Education Centre had a private audience in Westminster with **Betty Boothroyd**, Speaker of the House of Commons, as part of the centre's Education for Promotion course.

Topics discussed during their 40-minute visit

ranged from the meaning of Parliamentary control over the Armed Forces to what the Speaker intends to do when she retires...



Good for him

Kgn **Paul McMullan** is presented with an award by Cllr **Frank Doran**, Lord Mayor of Liverpool, on the latter's visit to 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment, in Dhekelia, Cyprus, where Paul is based.

He received £200 after tackling a burglar who had targeted a pensioner's house in Huyton, Liverpool, near Paul's home. The Lord Mayor is a Territorial Army member.



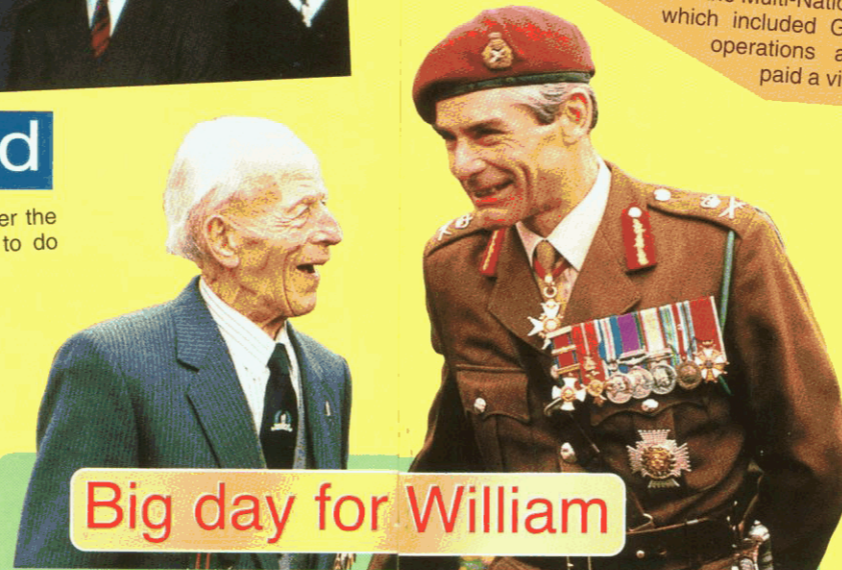
Big day for William

In the week in which Somme veteran **William Calvert** celebrated his 100th birthday, he had another significant event to mark.

Having enlisted in the Royal Irish Rifles when he was a mere 17, he had a definite feeling of affinity for the 30 recruits at the first passing-out parade of the Northern Ireland School Leavers Army Foundation Course, held at the Royal Irish Depot

in Ballymena, since most of them were the same age as he was then.

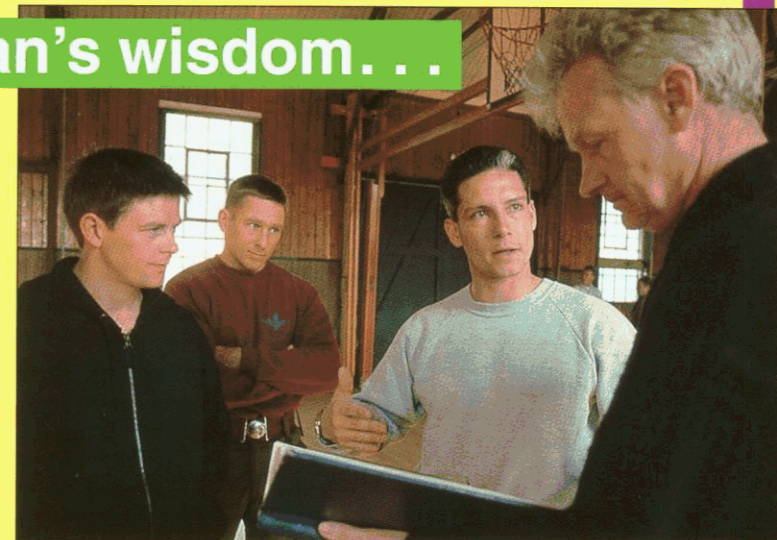
It was fitting that William, seen chatting to Lt Gen Sir **Rupert Smith**, GOC Northern Ireland, should choose to present a trophy for the "Most Determined Recruit" at the end of Phase One of the training of the members of Templer Troop taking part in the pilot scheme. Winner was Tpr Andrew Jackson.



Norman's wisdom...

Acting as adviser when a team from the *Soldier Soldier* television series was shooting part of an episode in his Aldershot unit's gymnasium was SSgt **Gary Norman**, APTC, 7 Para RHA (grey sweatshirt).

Seen with (left to right) actor **Danny Cunningham** (Fus Andy Butcher on screen); extra **Neil Rowley** (a former Para); and director **Chris King**, Gary – who was featured in an episode last year – said: "I'm here to iron out any technical inaccuracies as far as the physical training side is concerned, but I'm nothing to do with the script!"



In the scene being shot, Butcher is being given his last possible chance of passing his fitness test. Does he make it? That's a secret that will only be revealed when episode five is shown, probably in October...

Picture: Terry Champion

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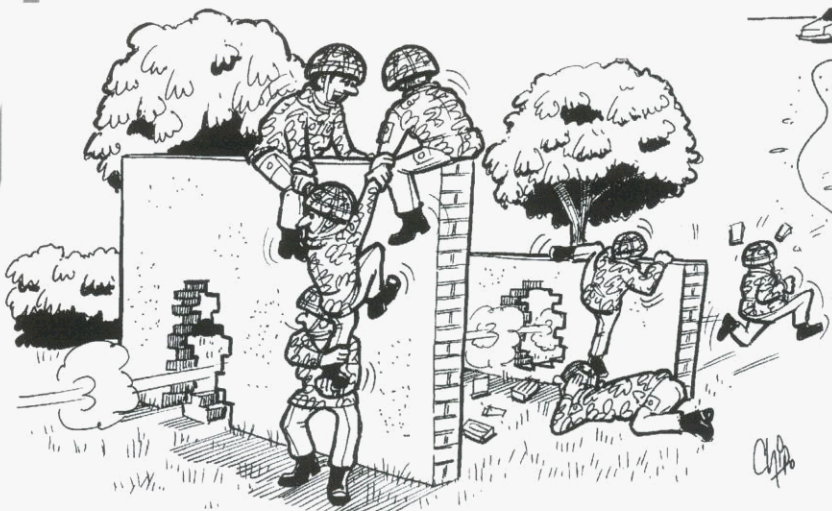


"Psst . . . Wanna get high?"

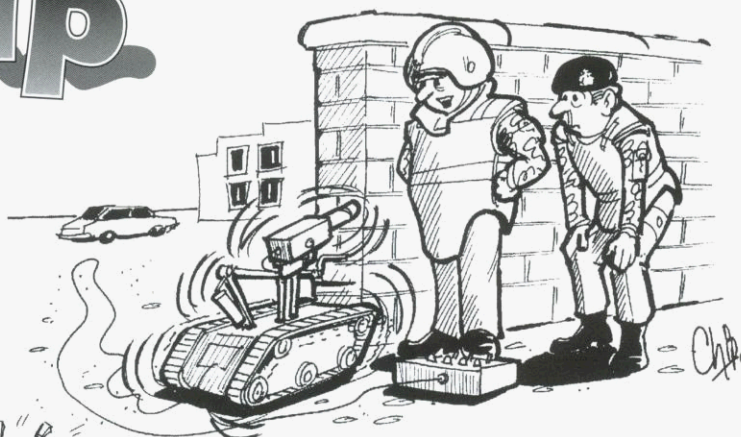


"The advert said the masseur is an ex-Army PT instructor with a washboard stomach"

Chuckle with Chip



"There's a born Para if ever I saw one!"



"We're all scared!"



"The phrase 'a plague of locusts' springs to mind!"

Ten-shun, the 1st Onion Sellers!

BRITISH ARMY berets are under threat from proposals to "Europeanise" military dress.

Multi-national operations in trouble spots around the world, particularly former Yugoslavia, have highlighted the need for standardisation, particularly where troops from several armies are operating cheek-by-jowl.

An official in Brussels was tasked to look at uniforms and suggest areas in which "commonality" could be introduced. Where armies are operating under, say, the authority of the United Nations, standard UN-issue food has already replaced national preferences.

While several items of uniform may eventually be affected, the beret is seen as an early target because it is not "climate-sensitive". In other words, it can be worn anywhere by any army.

It is understood that the version chosen as a pan-European model is based on the French beret, which is worn across the top of the head in the manner of onion sellers.

Wearing of the tam-o'-shanter, beloved of the Scottish regiments, and the distinctive Irish caubeen are likely to be threat-



Right: military beret in the Euro-approved "onion seller" mode



Wrong: outdated British way of beret-wearing

ened under the new regime of Euro-conformity. Both these items of headgear were short-listed for consideration. They are said to be described in the report as "quaint" and "examples of ethno-cultural

diversity". British regiments favour the beret pulled over one ear and "moulded" on to the head and forehead.

Reaction to the proposals, which were being formally propagated on April 1, has been mixed. A senior regimental colonel, who wished to remain anonymous, told *Soldier*: "This has got to be a bad joke. If they think they can turn my troops into a Frank Spencer comedy sketch they have another think coming. We will be urging the Army Board, the Dress Committee and the Ministry of Defence to resist this with all their might. We will fight this on the beaches and in other places."

Special clothing for extreme weather – hot or cold – is exempt from standardisation, so there is no possibility of Britain's Arctic-trained cadres having to wear, for example, the same combat gear as Foreign Legionnaires operating in the Sahara.

The British Army is also being asked to consider "Europeanisation" of regimental mascots. Brussels favours the introduction of French poodles, German shepherd dogs, Spanish bulls, Greek cats and Norwegian blue parrots.

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Fighting skills prescribed for Preston medics

A PRESTON Army medical unit has been picking up vital soldiering skills during a month-long exercise in Cyprus.

The 86-strong squadron of doctors, dentists, combat medical technicians, drivers, cooks and members of the Royal Logistic Corps from 5 Field Ambulance RAMC have returned from a tough exercise in which they left behind their normal roles to concentrate on infantry skills.

Focus of their training under Exercise Lion Sun was on handling and disarming weapons for junior NCOs who will be posted to infantry and armoured medical services in the future.

It also gave them a better understanding of the immense physical and mental pressures under which the infantry operates.

Cyprus's rugged, arid terrain was the perfect location for this elaborate scenario as medics became involved in night ambushes, a dawn raid on a paramilitary village and a dramatic beach landing.

Lion Sun gave the Fulwood Barracks-based unit first-hand knowledge of soldiering in the field by showing the medics what life might be like in the front line of battle.

Three soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment accompanied 5 Fd Amb to add realism to the exercise and give the benefit of their own infantry experiences.

In real life, medics would never be called on to perform in an aggressive role. Instead, they would advance with front-line troops, evacuating casualties from the field to a dressing station and then on to a field hospital.

Under the provisions of the Geneva Convention, medics may carry weapons only for their personal defence and the defence of casualties and their location. On the battlefield, medics display the Red Cross as a symbol of their protected status.

Each phase of Lion Sun was designed to equip the medics, many of whom had not fired a weapon for 12 months or more, with first-hand experience of equipment and weapon-handling, including the disarming of grenades.

**Report: Paul Smith
Pictures: Cpl Paul Brownbridge**



Above – Charged up: LCpl Martin Kilduff (right) and Pte Steve Pammen discover what it is like in the front line



Left – Boot camp: Preston-based medics Sgt Gavin Saul and Pte Johanne Kitching happily shed their over-used footwear after a month of 10km treks on Lion Sun

The early morning village attack brought to a close a physically-demanding exercise during which the Preston soldiers spent several nights camped out, trekked up to 10km a day in sweltering conditions, and took part in the island's wide range of water sports.

Maj Gerry McBride, OC Lion Sun, said: "This kind of training is crucial on two counts. Not only does it enable the medic to learn how to defend both himself and his patient, it also helps the medic and infantry

soldier to be talking the same language. The idea is that a medic will understand far better the plight of the casualty if he has at least some similar experience of his own.

"He will also be in a position to disarm any dangerous weapons."

Maj McBride said 5 Fd Amb had come on in "leaps and bounds" during the four-week exercise. "We've managed to build on their physical fitness, hone their weapon skills, add to their leadership qualities and boost the unit's morale ten-fold," he added.

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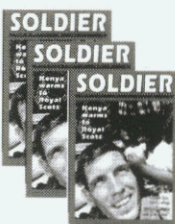
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THE ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND





Picture: Mike Weston

What a 'orrible lot . . . WO2 (SSM) Sammy Wilson was plainly not impressed by the turnout at the 27 Tpt Regt parade in Aldershot. But he was delighted with the results as the regiment raised more than £1,300



Maj Gen Rob McAfee (centre) gets the ball rolling in Germany

Red Alert

THERE was just nose way of getting away from it. Dress of the day included a globular facial extension of distinctly crimson hue.

It was March 14, and all over the world soldiers were getting red in the face – or, more accurately, red in the middle of the face.

With nosewhere to hide, troops observed Red Nose Day with due deference to a Great British Tradition. Soldiers on red alert were seen on parade grounds and on sports fields, conducting themselves with commendable dignity and precision in the name of Comic Relief.

It affected even the most senior officers. In **Germany**, a suitably attired Maj Gen Rob McAfee hit the first ball of a red-nosed squash-athon played out by his soldiers serving with Headquarters Multinational Division (Central) at Rheindahlen. A detailed explanation of the apparently bizarre proceedings was provided for other nationalities serving in the HQ.

In **Northern Ireland**, soldiers of the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment held a sports day for local

schoolchildren at their Girdwood base . . . and won by a nose.

In **Aldershot**, loggies of 27 Transport Regiment RLC entered the spirit of the day with a Comic Relief parade. The Sergeant Major inspected noses for cleanliness, while over in the regimental workshops soldiers held a 24-hour darts marathon.

Musicians from the Corps of Army Music at **Kneller Hall** took part in a 24-hour pianathon and raised about £800.

In **Colchester**, chefs serving with the 1st Battalion, The Light Infantry toiled through the night to bake 1,000 iced buns which they decorated with red cherry noses. With the ingredients provided by a local supplier, the buns were sold in local schools and all the money went to Comic Relief charities.



Tpr Mike Roberts rubs noses with a young visitor to the 2 RTR sports day in Northern Ireland



Play time for Kneller musicians



Red-nosed Land Rover push at the Army Apprentice College, Arborfield



Cpl Proff Court, ACC Arborfield, is "beaned" by Jacqui Gurd during a sponsored sit-in which raised more than £100. Earlier, WO1 (RQMS) Brian Cottingham took the first turn in the tub before leaving for a function at Sandhurst. He was said to be full of beans . . .

Picture: Mike Weston

Grove of memories

ALL BUT two regiments have responded to an appeal for military support for an Army Grove now being created within the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire.

The Household Division, the logistic corps' associations, the Royal Tank Regiment and The Royal Irish Regiment have raised sufficient funds to have their own dedicated plots, resulting in the creation of the largest permanent tribute to the British Army.

Cdr David Childs RN, project director, described the reaction of the Army to the appeal as "overwhelming". It followed a letter from former Adjutant General Gen Sir David Ramsbotham to all regiments and corps, and publicity in *Soldier*.

Enclosed by two avenues and the curve of an enormous circle of trees, the Army Grove will have as its centre an open air chapel funded by veterans of the Greek campaign.

In front of the chapel will be a monument to the 49th Division which will be approached through a glade of trees dedicated to the QARANC and, possibly, the Gurkhas.

Trees planted for the Royal Signals, Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery will also be found in this area, while behind the chapel a curving row of trees is being planted on behalf of the Royal Armoured Corps.

The body of the grove is entered down a short flight of steps where the first tree to greet visitors will be a Cedar of Lebanon dedicated to the Long Range Desert Group, which at one time trained next to an ancient stand of these trees.

Scots pine planted for the SAS, the Scottish regiments, and the Highland Fieldcraft Training Centre will be close by, as will be Chilean pine for The Parachute Regiment and 23 Para Field Ambulance.

Trees for the Regiments of Foot are being planted in traditional squares, while all the corps, prior to the most recent amalgamations, will be represented along an avenue that bisects the grove.

Trees have been chosen with the donor unit in mind: a chestnut from Hougemont Farm at Waterloo will feature in the RLC plot, while ash trees from Cambrai will be planted for the RTR.

The Cheshire Regiment will have an oak, the RAOC a walnut because it was the wood used to make rifle stocks (and because the corps traditionally served walnuts with the port in the officers' mess). The Army Catering Corps requested trees with a culinary theme, and the Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus Altissima*, was

- a Merchant Navy Convoy
- b Household Division Eight-pointed Star
- c The logistic corps' associations
- d The Greek Campaign
- e The Eighth Army
- f The Indian Army
- g The Burma Star
- h The Royal Tank Regiment
- i The Royal Air Force
- j The Army Grove
- k The RBL Poppy Field
- l War Widows Garden
- m BLESMA
- n Garden of the Innocents
- o The United Nations Circle
- p Naval Flotilla
- q DOGRA
- r Royal Irish
- s Leonard Cheshire Grove

The National Memorial Arboretum

thought appropriate for Army chaplains.

Several amalgamated regiments asked that their predecessors be honoured and contributed the funds for this to happen. There are spaces available in which associations could have trees planted to the memory of their own regiments and corps no longer in existence.

There is also room for units ranging from divisions to platoons: the First and

Eighth Armies are having a joint plot, as are the Indian Army and 17th Dogra.

Another plot is being planted with bamboo to honour the Burma Star and Far East veterans, including PoWs. Centre-piece will be a replica of the tennis court at Kohima.

The arboretum, announced by the Prime Minister in 1994, exists to pay tribute to individual men and women, and the greater

part of the site is given over to the planting of individual commemorative trees.

Names of all recorded in this way will be held in a Book of Remembrance which will be housed in a chapel within a visitors' centre to be built, it is hoped, with Millennium Fund money. More than £1 million has already been raised towards the cost of the complex.

The project was inspired by the late



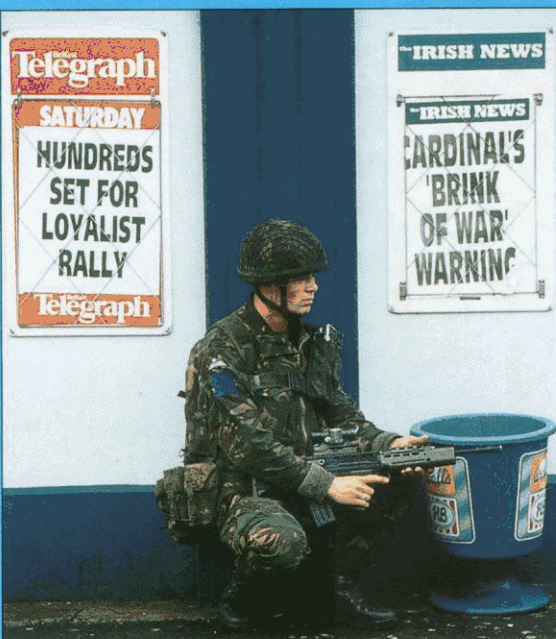
Lord Leonard Cheshire VC, whose vision was to create a permanent living memorial to all who have lost their lives in wars this century.

The arboretum lies on 150 acres of land at Alrewas, about five miles from Lichfield, and within the National Forest. The 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment is based nearby at Whittington Barracks.

Now a muddy site, it is hoped the Army

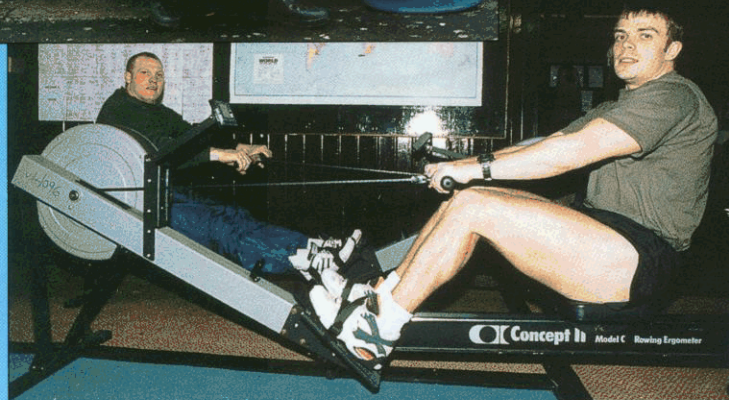
Grove will be ready early in 1998, by which time the trees should be about 4ft high, and all the paths, benches and plaques will be in place.

Anyone wishing to know more about the project, or how to sponsor a tree or contribute to the Army Grove, should contact the Director, National Memorial Arboretum, PO Box 10, Tilsbury, Wilts SP3 6TH (tel 01722 716310; fax 716839).



Left – Street-wise: a soldier checks ahead on patrol

Below – Going places: LCpl Andy Grimstead (left) and Pte Lee Spendlove taking part in the 2nd Battalion's sponsored attempt to "row" around the world during its six-month tour in Northern Ireland

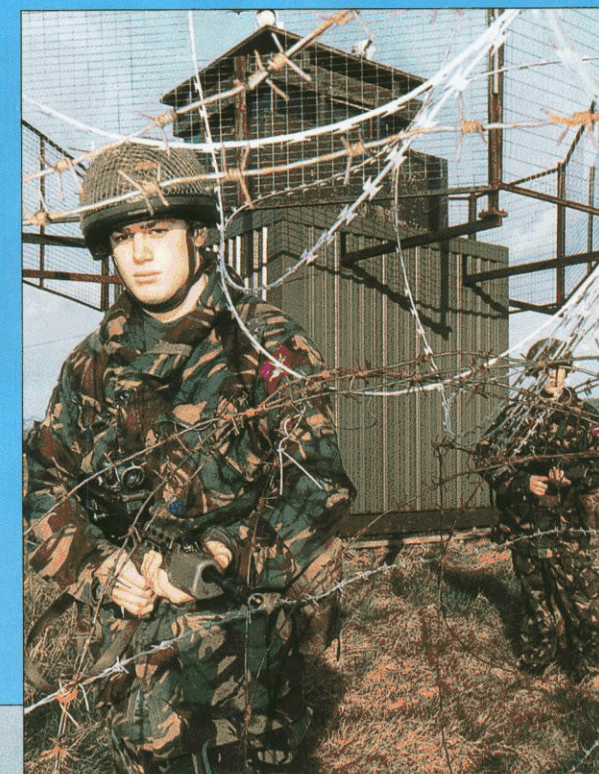


Vigilance: a patrol stands by as an RAF Puma helicopter makes a delivery to one of the golf towers that overlook the border in south Armagh



Above – Mate check: Pte Lee Easton counts his A Company colleagues in through the gates of their Newtownhamilton base after a foot patrol in the small market town

Right – Wire act: Ptes John Trainer (foreground) and Nick Poole of B Company on the perimeter wire of an observation post in the hills of south Armagh



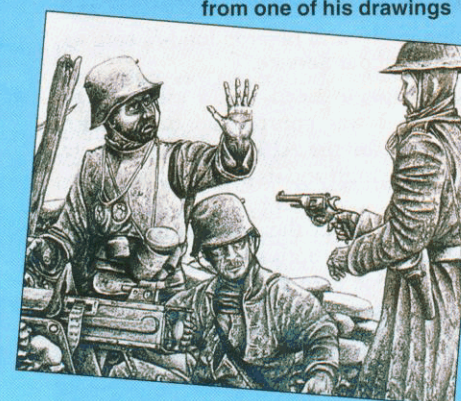
Below – Lofty view: an air gunner keeps his eye on the ground as his helicopter sweeps across a town in south Armagh



Paras on a sharp learning curve



SSgt Steve Lint and (below) detail from one of his drawings



WHEN the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment deployed to south Armagh six months ago they were not to know that by the end of their tour local people would be unaware that they had ever been in the area . . . or that the time in Northern Ireland would include a trip around the world.

Soldiers of B Company, who were based at Forkill, witnessed a marked change in attitude toward the regiment by the local population. As CSM Spike Redwood explained: "We expected the IRA and its sympathisers to exploit the arrival of 2 Para to create situations that could be manipulated by the media. It never happened."

"It is a great accolade for all the soldiers and shows the professionalism with which they conducted themselves that there wasn't a single formal complaint by local people, and no successful attacks by the IRA."

Speaking just before the battalion returned to Aldershot, Maj Neil Hutton, OC D Company at Crossmaglen, had simi-

lar views. "Far from a hostile reception people have been quite friendly. Community relations have been such a positive aspect that there is a sense of improvement all round."

It was not all patrolling and observation work. Unit education officer Capt Mike Atkinson, based with HQ Company at Bessbrook, was kept particularly busy: "More than 140 soldiers signed up to study under the Forces Correspondence Course scheme in an effort to apply themselves constructively during the short periods of free time that they had during a very busy operational tour."

Maj Atkinson had nothing but praise for the soldiers. "Although they will receive up to 80 per cent of the money back it is still asking a lot of young soldiers to pay for the courses up front," he said. "It says a great

deal about their professionalism and enthusiasm that they are always willing to learn."

He added: "There are a huge variety of courses on offer and within 2 Para we have people studying at all levels from GCSE to part-time degrees."

"Courses being followed include law, English, maths, business studies and psychology as well as foreign languages. These were particularly popular with troops in the observation towers and outstations."

While learning French, armourer SSgt Steve Lint REME decided to take up what has developed into several works of art. "I studied commercial design before joining the REME, so the last thing I imagined doing was sketching scenes from the French text of an historical account of the battles around Passchendaele," he said.

Having completed a basic French course he went on to pass the Army Colloquial French exam just nine days after taking up the language. "I wanted something to tax my

mind while off duty and started to improve my understanding of French by reading textbooks.

"It was while reading that I was inspired to illustrate the words. One of my favourite sketches – depicting an incident on the Western Front – was completed on Remembrance Day while in Northern Ireland."

As well as speaking French, SSgt Lint is also an Army Russian interpreter. He hopes to gain a late entry commission into the AGC (ETS) to allow him to return as an instructor.

Before that happens he is looking forward

to parachuting into the Ukraine with 2 Para later this year on Exercise Cossack Steppe.

A completely different challenge was lurking for the men of D Company. Lt Paul Blair was asked to come up with a charity event to raise money for the Airborne Forces Fund and PHAB (Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied). With his men confined to barracks, the options were somewhat limited.

He came up with the idea of rowing around the world – on exercise machines. Lt Blair was the first to start the circumnavigation but very soon soldiers and officers throughout south Armagh were helping with the challenge.

Pte Lee Spendlove, who was also based at Crossmaglen, said: "It gave an added incentive and motivation to our physical training in Northern Ireland and I usually tried to row at least 8km a day. It was a great way of

keeping fit while at the same time knowing we were helping others less fortunate than ourselves."

Lt Blair added: "We completed the challenge just before returning home and managed to raise more than £1,500."

Maj Clive Boyns, OC of A Company, which was based at Newtownhamilton, summed up the tour: "Everyone was extremely conscientious and worked very hard. Daily patrolling ensured that all our soldiers remained vigilant and the two finds we had early on demonstrated that this paid off."

But perhaps the strangest compliment the Paras received was when a civil representative asked a villager what impact the battalion had made during the tour. The reply was: "If the Parachute Regiment was here we'd know about it. They're not Paras . . . they're just wearing their uniforms."

Report: Jill Swift
Pictures: Chris Fletcher

You never know when you might need them

THERE IS a commonly-held misconception that the Army Benevolent Fund, the British Army's central charity, is run "by the officers, for the benefit of the officers", according to Brig Nicholas Prideaux, the fund's appeals director.

Nothing could be further from the truth, he told *Soldier*, speaking in the ABF's premises in Kensington. In fact, not only do the fund's beneficiaries, both Regular and Territorial, cover the spectrum of ranks, but they are becoming much younger – and will increasingly do so in future years.

That is why the ABF is keen to widen its supporter base of serving and retired

Report: Phil Wilcox

personnel to include younger people who will carry on the work done by "the old and bold", said the brigadier.

"It is a 'drip, drip, drip' process, raising awareness of what we do, but we would very much like not just the soldiers but their families to be involved also."

The fund divides its United Kingdom operations into 12 regions, with regional organisers responsible for county committees and fund-raising.

"We know exactly how much the Army raises both here and overseas – Cyprus, for example, is treated as a region in its own right," Brig Prideaux pointed out.

"We are indebted to the Army Central Fund, who give us money every year, and to donations from the Army in various regions, as well as the tremendous support from the TA and the ACF, raising income from various functions."

One of the keen band of fund-raisers is Catterick-based SSgt Linda Johnston AGC (SPS).

"Despite being an Army welfare worker in the largest Army garrison, and having frequently called on the support of regimental and corps asso-



SSgt Linda Johnston, who regards fund-raisers as "the silent heroes of our Service."

ciations for families in need, I am ashamed to admit that when I was approached to organise some fund-raising for the ABF last year, I knew very little about the fund and its purpose," she confessed.

"So, finding out about the millions of pounds that the ABF spends on both serving and ex-Service men and women and their dependants every year, was my first step to planning a contribution from North Yorkshire to reflect the fund's unique commitment to our community."

More than 20 RSMs listened to her message of "supporting the fund that supports them", and, boosted by individual fund-raising events such as a charity golf match and a trip to the coast armed with collection buckets, their units went on selling tickets right up to the "grand draw" held last September.

The result, greatly helped by a "tremendous boost to morale" when Army Welfare Catterick

matched the largest donation, took the total handed over to the ABF to £4,450.

"Fund-raising is fun," said Brig Prideaux, "and we are keen to get that message across to younger people: at the moment, only five per cent of our supporters are between the ages of 20 and 40."

Over to former Para Lt Col Simon Brewis, ABF welfare director.

"In my view, I believe that Army benevolence is experiencing a sea change, for many reasons," he said.

"Everybody thinks that the veterans are fading away, and there will be a fall-out of benevolence. But the actual amount we have got to find to cope with sickness and mobility claims is going to increase, with the National Service era now coming into its own, apart from the many conflicts since the Second World War."

One unfortunate aspect, he added, was that, among the younger generation, expectations were "much higher", anticipating thousands of pounds in help for all their problems, in comparison to the hundreds of pounds which the older generation, which has a great deal of pride, expects.

"It is a worrying trend. It is much more



Lt Col Simon Brewis, Army Benevolent Fund welfare director (left) with Maj Geoffrey Crook (Royal Pioneer Corps Association), Col Banks Middleton (Airborne Forces Security Fund) and Capt Barry Double (Grenadier Guards Association), pictured at the British Entomological Society's premises which the ABF leases. The Security Fund and the two associations have all benefited from the ABF's donations

difficult these days: we could not afford to go on purely on our investment income, and the fund simply is not going to last if that dries up."

The fund now works on the NED – Need, Eligibility and Deservedness – principle, he said.

"Some corps and regiments have restricted criteria – they are not able to help with credit cards, loans or funerals, for example. But in the ABF we don't have any restrictions; we ask if there is a need and how deserving is the cause, treating each case on its merits."

One of the more recent cases dealt with was a former high-

wire walker, an ex-Grenadier who had been injured. Money to provide for him came from his regiment and the ABF.

At present, the Army Benevolent Fund team are, albeit metaphorically, performing a tricky tightrope act of their own.

They are endeavouring to increase dwindling funds needed for a fast-approaching future generation of claimants while a younger generation is apparently content to watch them from the safety of the ring-side seats.

SSgt Johnston's message to them is a simple one: "To those of you who do not know there is one organisation in existence for your benefit alone, that helps people like you and me when all others shut the door, the ABF is ours. Support it: you never know when you may need it!"

● The Army Benevolent Fund is running a sponsored six-card race meeting at Windsor on June 30 to raise money for its coffers. Details from Col Malcolm Haver-gal on 0171 584-5206.

ABF 'has never failed to respond'

"The Army Benevolent Fund is the Army's central charity. Through the network of regimental and corps associations, the fund provides assistance to both serving soldiers and veterans of both the Regular and the Territorial Army, whenever the need arises."

"The fund also supports some 70 other national charities concerned with the special needs of soldiers, veterans and their families. As the years take their inevitable toll, there are ever more calls for assistance from those who have fallen on hard times."

"The Army Benevolent Fund has never failed to respond to a call from those in need and I commend this magnificent organisation to you all." – **Gen Sir Michael Rose, Adjutant General**



Commitment to the family

"To know that the Army Benevolent fund is there in the background to help out in times of need is one of the most reassuring facts in modern military life."

"Families may not fully appreciate the fund until a time comes in their circumstances when disaster strikes and the future looks bleak."

"However, thanks to the generosity of the ABF and the organisations that it supports, help is at hand, whether it is financial, practical or just advisory. This support is a lifetime commitment to the family and we all have good reason to be extremely grateful for the work of the fund." – **Cherry Milne, Chairman, Army Families Federation**



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King's head to appear on '58 medal

KING HUSSEIN of Jordan has approved the use of his profile on a commemorative medal which former soldiers are having struck to mark their service in his defence.

The veterans are incensed that their role in supporting the king in 1958 was not recognised by the award of an official campaign medal.

They were serving with 16th Independent Parachute Brigade when tension flared up in Jordan, threatening the stability of the country. More than 2,000 men of

the brigade were flown to Amman, remaining in the desert kingdom until the crisis was over. The veterans believe the operation was a major success.

In these pages (Nov 11), we carried an appeal by ex-sapper Taff Harris to Jordan veterans willing to pay for their own medals.

He said King Hussein's offer in 1958 to issue a medal to all British soldiers involved was turned down. When the brigade returned to Cyprus, many soldiers discovered that, because of their time in

the desert, they had failed to qualify for the Cyprus General Service Medal.

"We have been denied two medals, not just one," said Taff.

He tells us he has had an excellent response to his appeal, and that enthusiasm for the project has received a further boost following news of King Hussein's generous response.

Taff Harris can be contacted at 124 Haven Park Crescent, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 1DS (tel 01437 768668).



Lt Gareth Megaw, a 206 Battery troop commander, views the portrait of a fellow RA officer with Capt Torrens-Spence RN (Retd) at the unveiling of the refurbished work. See "Gunners rescue painting"

Gunners rescue painting

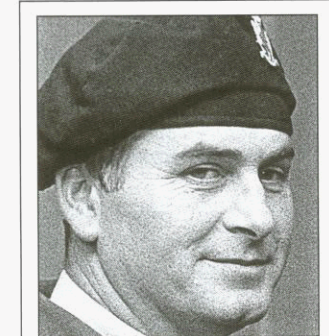
PART-TIME soldiers in Co Down have helped to save part of the artistic legacy of one of Northern Ireland's oldest military families.

Newtownards-based 206 (Ulster) Battery RA (V) is now the proud owner of an enormous painting donated by the Torrens-Spence family from Downpatrick.

A portrait of a member of the family who had served with the Royal Artillery, it had been stored in an outhouse and was in urgent need of restoration.

Now the painting of the late 2nd Lt J B H Torrens RA, who was born in 1902, graces the entrance to the TA gunners' base.

When soldiers of 32 Brigade Support Squadron RLC realised their mechanised brigade – 19 – had as its insignia a black panther, they decided to assume an appropriate identity. Now the



WO2 Seamus Gormley, 4/5 Battalion, The Royal Irish Rangers (V), has been awarded the Lord Lieutenant of Tyrone's Certificate for services to the Territorial Forces. After four years in the Irish Guards he joined the Omagh company of the 4th Battalion, The North Irish Militia in 1980 and has worn three different cap badges since.

unit, part of 3 Regiment RLC based at Abingdon, has adopted a real big cat.

The nearest they could get was a black jaguar named Pele, who lives at Marwell Zoological

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, April 1947

POOR SOLES . . .

I was interested in the letter from a happy housewife in BAOR. Do not think I grudge families their privileges, which include being able to ride round in Volkswagen and other cars while we chaps on pass must walk. But I do feel more of them might give us a lift when they see us trying to hitch-hike. – Tpr G Brewer, 105 Rft Group. (Letter to the Editor)

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, April 1972

WELCOME TO HQ UKLF

In the most significant change the Army in the United Kingdom has seen in more than 60 years, the present four commands are to disappear and be replaced by a single command, Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces, based at Wilton, near Salisbury. First C-in-C is Gen Sir Basil Eugster.

Baffled by a test of memory

MORE THAN 50 years ago the Army put the then Sgt Raymond Kibby RAMC to the test . . . and he wants to know why.

He was serving with 157 Field Ambulance at Abernethy, Scotland in late 1943 or early '44 when the unit was visited by a team of RAEC personnel. They turned the mess hall into an exam room and made all ranks complete a written assessment.

Some time later he was shown his "results" by an orderly room friend.

They were presented in code form: the letters P A G E T R M appearing above single digit numbers (other than the T which had a two-digit number, and the M, which had four digits).

No explanation was ever given and Raymond, now in his 80th year and living in retirement in Somerset, is still "curious. His search for enlightenment has so far drawn a blank.

He wonders if readers recall the mystery tests, or their purpose?

Park near Winchester. He is signed up to the squadron for a year, but will not be allowed to accompany his "foster parents" when they deploy to Bosnia for six months soon.

Suffolk honours its first VC

SUFFOLK'S forgotten first Victoria Cross winner has been honoured on the 100th anniversary of his death.

Pte Alfred Ablett (right), Gren Gds, was 26 when he earned his medal for heroism at Sebastopol in the Crimea. On his death in March 1897 his body was taken by train to his birthplace in Weybread, Suffolk.

Although his VC featured in the village sign and a close in the village was named after him, he was buried in an unmarked grave and in time forgotten.

Suffolk Branch of the Grenadier Guards Association has rectified



remarkable 150 members of the Ablett family.

The young Grenadier fought at Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman before arriving at Sebastopol. On September 2, 1855 he was in a trench used as a powder magazine when a shell – its fuse still burning –

fell into the ammunition store. While everyone else fled, Pte Ablett picked up the red-hot shell and threw it out of the trench, where it exploded as it hit the ground. He was promoted corporal on the spot and subsequently awarded both the DCM and the VC.

● A book on the life of Albert Ablett, *Through Hell to Immortality*, written by Maj Frank Clark, has been published by the Gren Gds Association (Suffolk Branch). It costs £5.50 including p and p, and is available from the secretary, C A Dearing, Millside, Nedging Road, Nedging Tye, Ipswich IP7 7HJ (0149 741126).

Trust aims to 'rescue' overseas memorials

Ian Davidson, who founded the original organisation, said: "It is a big project but someone has to do something about British war memorials which are not being looked after overseas."

"War memorials have been ignored in front of our eyes in

this country so it is easy to imagine the situation abroad."

BCESL secretary-general Lt Col Sam Pope said: "Many countries jealously guard the memorials but some fall through the net and we hope to help with this project through our contacts overseas."

The trust, which also plans to campaign for a national memorial day similar to that in the USA, has attracted the support of the Queen Mother and has recruited Earl Nelson as a fourth patron, along with Countess Mountbatten of Burma, the sculptress Josefine de Vasconcellos, and the comedian Spike Milligan, who served in the Royal Artillery.

REUNIONS

The Immatures: 50th reunion of 249 (Berks RHA) AA Bty RA planned for April 24. Details: E M Fulbrook, 1 Buxton Avenue, Cave-sham Heights, Reading, Berks RG4 7BT (tel 01734 473320).

APTC Association (York Branch): Annual meeting April 25; annual dinner May 16. Details: Capt (Retd) Rocky Holling on 01226 207046.

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

Rifle Brigade and 3rd RGJ Band and Bugle Club: 20th anniversary May 3-4. Members who have not returned cards are asked to do so as soon as possible. Details: Kevin Freemantle, 22 Owslebury Grove, Havant, Hants PO9 5HR (tel 01705 38660).

201 (RCZ) (V) REME: 26th reunion, May 9-10, at Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth, Warks. Details: Maj Ron Smith, 6 St John's Place, Waterloo, Liverpool (tel 0151 928-4493).

Middlesex Regiment (DCO): Annual reunion at the Victory Services Club, London W2, on May

10. Details: Ron Morris, 38 Traps Lane, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4SA (tel 0181 949-7605).

Herts and Beds Yeomanry: 86th, 105th, 135th and 191st Fd Regts RA, 53rd Heavy Regt, 79th HAA Regt and post-war successors. Reunion on June 7 at TA Centre, Marsh Road. Details from Ron Currell, 28 St Margaret's Close, Old Fletton, Peterborough PE2 9EA.

Cheshire Regiment Association: Birkenhead and District Branch's Sixth Oak Leaf Dinner, Hesketh Hall, Port Sunlight, June 13. Tickets (£10) from Graham Ball on 0151 608-4524 or Geoff Hunt 0151 645-0434.

497, 976 and 981 ex-Royal

SEARCHLINE

Ex-members of the **Band of 8th KRI Hussars** interested in a possible reunion in 1998 are asked to contact Colin Ridges, 117 Vanner Road, Witney OX8 6LL.

Robert Moore (ex-Cpl RAOC) is writing of his experiences in the Suez Canal Zone and wishes to contact anyone who witnessed the public hanging in 1950 of three soldiers found guilty of the murder of a taxi driver at Port Suez. He would also appreciate memories

Marines: 4th reunion at Royal Sailors Home Club on Aug 16 to mark 50th anniversary of formation of squads. Details: P Wye, Pet-a-Pat, 349 Old Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 3RQ.

Royal Signals, Krefeld: 60's 16ers reunion to be held in Krefeld, Sept 19-21. For details send sae to Chris Bartlett, 45 Whitehouse Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 5SR.

Vietnam veterans: Tan Son Nhut Association will mark the 50th anniversary of the USAF with a five-day reunion in Hampton, Virginia, USA on Oct 8-12. Details from John Peele, 6203 57th Avenue, Riverdale, MD 20737, USA.

of the "Suez Canal Bus Service" between Port Suez and Ismailia. Replies to 21 Barncroft, Moss Side, Leyland PR5 3UD.

Past members of **200 Hovercraft Trials Sqn RCT** who served in the unit from Singapore 1969 to Browdown 1973 sought for possible reunion. Contact A R Smith (ex-Cpl, MT Section), 67 Langham Drive, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO16 7AG (tel 01255 474919).

APRIL

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

MAY

24-26: Overlord historic military vehicle show, Longmoor Camp, Liphook, Hants.

JUNE

4-5: Floodlit Beating Retreat by Massed Bands of Household Division, Horse Guards, 9.30pm. Tickets: 0171 839-5323.

14: Queen's Birthday Parade, F Coy Scots Guards, Horse Guards (Major General's Review, May 31; Colonel's Review, June 7).

21: Sherborne Military Tattoo, Sherborne Castle, Dorset, in aid of Poppy Appeal and Army Benevolent Fund. Includes displays by White Helmets, PWRR free fall team, D and D Band, QGR Pipes and Drums, 9 Para Sqn RE, AAC helicopters. 28-29: Victorian Military Society celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, Historic Dockyard, Chatham.

JULY

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

SEPTEMBER

6-7: Berwick Military Tattoo, The Barracks, Berwick-upon-Tweed, 8pm. Proceeds to Service charities.

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

OCTOBER

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

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

● Home from home: 14 Independent Topographic Squadron RE has a tasteful reminder of its six-month stay in the Kiseljak Brick Factory in Bosnia . . . an oil painting by Birmingham artist Dennis Jones.

Working from photographs, he recreated the scene in superb detail and presented it to the squadron back at its base in Germany. In return Mr Jones accepted an inscribed map of Bosnia printed by the unit – and a bottle of malt whisky.

A limited edition print of the painting is to be produced for soldiers who served with Military Survey units in Kiseljak last year.

● Back to the front: 52 officers and warrant officers from the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) made a battlefield tour of Mons, Waterloo, Wetteren and Ypres in Belgium.

They were briefed by regimental historian Dr Graham Watson and laid a wreath at the grave of 2nd Lt Percy Beck, who died at Ypres. A ceremony of remembrance was held at the Menin Gate and the Last Post Committee allowed the regiment's buglers to sound *Reveille*.

Pele signs for loggies

A light-hearted Welsh treat

THE Welsh Guards have had several Directors of Music lately and Maj Watts follows Lt Col Cliff Ross to Kneller Hall shortly, so yet another change. Nevertheless the band is in good heart if this light-hearted programme is to be taken as evidence.

A fine fanfare, *Diamond Jubilee* by Stuart Watts, gets us going with a stirring march, *Men of Wales*, and an overture by the prolific American composer Alfred Reed, *Viva Musica*. A saxophone

version of the popular song *People* is followed by *Tahiti Trot*, which is an arrangement of *Tea for Two* by, of all people, Dmitre Shostakovich; no one can quite remember why it became all the rage in Russia under its new title.

Men of Harlech gets a few mentions during the programme, and other Welsh-eries are a *Welsh Fantasy* by

Rodney Bashford

Musical Snapshots. Band of the Welsh Guards. Conductor: Maj S A Watts. Available from the Band of the Welsh Guards, Chelsea Barracks, London SW1W 8RF, CD price £11.50 inc.

Gordon Langford, *Sospan Fach*, and the regimental marches. Always popular nowadays is *Gabriel's Oboe*,

arranged and played by members of the band, and Herold's *Clog Dance* can never fail. *The Virginians* is a musical tribute to five US Presidents all hailing from Virginia; presumably their characters are portrayed, but my knowledge on the subject is sadly lacking.

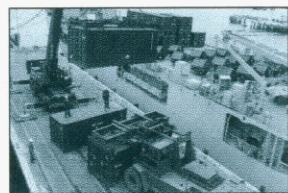
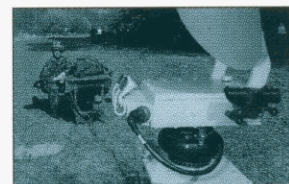
A Royal Firework is far from a damp squib, being a jazzy version of a hornpipe from Handel's *Royal Fireworks* with a fine march by Leslie Statham, a past director of the band, more or less wrapping everything up.

There remain two works of more substance in a round-the-world musical trip, *Global Variations*, by Nigel Hess, well known for his music to many television plays and for being a nephew of Dame Myra of that ilk.

Several countries are visited, with clues to your whereabouts given here and there. Saint-Saens' *Organ Symphony* is always the final piece of a concert for it has such a sense of finale that nothing can follow it. The audience begins to collect its bits and pieces together near the end. Here, though, you are invited to visit Wales, where there will be a welcome in the hillside, immediately following it.

Otherwise this is an interesting and well-presented programme which should please all. *Iechyd Da*.

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At The Hook with the 'Forty-Twa'

WHAT did it cost to be fitted out with togs becoming an officer in 1932? No prices revealed, but David Rose describes it as "staggering" in his autobiography *Off the Record*.

He was a cadet at Sandhurst in 1932 and about to join The Black Watch (the "Forty-Twa") - the first battalion of which he was destined to command with distinction - and had gone with his mother to London to be kitted out.

He protested at all the "finery" - tailcoat, morning coat, top hat and bowler, tweeds for race meetings, plus-fours for golf and shooting and much more.

They'll last you for years, said mother. They did, too, until his brothers raided his wardrobe while he was with Wingate and the Chindits in 1944. But it was all deemed necessary in those days and all on £12-a-month pay.

Had it not been for his mother's allowance of £250 a year - she gave each of her four soldier sons the same amount -

it is clear from his account he would not have survived the demands of mess life.

But survive he did and in this life story he tells a mix of jolly, funny and sometimes sad tales, especially of his time in Korea and the battle of The Hook (where he won the Bar to the DSO he was awarded for Somaliland), and of his experiences of the Mau Mau in Kenya.

Strong family bonds are evident throughout and there are

various references to his brothers, Rhoddy (HLI), Angus (A and SH) and Neil (French Foreign Legion).

This soldier's story will appeal to everyone who likes a good read about Army life and events leading up to, during and after the Second World War.

The foreword, by the way, is by the current Adjutant General, Gen Sir Michael Rose, not a relative, just a "distant member of the Rose clan".

He commends this lively book as "charming and very human". - JM

Off the Record - The Life and Letters of a Black Watch Officer, by David Rose. Spellmount, hardback, £18.95.

Medal-winning stayer charges past the post

AT last, one of the most important modern works of military history is complete.

The final part of the Marquess of Anglesey's *A History of the British Cavalry 1816-1919*, a monumental chronicle of the Army's mounted arm from immediately after Waterloo until the beginnings of mechanisation, has now been published.

The project was begun in 1973 and in the middle of the programme Lord Anglesey had a serious accident which set it back by two years. Throughout almost a quarter of a century the work has not only had the same publisher, Leo Cooper, but also the same editor, Mrs Pat Brayne, which is perhaps unique in recent publishing.

This final volume, subtitled *The Western Front 1915-1918, Epilogue 1919-1939*, aims to put the record straight about the role played by mounted fighting troops - cavalry and yeomanry - in France and Belgium during the First World War.

It will disillusion those who have been under the impression

A History of the British Cavalry 1816-1919 Volume 8: The Western Front 1915-1918, Epilogue 1919-1939 by The Marquess of Anglesey FSA, published by Leo Cooper Pen & Sword Books, Hardback £40.

No one who reads the book can again fully accept the myths of the easy life enjoyed by the mounted troops as opposed to that of the "poor bloody infantry".

That is not to say there is no element of truth in such myths, for as the author writes: "During the whole of 1915 the cavalry was virtually never employed in action other than as infantry or pioneers, though there were occasional opportunities for mounted patrols."

Then there was the role known as "doing fire brigade", answering the call of some hard-pressed infantry commander. Waiting behind the line for the call was surprisingly "civilised". We learn that well into 1915 Fortnum and Mason maintained a shop in Ypres, and Bethune had an "excellent oyster shop on the Square".

Furthermore, the cavalry were able to keep up their tradition of active mounted sports such as hunting, polo and coursing on horse back. At one time three brigadiers were *hors de combat* as a result of sporting accidents.

In the actions in which the cavalry was involved on the Western Front the casualties amounted to 19,051, of whom 4,421 were killed or died.

One battle in which the cavalry took an important part

A History of the British Cavalry

1816-1919

The Marquess of Anglesey F.S.A.

Volume 8: The Western Front, 1915-1918
Epilogue, 1919-1939



Cover story: Detail from "The Charge of Flowerdew's Squadron" by Alfred Munnings, as it appears on the cover of Volume 8

was that of Cambrai - and so too, coincidentally, did their successors, the tanks.

Lord Anglesey sees his book as something of a mission. "A chief object of this last volume has been to enable its author to enter the ranks of that small contingent of writers about the Western Front which has been battling to dispel the numerous myths that have grown up concerning the British Army's part in its battles.

"Such men as John Terraine and Paddy Griffith have been valiantly striving over the past few decades to put the record straight".

Quite another view is

expressed over the literary work of Alan Clark who, on his debut as a military historian in 1961, entitled his book *The Donkeys*, a reference to the First World War generals leading the British soldiers who fought "like lions" (German C-in-C Ludendorff's words).

Clark made it clear that he had no more regard for the cavalry as an arm of war than for the Army's generals.

Lord Anglesey certainly does not agree with either of these contentions and Clark is condemned in the most direct manner, as being "the most arrogant and least respectable of writers on the war", and his book is described as "a deplorable travesty".

Such damning criticism of a writer in modern times is rare. A J P Taylor and Basil Liddell Hart emerge with slightly less wounding judgement; of the latter, whom Clark called "the most acknowledged master of military history", Anglesey comments: "Acknowledged, yes; 'master', alas, not entirely!"

An across-the-table confrontation between the author of this book and Alan Clark would make fascinating television.

Lord Anglesey sums up his aim in producing this remarkable work: "It has been my intention to present a fair and detailed account of peacetime life and the wartime actions of the British mounted arm..."

That he has succeeded is evidenced by the award of the Chesney Gold Medal, given in recognition of historical excellence under the auspices of the Royal United Services Institute. - BJ

BOOKS IN BRIEF

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Memories of BMH Rinteln

YOUR article on the last births at the British Military Hospital Rinteln (March 17) brought back memories for my wife and me.

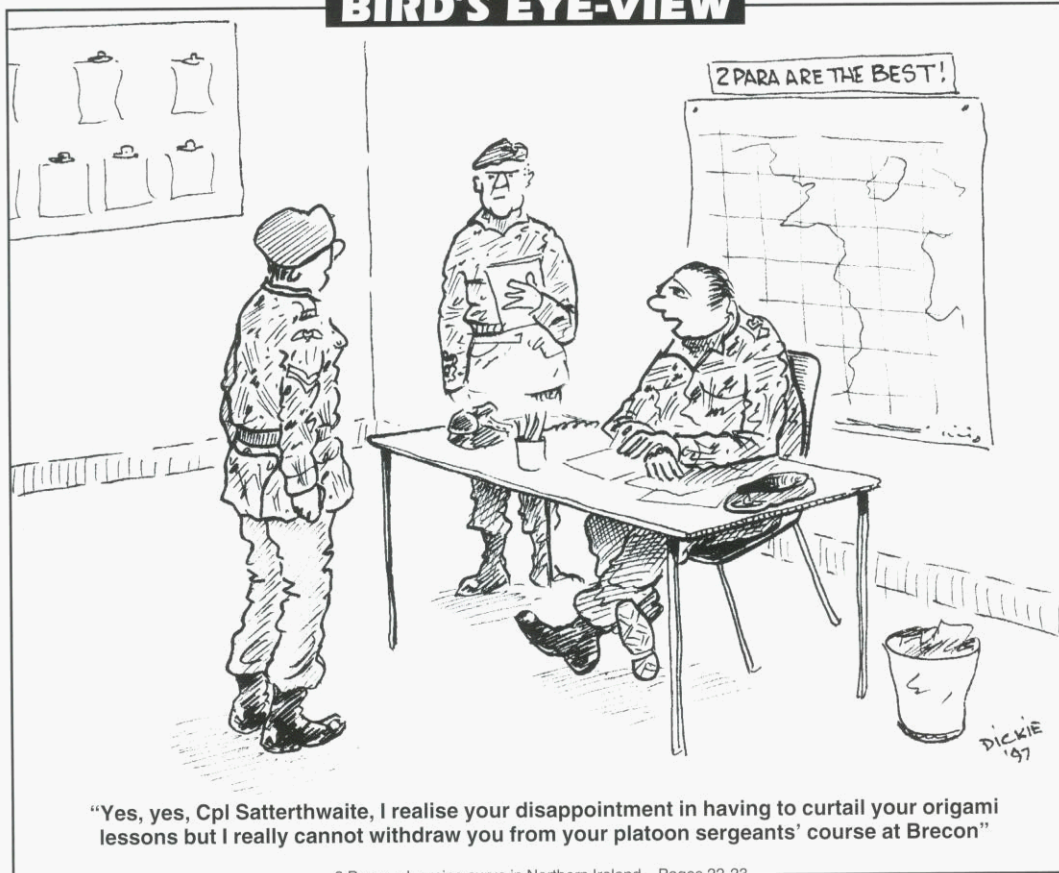
My eldest daughter was born in what was then RAF Hospital Rinteln, on December 20, 1951, while I was serving with 108 Coy RASC in Hameln.

Two days later I finished up in the same hospital after being badly injured in a car accident on my way home after visiting my wife and child.

Even in those days the care paid to all patients was of the highest order. I was sorry to hear that the establishment would soon be closing.

Thank you for your excellent magazine, which keeps me up to date with today's Army. — **R L Griffin (ex-Sgt RASC), Raunds, Northants.**

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



"Yes, yes, Cpl Satterthwaite, I realise your disappointment in having to curtail your origami lessons but I really cannot withdraw you from your platoon sergeants' course at Brecon"

2 Para on learning curve in Northern Ireland — Pages 22-23

Brett (10) can't wait to join the Army

MY NAME is Brett Griffin and I am ten years old. My grandad buys *Soldier* magazine and passes all of his copies on to me.

I would like to be a soldier myself. I have camouflage trousers, jacket and cap. My grandad gave me a tank helmet, a lanyard and a scale model of a Churchill tank and also lets me borrow his REME belt.

I read in your magazine last year that Jamie Westbrook, aged 11, also enjoys reading *Soldier*, so my Grandad said I might be your youngest reader.

My nan has phoned the Territorial Army to see if they have a training programme for my age group.

I think being a soldier is one of the bravest jobs in the world. — **Brett Griffin, Redditch, Worcs.**



Brett Griffin writes: "We were on our way home from a sports day at school one summer and to my delight I saw this truck parked near my nan's house. That is my sister on the right. I hope you are considering putting this in *Soldier* magazine, as my Grandad 'Shep' will be looking out for it."

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

Brassed off over 'joke' trade union

WITH reference to the "In the Press" items on setting up a trade union for the Services (March 17), I tried this at Lippstadt in 1980 when I was serving with 22 Sig Regt.

It was more as a joke than anything — all the lads had cards, and so on. Our emblem read SNAFU — Soldiers' National Armed Forces Union.

The brass weren't impressed. — **Tony Levy (R Sigs, 1972-81), Wednesfield, Staffs.**

Wrong angle

I WRITE in response to the article on angling (Mar 31). As a former secretary of the Army Angling Association (coarse section) I was dismayed to read that it was "newly formed".

While applauding the initiative of the Bulford-Larkhill team, I must caution them against publicising themselves as representing the association.

Angling is recognised by the Army Sport Control Board, and the AAA represents all anglers. Finally, well done to the Bulford-Larkhill lads on a good start to their campaign. — **WO2 (SQMS) Gus Brindle, HQ AFSOUTH, BFPO 8.**

● Following Jamie's letter last April we heard of several even younger readers and one *Soldier* fan of 2½. May we suggest to all youngsters like Brett who are interested in joining the Army that they get in touch with their local Army Cadet Force unit or write to The Army Cadet Force Association, The Duke of York's Headquarters, London SW3 4RR. — **Editor.**

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

THE ROYAL LOGISTIC CORPS

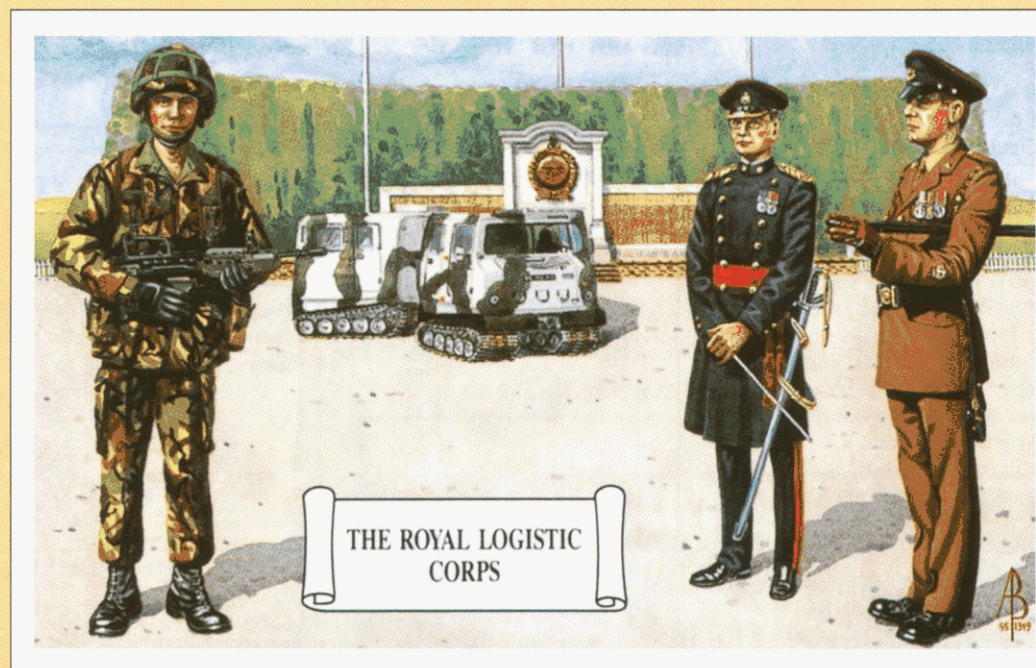
GETTING the British Army into the field and keeping it there is the responsibility of the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), formed on April 5, 1993 from its acknowledged predecessors, the Royal Corps of Transport, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, Royal Pioneer Corps, Army Catering Corps and the Postal and Courier Service of the Royal Engineers.

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The postcard illustrated



here was reproduced from a watercolour painting by Alix Baker. It shows:

- Soldier: Combat dress, with SA80 rifle.
- Sergeant major: No 2 dress.
- Director of Music: The blue frock coat worn by the

Director of Music was originally introduced into service as "undress" early in the last century. By today's standards it is an elegant and formal garment.

- Haggglund all-terrain carrier: Taken into service by the British Army, mainly for use

in Norway. It is in service with the ACE Mobile Force (Logistics) Battalion at Bulford.

- Background: The Royal Army Ordnance Corps War Memorial at The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut, where it is the backdrop to parades of the new corps.

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



Dragon badge

FURTHER to letters on the China Dragon, can any reader explain how the Buffs – the 3rd of Foot, descended from a regiment raised for service in the Netherlands in 1572 – came to have a dragon for a cap badge? And how did the saying come about, "Steady the Buffs"? – **Edward Kelly, Dover.**

AN earlier correspondent referred to the 49th Foot being awarded the China Dragon. But the Dragon was never worn by the Hertfordshires (49th Foot). Can someone tell that one out? – **R Edwards (ex-Beds and Herts/ Herts Regt TA), Hertford.**

GSM 'Near East'

A colleague reckoned the GSM 18/64 should never have been awarded for Op Musketeer '56 as the action took place in Africa,

which was specifically excluded in the rules relating to its issue.

Moreover, in an effort to disguise Egypt's location in this continent, the term "Near East" was embossed on the clasp whereas about 100,000 of us out there around that time knew it as the "Middle East".

As Baldrick might sum up, "I think it was part of a cunning plan to outwit foreigners." – **W H D Podd, Lowestoft, Suffolk.**

I AM writing on behalf of the 1st Bn Buffs and other soldiers who served in the Suez Canal Zone. I was there in 1951-52 when we were shot at by the Egyptian police and Army at Port Taufiq and Port Fayid. I shall be writing to the appropriate authority about medal entitlement. – **H H Newing, Whitstable, Kent.**

Service numbers

FURTHER to the replies on the subject of military numbers, before the Second World War Regular regiments had their own block numbers.

During the war additions were made for various corps and units. When enlisting or being called up all started in the General Service

Corps for six weeks primary training before being posted. The GSC had block numbers in force – 1400 5001 to 1500 0000 and 1900 0001 to 1920 0000.

The system is still in use today, with all new recruits having an eight-digit number (eg 24072935).

My source is Lt Col D C R Ward KOSB. – **A F Brocklehurst, Penarth, S Glamorgan.**

Dead Man's Number

PETE-DE-WOOD's letter (March 17) is incorrect. My Army number was 14114533. Nos 14114501 to

14114860 were allocated in January 1946 to Royal Engineers and REME potential officers when we were mustered at Sobraon Barracks, Colchester, after completing two-and-a-half-year Engineer cadet courses.

There were some earlier, smaller batches whose numbers were probably within 14113000 and 14114500. Half, or slightly more, of these were commissioned during 1946, then taking six-figure numbers beginning P/37. – **Capt J F Mapstone ERD, (RE retd), Northampton.**

For the record

QLR Museum

IN the pages devoted to military museums (advertisement feature, March 17) I read that the museum of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment incorporates the archives etc of the Loyal (North) Lancashire Regiment.

The proper name of the regiment was the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) from 1921 until its amalgamation with the Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers) in 1970. It may have been an unusual name but it was ours and we were proud

of it. – **Michael B Potter (ex-Loyals), Bedford.**

Identical twins

ON the subject of identical twins ("Which is which Steer", March 17), unless I am mistaken the first to join the Army after the end of National Service were W/427521 Pte S A Farley and W/427526 Pte S A Farley.

They joined in 1965, appeared on Hughie Green's television show, *Double Your Money*, and left on marriage in 1968. – **K B Arm, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.**



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

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Competition No 656 (March 3 issue): First correct entry drawn was from Mr Ken Loble, of Todmorden, Lancashire, who wins £50. Book prizes go to runners-up WO1 R G Raynor, Twickenham, Middlesex, and Mr W J Quinn, of Northern Ireland. The ten differences were: centre branch of tree; hand, right shoulder of second figure from left; right foot, third figure from left; instructor's right cuff, right ankle; head of second figure from right; back of right-hand figure; line, bottom left of right-hand window; cuff of combat jacket under table.



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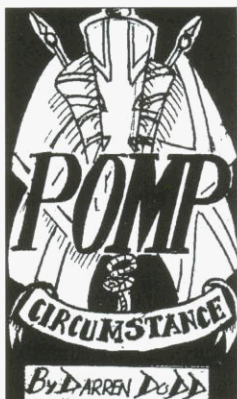
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TWELVE-way tie for sixth prize (19 goals, £50 each): SSgt RN Brown, ASPT, Aldershot; Cpl MI Colston, 24 Airmob Bde CSS Bn, Colchester; LCpl A Dryland, 3 Tk Tptr Sqn RLC, BFPO 16; Sgt JM Dunn, 103 Bn REME (V), Redhill; Rfn DT Harding, SOTAT (G), BFPO 16; Cpl D Hayes, 28 Eng Regt, BFPO 31; Sgt RS Henry, BFPO 801; WO1 R Howick, 1 Coldm Gds, BFPO 17; LCpl DE Kear, QDG, BFPO 16; LCpl MA Lindsay, 62 Cyprus Sp Sqn RE, BFPO 58; WO2 M Moore, MOD, Sgt PH Smith, AFCO Reading.

MARCH 22, 1997

THREE-way tie for first prize (14 goals, £1,500 each): LSgt MS Austin, 1 SG, Windsor; WO2 D Bryson, 3 CS Regt RLC, Abingdon; Sgt RS Dent, JCU, BFPO 825.

39-way tie for fourth prize (13 goals, £38.46 each): SSgt K Allen, 17 Port & Maritime Regt RLC, Marchwood; SSgt SG Austin, 81 PC Sqn RLC, Abingdon; Cpl P Beaumont, 1 Bn REME, BFPO 36; WO1 S Bennion, 5 Regt AAC, BFPO 808; SSgt MR Champion, 5 Fd Amb, Preston; Maj PA Conway, Royal Hospital Haslar; Sgt

RS Crisp, 1 Coldm Gds, BFPO 17; Cpl AM Currie, 25 Engr Regt, BFPO 808; WO1 SJJ Davies, AMS Trg Gp, Ash Vale; Sgt B Desborough, ATR Lichfield; Cpl AW Etherington, 1 KOSB, Edinburgh; Sgt CS Fletcher, 9 Signal Regt (Radio), BFPO 59; Sgt JT Flowers, 7 Para RHA, Aldershot; Capt (name withheld), 21 SAS (V), London; LCpl S Healey, HQ Dhekelia Garrison; BFPO 58; Cpl AS Hildreth, 1 RSME Regt, Chatham; Pte JJ Hogg, 82 AB GS Sqn RLC, Aldershot; WO2 MM Hopson, HQ York Garrison; Tpr LR Hunston, 3 R IRISH, BFPO 809; Sgt SP Hunt, Sp Bn HQ ARRC, BFPO 40; SSgt SP Jessop, ATR Winchester; Tpr LR Johnson, 9/12 L, Bovington; WO2 AV Jolliffe, Depot R IRISH, BFPO 808; Lt Col JB Kennedy MDHU Frimley Park; Cpl RMA Link, 27 Tpt Regt RLC, Aldershot; Capt DA Malley FIU, BFPO 825; Cpl ALM McKinlay, AMF (L) CSS Bn, Bulford; Cpl ORE Morrison, 3 Arm Fd Amb, BFPO 16; Tpr SJ Park, 2 RTR, BFPO 38; Cpl R Penhallurick, RDG, Tidworth; Cpl S Rafferty, 8 Arty Sp Regt RLC, Catterick; Maj DWN Rule, Defence Attache Abu Dhabi; Sgt P Rutter, 2 LI, BFPO 806; Sgt P Sembiane, Cdo Log Regt RM, Chivenor; LCpl J Taylor, 32 Engr Regt, BFPO 30; Capt DJ Thornton, 5 Regt AAC, BFPO 808; SSgt RI Whereat, 8 Arty Sp Regt RLC, Catterick; WO2 WH Williams, Cyprus Logistic Unit, BFPO 57; Sgt AR Wilson, HQ Landcent, BFPO 115.

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Caroline on trial for Great Britain

Capt Caroline Kirman (Int Corps) has been selected for trials with the Great Britain rowing squad.

Since taking up the sport at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, she has notched up a number of successes.

Last year she competed for England in the Home Countries international championships, winning the coxless pairs, which is her specialist event, and coming second in

the coxed fours event. Currently stationed at RAF Brampton, Kirman is captain of the Army women's rowing team and a member of the Bedford Rowing Club.

Capt Kirman has competed for the Army for three years, racing in all types of boat from skulls to an eight.

She is currently in training for the Joint Services regatta to be held at Peterborough on May 17.



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ANYONE interested in learning how to windsurf is invited to contact the REME Yacht Club (RYC), which has a ready-to-use package of equipment for hire.

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Massey Trophy

Football results:

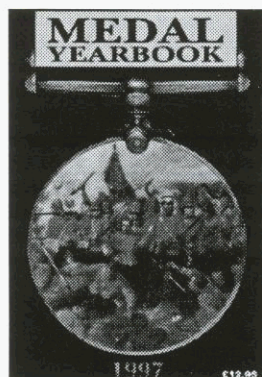
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Pacific tourists in superb form against German XV

Army 48, RAF 20

AS PART of the build-up to their tour of the South Pacific in May, the British Army (Germany) rugby squad gathered for five days of intense coaching during which they played three games.

First match was against RAF (Germany) at Bradbury Barracks, Krefeld. The Army, against the run of play, scored through Capt Stuart Podmore. A large crowd was then treated to one of the most impressive displays of rugby seen in Germany for many years.

By half-time the Army had scored four more tries through Stuart Podmore, Maj Simon Humphrey and Sgt Steve Berryman (two). After the break Berryman grabbed his hat trick to make the score 36-3.

The RAF discovered a new lease of life, scoring three tries before the Army came back strongly in the final eight minutes when they scored two excellent tries through Spr Dean Ross and man of the match Cpl Steve Humphries.

After several quality coaching sessions the Army fielded two XV's in Cologne against Germany Under-23 and the



Cpl Steve Humphries out-jumps Manfred Medoch (No 5) in the match against the German National XV at Cologne, but the ball is safely in German hands

German National XV. The Army were too strong for the German junior team, running

out 29-5 winners, and scoring five tries through WO2 Innes (two), Sgt Roadnight, 2nd Lt

Rattenbury and LCpl Miller.

A memorable performance against the full German XV ended in a 24-9 victory for the Army, with Gdm Carl Leech, Lt Charlie Waggett and Spr Franky Green scoring tries.

The tour squad has three more warm-up games, against Holland, DIOK (the European FIRA club champions) and North Germany.

ARMY (GERMANY) RUGBY TEAM TO TOUR NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

LCpl Kershaw (LD); Lt Waggett, WO2 Innes, Cpl Bevan, Cpl Powell, LCpl Lockyer, Tpr Jones, Tpr Meredith (all QDG); Capt Podmore (26 RA); Cpl Fazakerly, Cpl Sanger (21 Eng Regt); Sgt Thomas (28 Engr Regt); Spr Ross Spr Green (35 Engr Regt); Sgt Berryman, Gdsm Leech (Coldm Gds); Capt Lewis (REME/1 RHF); SSgt Tinsdale, SSgt

Williams (1 GS RLC); 2nd Lt Rattenbury (2 CS RLC); Cpl Matheson (1(UK) ADSR); Sgt Mundie, Cpl Humphries, Cpl Bembridge (7 Sig Regt); Cpl Wood (200 Sig Sqn); LCpl Davies (3 Bn REME); Cpl Davies (14 Sig Regt); Capt Glasgow (HQ ARRC); Maj Humphrey (HQ UKSC(G)); SSgt Neighbour (2 Sig Regt).

Firemen douse Army's flames

English Fire Service 3, Army 0
YET another very hastily rearranged Army side took on an English Fire Service team containing old Army stalwarts Sig Paul Brown and Simon Bambrook, writes Derrick Bly.

Bambrook, in fact, laid on two of the goals in a 3-0 victory for the firemen at Sheffield.

Coach QMSI Duncan Russell sent on Pte Lee Badrock (1 Cheshire), first of this year's impressive youth squad to experience first team action, and he gave a good account of himself.

Netherlands 3, CS 0

The Netherlands retained the Kentish Cup with a 3-0 victory over British Combined Services at Ermelo in Holland.

Although the visitors had the better of the earlier exchanges, a three-goal burst by the Dutch side mid-way through the second half ended British hopes of retaining the trophy.

Army Youth 6, RN Youth 2

The Army Youth side put on a superb display against the Royal Navy at Aldershot to lift the junior Inter-Service trophy. In the fourth minute they

went ahead through SEME's Cfn Ritchie Gunning.

Three minutes from the break, Gunning was fouled on the edge of the box and Watts bent the ball over the wall and inside the right post. The Army made it three in the 49th minute, Gunning slipping the ball through to Jackson for the SEME youngster to beat the advancing 'keeper.

On the hour, the Army scored a superb fourth when Watts unleashed a tremendous 35-yarder which the Navy 'keeper touched but could not

stop as it rocketed into the roof of the net.

After the Navy had reduced the arrears, Watts completed a superb performance by curling another free kick inside the opposite post for a 6-1 lead, and his hat trick. The Navy further reduced the arrears just before the end when the home defence for once were caught flat-footed.

AT Greg Dick (11 Sig Regt) was the architect of many of the Army moves and looks set for an early call-up to the senior squad.



Maj Rob Herring RLC, 5 AB Bde, winner of the open competition and his age group, canoes to victory

Herring paddles off with 'quad' trophy

TOP triathlete Maj Rob Herring (RLC) added canoeing to his impressive list of sporting skills on the way to winning the Army's first open invitation quadrathlon championship.

Put on by the Army Physical Training Corps and the Royal Engineers at Hawley Training Area, the competition attracted more than 50 individual and 40 team entries.

Organised by world and European quadrathlon champion Capt Ted Martin from ASPT and hosted by WO Geordie Alhaji of 3 RSME Regiment, the event began with a 1,500m swim in the pool at Gibraltar Barracks. Next morning the 7km kayak course, a 35km cycle race and 7km cross country tested the mental and physical resolve of the athletes.

First male home was the

Army triathlete champion Rob Herring, currently serving with 5 AB Bde in Aldershot. He chanced his luck in a canoe and got away with it, and also won his 35-39 year age group prize after producing an overall time of 2hr 25min – seven minutes behind the strong ASPT relay team that came first in a time of 2hr 18min.

Winning women's time was 2hr 44min, recorded by Gina Vaughan, the British champion. First Army competitor was Cfn Hawkins REME with a time of 2hr 47min.

Other notable performances were from the Royal Engineers, with Spr Jenkins and Maj Wildish second and third respectively in the open competition.

LCpl Hurst (RLC) was second Army woman to cross the line.



Maj Tim Wildish, who was third overall, finishes the 7km run

Fleet of foot Alan wins for third time

CPL Alan Shepherd (24 Armd Fd Amb) won the Army half marathon title, run in conjunction with the Fleet Half on March 23, for the third consecutive time, and in doing so led the Army to victory in the Inter-Service championships.

And he did so in style, crossing the line in 1hr 7min 17sec, seven seconds faster than his previous best set in 1995.

He was followed home by two BAD Kineton runners, LCpl Paul Harwood (1:09.15) and Cpl Paul Aston (1:10.37). Both Harwood and Aston took well over two minutes off their previous best performances.

BAD Kineton took the team honours, their third scoring runner, veteran Maj Clive Osborne, finishing in 25th place. Second team were 28 Engineer Regiment, for whom Cpl Peter Jackson (6th), SSgt Martin Brady (13) and LCpl Riley (22) featured.

In the Inter-Service categories, the Army's men finished comfortably ahead of the Royal Air Force, with the Royal Navy third.

Shepherd's overall placing in the race was an excellent seventh, less than four minutes behind the winner, Great Britain cross-country international Gary Staines.

Pte Alison Armstrong, also from the strong Kineton stable, was the first Army woman to finish, recording a time of 1:25.18. Cpl Sonia Hurst (Army Sch of Catering) ran for charity and finished second, while WO2 Karen Mitchell (HQ Land) was third overall and winner of the women's veterans' title in a time of 1:35.55.

Together, they won the Inter-Service honours, comfortably beating the Navy, while the RAF were one short of a full team.

Capt Peter Marsh (D Log Pln), now back from injury, ran superbly to finish tenth and claim the veteran men's title in 1:13.44, ahead of Clive Osborne in second and Maj Colin Walker (38 Engr Regt) in third. Inter-Service gold went to the RAF veterans.

In brief

Canoe do this?

VOLUNTEERS are wanted from Royal Logistic Corps personnel for male and mixed teams to take part in the Army canoe polo championships at Devizes from May 30 to June 1. No previous experience of

the sport is required. Details from Capt R Schofield, 29 Regt RLC, South Cerney, tel 738 8155.

RCT reunion

ALL Regular or ex-Regular personnel who represented

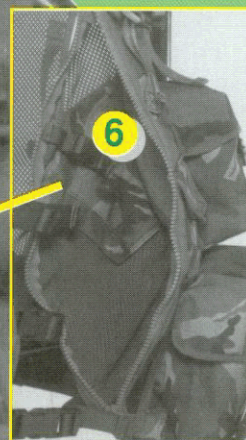
RCT corps football up to April 5, 1993 are invited to the RCT Corps/BAOR football reunion at Defence School of Transport, Normandy Barracks, Leconfield, East Yorkshire, on June 6 and 7. More information from WO1 (Tommy) Raven, Leconfield Mil 5488.

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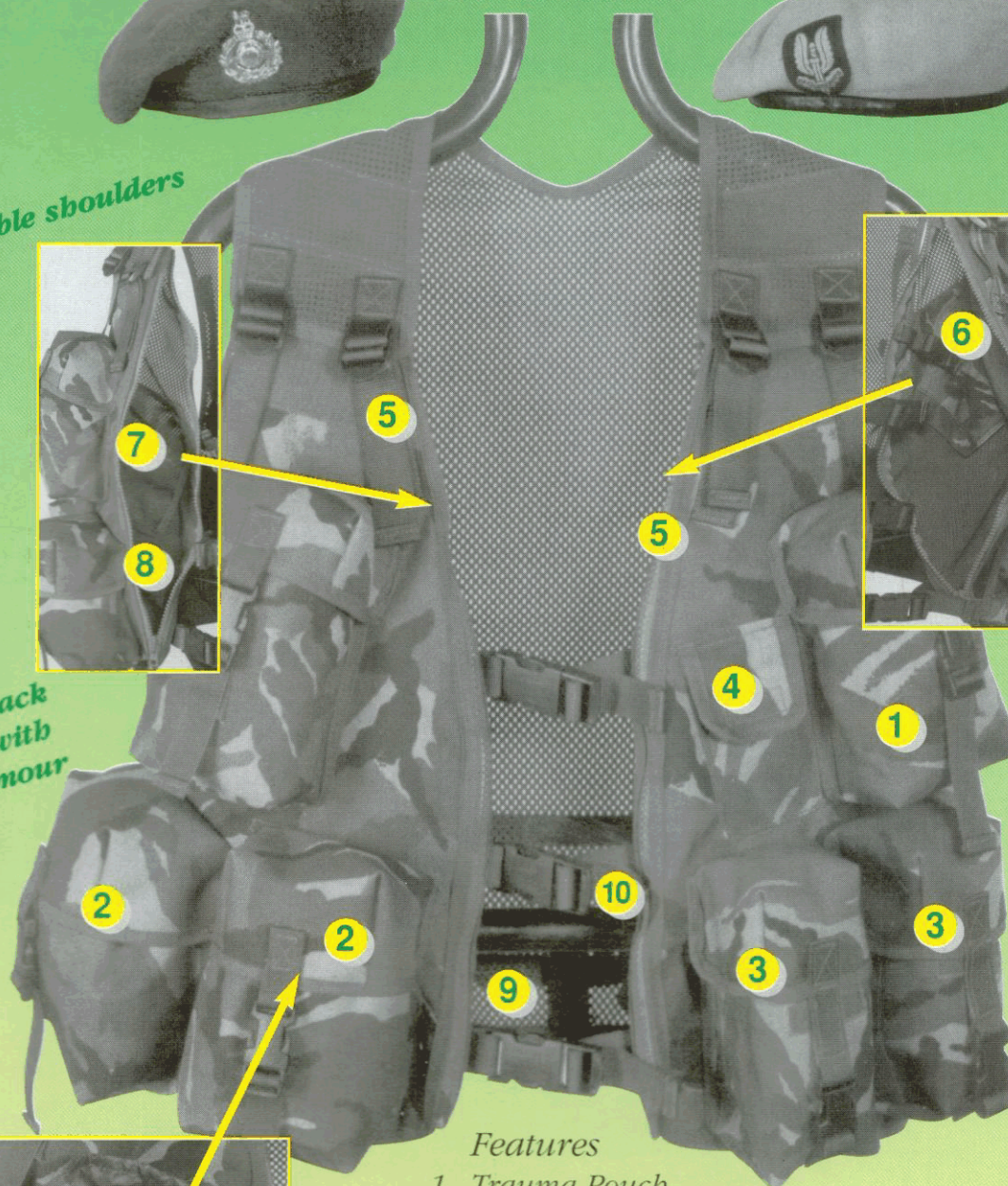
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WO1 Lawrence Sale "conducts" the celebrations on the steps of the Royal Albert Hall, where nine student bandmasters received BA degrees on completing courses at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. The degrees, conferred by Kingston University, were the first in the 140-year history of the RMSM

Picture: Mike Weston



SOLDIER