

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

May 2002 £2

# SOLDIER



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● Tribute to the Queen Mother – Pages 4 to 11

## In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine



### Cover picture

Irish Guardsmen bear the coffin of the Queen Mother following the funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Picture: Graeme Main

### Pages 4-11

Our coverage of the Queen Mother's lying-in-state and funeral fills the following eight pages of this edition. Some features have been held over as a consequence.

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# Majestic farewell

Services intimately involved in nation's final tribute

MILLIONS of words and thousands of images have paid tribute in the past few weeks to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who died on March 30.

Her lifetime association with, and affection for, Britain's Servicemen and women were strongly reflected in the scale of the military presence at her lying-in-state and funeral.

An indelible backdrop to an event watched by millions and attended by the highest and noblest was provided by immaculate ranks of soldiers, sailors and airmen paying their last respects.

The intimate nature of their relationship with the Nation's Grandmother was symbolised by the six young Irish Guardsmen who bore her coffin into and out of Westminster Abbey.

These pages are our tribute to the Queen Mother.





Clockwise from top right:  
Sovereign's Parade, April  
1981; Territorial Army  
Volunteer Reserve,  
Warminster, June 1979;  
St Patrick's Day,  
Pirbright, March 1997;  
meeting 1 LI families in  
Berlin, April 1990.





The King's Troop RHA gun carriage passes close to Clarence House on the Mall

Head bowed, a Grenadier Guardsman lines the route during the procession to the lying-in-state at Westminster



Soldiers of 105 Regiment RA (Volunteers) fire a 41-gun salute from Edinburgh Castle

## Gunners' salute

FORTY-ONE gun salutes echoed across Britain and Gibraltar on April 1 to mark the Queen Mother's death. Starting at noon and firing at intervals of a minute for 40 minutes, the salutes were made at:

Hyde Park, London (The King's Troop RHA)  
 Tower of London (HAC)  
 Firepower Museum, Woolwich (16 Regt RA)

Edinburgh Castle (105 (V) Regt RA TA)  
 Stirling Castle (105 (V) Regt RA TA)  
 City Hall, Cardiff (104 (V) Regt RA TA)  
 Belfast (105 (V) Regt RA TA)  
 Aldershot (7 Para RHA)  
 Dover Castle (100 (V) Regt RA TA)  
 Royal Citadel, Plymouth (29 Cdo Regt RA)  
 York (40 Regt RA)  
 Gibraltar (Royal Gibraltar Regt)

During the procession to the lying-in-state, The King's Troop fired a 29-minute salute from Green Park.

Lt Col Paddy Tabor, Household Cavalry, whose father stood vigil over the coffin of King George VI at his lying-in-state in 1952, performed the same service for the Queen Mother. He was one of four Household Cavalry officers to mount the first 20-minute vigil, standing one at each corner of the catafalque as members of the public filed past. Lt Col Tabor's father, retired Maj Gen David Tabor, commanded the Blues and Royals.

The Queen Mother was mourned at military bases around the world, including Afghanistan. She was Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Anglian Regiment, whose soldiers are currently providing the British infantry element of the international peacekeeping force in Kabul.

The catafalque, right, during the lying-in-state in Westminster Hall. Four soldiers of the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards, keep vigil at the corners

Massed Pipes and Drums, below, perform during the short procession from Westminster Hall to Westminster Abbey for the funeral service



## The Queen Mother's regiments and corps

### Colonel-in-Chief:

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards  
The Queen's Royal Hussars (The Queen's Own and Royal Irish)  
9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's)  
The King's Regiment  
The Royal Anglian Regiment  
The Light Infantry  
The Black Watch (The Royal Highland Regiment)  
Royal Army Medical Corps

### Special relationship:

Irish Guards

### Royal Honorary Colonel:

The Royal Yeomanry  
The London Scottish

### Colonel-in-Chief:

The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada  
The Toronto Scottish Regiment (Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Own)  
Canadian Forces Medical Corps  
Royal Australian Army Medical Corps  
Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corps

### Special relationship:

The Cape Town Highlanders  
The Transvaal Scottish  
The Witwatersrand Rifles

Soldiers of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment march in the procession, left

# Solemn procession

FOLLOWING the lying-in-state, the bearer party from the 1st Battalion, Irish Guards placed the coffin on the gun carriage drawn by The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery to Westminster Abbey.

It was led by the Massed Pipes and Drums – 196 musicians in all – under Pipe Maj Steven Small, BW, senior pipe major of the British Army, and GOC London District, Maj Gen Redmond Watt. Pipes and drums were drawn from the Scots DG, 1 RTR, 1 SG, 1 IG, 1 RS, 1 RHF, 1 KOSB, 1 R Irish, 1 BW, 1 Hldrs, 1 A and SH, 2 RGR, 51 Highland and the Londons.

● Among those escorting the gun carriage as pall-bearers were Brig Guy Ratcliffe, Colonel Commandant RAMC; Brig Garry Barnett, Colonel BW; Maj Gen Robin Brims, Colonel LI; Gen Sir Michael Walker, Colonel, R Anglian; Col Malcolm Grant Haworth, Colonel Kings; Brig Hugh

Pye, Colonel 9/12th L; Maj Gen David Jenkins, Colonel QRH; and Col John Pocock, Colonel QDG.

During the procession from St James's Palace to Westminster Hall on April 5, the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Michael Walker had chosen to represent The Royal Anglian Regiment as a pall-bearer. Among the Chiefs of Staff and Chief of the Defence Staff, who followed members of the Royal Family immediately behind the coffin, CGS was represented by Gen Sir Mike Jackson.

An officer and three soldiers representing each of the Queen Mother's units marched with them. In all, 1,700 personnel from the Armed Forces were involved in the procession and a further 950 lined the route.

● A guard of honour found by Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards, formed-up in Parliament Square with the Band of the Grenadier Guards.



Crowds watch the procession to Westminster Hall. Visible among the pall-bearers is Gen Sir Michael Walker, Chief of the General Staff, representing The Royal Anglian Regiment



● The route was lined by members of the Armed Forces and soldiers, sailors and air force personnel lined the path from the West Gate of Westminster Abbey to the Great West Door.

● At the end of the service, buglers of The Light Infantry sounded *Last Post* and *Reveille*, and the Massed Pipes and Drums played the lament *Oft the Stilly Night*.

● As the hearse passed through Wellington Arch on its journey to Windsor Castle, the barrels of the guns of The King's Troop were depressed in salute.

● The Irish Guards' bearer party involved in both the lying-in-state procession and the funeral service was led by Capt Fabian Roberts and CSM Chris Oswald. Eight soldiers – Gdsm Andrew Travis, Thomas Major, Robert Fleming, Paul Hewitt, Adam Azab, Simon Campbell, John Organ, Matthew Wall and Gavin O'Neill – carried the coffin on their shoulders.

Gds Anthony Oliver and Stephen Park were trestle-bearers and Gdsm Andrew Travis and Wayne Sampat were cap-bearers.

Former Pipe Maj John Spoore, who played for the Queen Mother every year at Clarence House on the morning of her birthday, came out of retirement to perform at her funeral. Now 65, John, a former Gordon Highlander, is a member of the Pipes and Drums of A (The London Scottish) Company, part of The London Regiment.

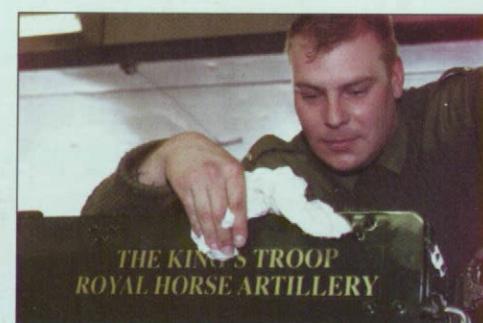
Companies made up of Coldstream, Scots and Irish Guards, left, march past street-lining troops with bowed heads on the route to Westminster Hall for the lying-in-state. In the background is the Guards Memorial

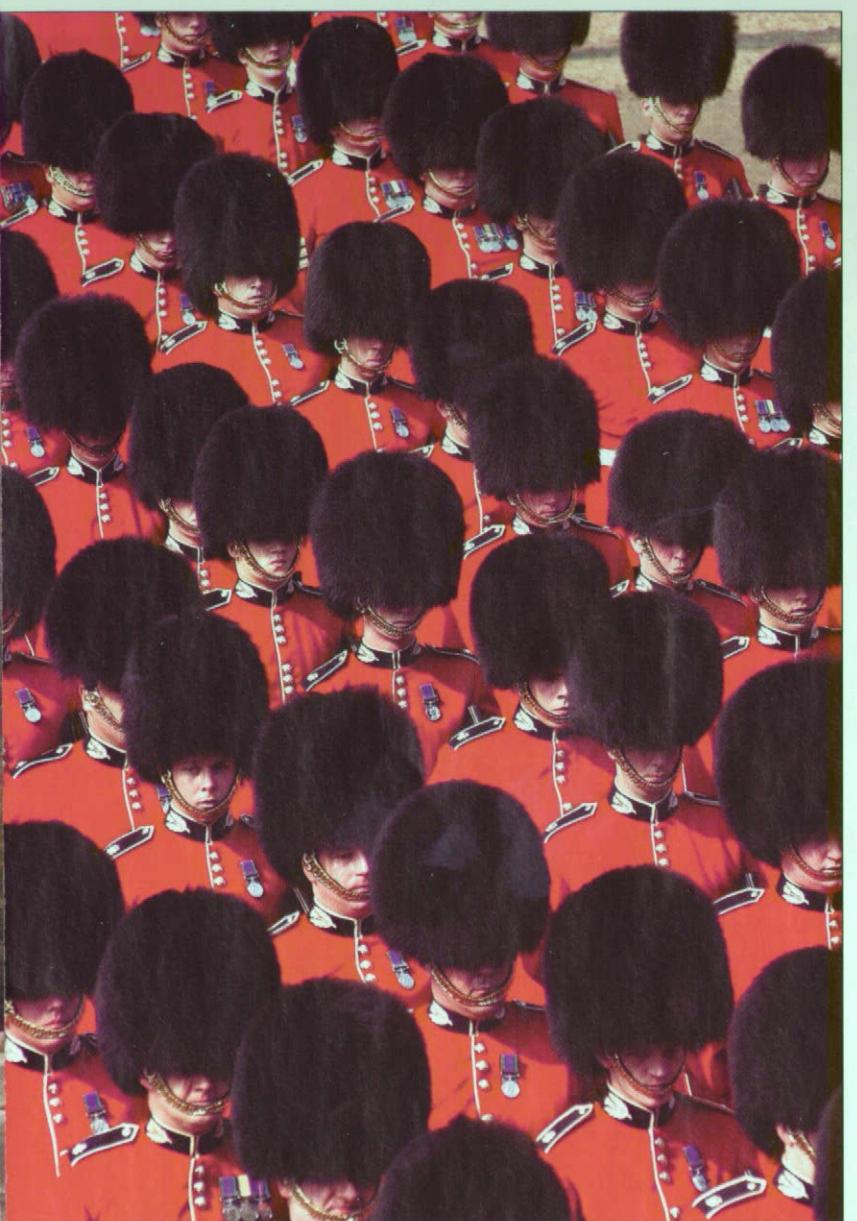


Life Guards on the route, above

Cpl Allison Jones of 105 (V) Regt RA at Edinburgh Castle, right

Bdr Justin MacGregor polishes the gun carriage at St John's Wood Barracks, below





Soldiers from the Queen Mother's Commonwealth regiments, above

Scots Guards on the procession to the lying in state, left

Led by Massed Pipes and Drums, the coffin moves to the Abbey, right

## Monarch's gratitude

"May I ask you to pass my gratitude to all those members of the Armed Forces for their role in organising and participating in the ceremonial processions and other duties leading up to and during the lying-in-state and funeral of Queen Elizabeth yesterday. The professionalism and excellence of the Services on such occasions is a source of great pride to the whole country and to me personally."

— Elizabeth R

Message to the Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce

Retired Gurkha soldiers and their families in Nepal expressed their condolences "on the sad and peaceful departure of the great soul of the Queen Mother". A message from the Gurkha Army Ex-Servicemen's Organisation said: "At this time of grief we pray to the Lord Almighty to grant eternal peace to her departed soul and to give strength to the Royal Family and the entire United Kingdom to bear this irreparable loss."

Lying-in-state and funeral pictures in this tribute are by Graeme Main, Steve Dock, WO2 Pete Bristo, Sgt Shaun Lewis and Mark Owens. Historical pictures by Paul Haley and Mike Weston



Irish Guardsmen carry the coffin out of Westminster Abbey for its final journey to Windsor Castle



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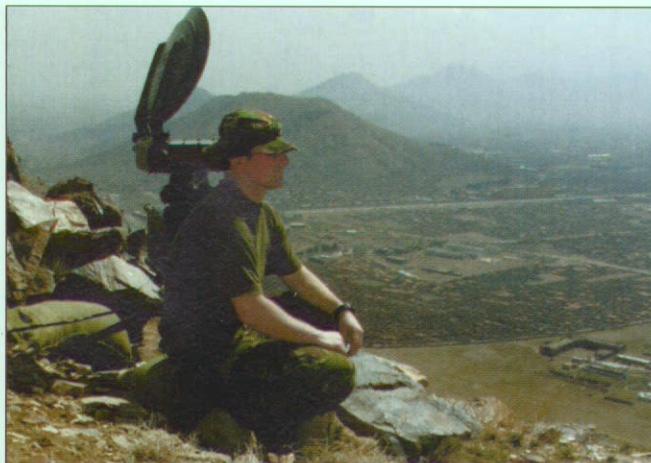


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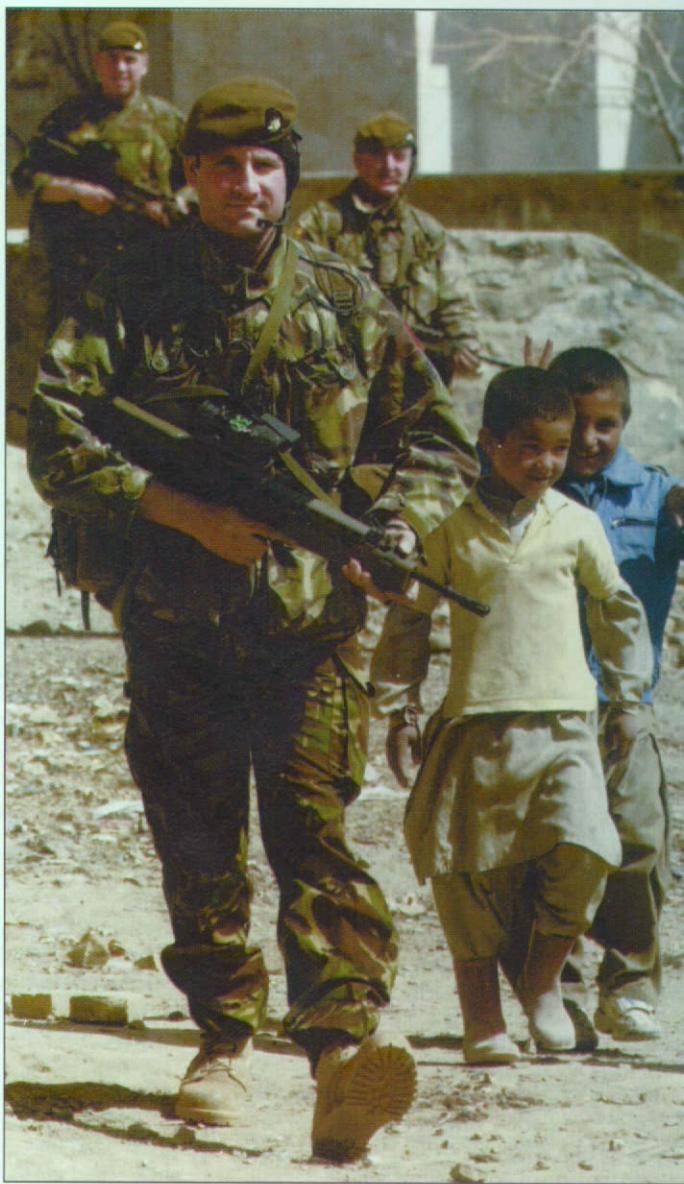


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High life and street life: Above, the view from Artillery Hill Observation Post, 7,389ft above sea level, which overlooks Kabul. Right, Lt Mark Duppap-Miller, R Anglian, leads a patrol out on the streets

# Mountain mission targets terrorists



## Search-and-clear operation ends but Kabul patrols come under fire

TROOPS from 45 Commando Group have successfully completed Operation Ptarmigan to clear and search a mountain valley in eastern Afghanistan where residual Taliban and al-Qaeda forces are believed to be operating.

All British forces were recovered safely to Bagram airfield following the five-day operation.

The battle-group is made up of elements drawn from all three Services, including 7 (Sphinx) Commando Battery of 29 Commando Regiment RA, armed with 105mm light guns, and 59 Independent Commando Squadron RE.

In Kabul, Operation Fingal continued, with 19 countries contributing troops to the International Security Assistance Force to help the Afghan Interim Authority with security and stability.

A soldier on patrol with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment died following a shooting incident in the capital. An investigation is under way, but hostile action was not a factor. The soldier's

name was being withheld at the request of his family.

As we went to press soldiers from 1 R Anglian had been involved in three contacts in Kabul since taking over from the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment.

Capt Olly Brown, 1 R Anglian, said the most serious incident occurred after C Company set up an observation post (OP) in the western suburbs after reports of bandits moving into the area.

An armed group of 30 men fanned out on open ground and advanced on the OP. "Challenges were issued by the guys in the OP but the group of 30 opened fire and a number of rounds came within six inches of hitting soldiers," Capt Brown said.

The mob dispersed and a quick-reaction force moved in to make arrests.

When team leader Bdr Mick Tunnicliffe, from Colchester-based 19 Regiment RA, turned a corner he was confronted by seven armed men at close range.

"The team commander, in a very brave

act, rushed the lead man, who was armed with an AK47, and knocked him to the floor. He disarmed him and they arrested the seven individuals.

"In the situation he faced under the rules of engagement he could have opened fire and killed all those guys. It was a very brave act to rush the guy rather than having six or seven dead people lying in front of him."

Such incidents need to be put in context, said Capt Brown. "After 23 years of civil war virtually everyone owns a weapon of some description and local people say this is by far the most peaceful, stable and secure environment in which they have lived in all that time. They are delighted to see us here and they feel secure that we are out patrolling. They are very friendly towards us and from that perspective our mission is going very well indeed."

Meanwhile, plans for Turkish military units to take over were being finalised.

● Colchester medics in Afghanistan, Page 39; Images of Kabul, Pages 40-41

## Sovereign's duty



Royal inspection: The Duke of York, representing the Queen, inspects officer cadets at the 138th Sovereign's Parade at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on April 12. JUO Robert Sledmere, who will serve with The Light Dragoons, was awarded the Sword of Honour by the Commandant, Maj Gen Philip Trousdale.

In all, 172 of the 720 cadets on parade received commissions into the British Army and 16 from 12 overseas countries also passed out.

The Queen's Medal was awarded to OCdt William Bancroft, who will join The King's Royal Hussars. He achieved the highest scores in military, practical and academic studies.

## Sandhurst's Rowallan Company runs into the history books

ROWALLAN Company, which has helped nearly 2,500 cadets who might not otherwise have done so pass out at RMA Sandhurst since 1977, has been disbanded. Its place will be taken by a new development course.

To mark the demise, cadets on the last Rowallan course carried a replica of their company's stag's head symbol from Sandhurst to the first Highland Fieldcraft Training Centre course at Glenfeshie. Running in relays, they did the 650-mile trip in four days, raising £7,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund and prostate cancer research.

The redesign of the RMA commissioning course, the review of officer careers and the different requirements of the modern cadet have forced changes in the way character development is conducted at Sandhurst.



Out of harm's way: Explosive ordnance disposal experts, above left, lift a box of munition



out of the cave while Gurkhas, above right, examine the lethal contents Pictures: Cpl Lee Purvis RAF

## Gurkhas find huge arms cache

SOLDIERS from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles have found the largest munitions cache since peace-keeping forces were deployed to Bosnia.

The massive haul – more than nine tonnes of large-calibre ammunition and mines – was uncovered in a cave north of Knezevo in the Republika Srpska after Gurkhas acted on a tip-off from local people during a football match.

A team from 1 Platoon, A Company, led by Lt (QGO) Bhuwani Prasad Rai, found the expertly-concealed entrance to the cave several kilometres from the

nearest main road. Members of a specialist explosive ordnance disposal unit arrived to clear the contents – an operation which took the best part of two days.

Several anti-personnel mines had been placed along the side of the cave

and there was a real danger that such a large stock of explosives could be rigged with booby-traps. The EOD team pulled out 1,881 40mm anti-aircraft warheads, 232 120mm high-explosive mortar bombs, 28 78mm artillery shells, 10,000 small-arms ammunition and an assortment of nearly 400 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines.

Maj James Elliot, OC A Coy, attributed the discovery to the way in which the Gurkhas have won the trust of the community in which they are based.

Lt Col Ian Thomas, commanding the

UK Battle-group, said: "This is a propitious event for SFOR. The professionalism and excellent conduct of the Gurkha patrols operating in this area seem to have won over the locals and convinced them that it is in their best interests to cooperate with SFOR in ridding Bosnia of dangerous weapons and munitions. These people have come to regard British soldiers as a force for good."

The Gurkhas, now relieved by the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards, have returned to their base at Shorncliffe in Kent.

### Flag tribute

FLAGS were flown at half-mast at military locations on April 26 to mark the private funeral of Fd Marshal Sir Nigel Bagnall, Chief of the General Staff between 1985 and 1988. A service of thanksgiving took place on the same day at St Michael's Church, Chenies in Buckinghamshire.

## Question mark hangs over Invicta Park married quarters

UNCERTAINTY hangs over the future of Invicta Park, the crumbling quarters occupied by 36 Engineer Regiment families in Kent, following a decision to review the rebuilding programme. Maj (Retd) Ray Edwards, unit welfare officer, said: "The Defence Housing Executive has decided that due to the likelihood of surplus quarters becoming available at Chatham [within ten miles of Invicta Park]

from 2003 onwards no further expenditure can be justified on the project. This stance was robustly challenged."

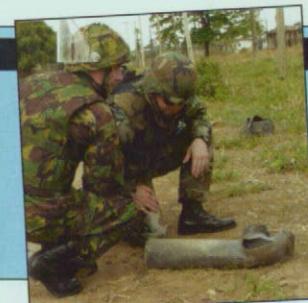
Kirsty Duddin, of the Army Families Federation, said: "I am extremely sad the provision by DHE of new houses for the 36 Engr Regt families in Invicta Park has, yet again, been delayed. We had been led to believe that a commit-

ment had been made for the first phase of the demolish and rebuild project, but that seems to have disappeared."

DHE director of housing, Wendy Jarvis, said: "The future provision of housing at Invicta Park is the subject of a study. Once its recommendations have been endorsed by the MoD, a joint action plan will be promulgated."

### IN BRIEF

- Ammunition technical officer Capt David Beckett RLC, left, and US Army explosive ordnance disposal officer Capt Brian Winningham examine debris from the arsenal explosion in Lagos which killed hundreds of Nigerians on March 2. The US 720th Ordnance



Coy (EOD) is leading Operation Avid Recovery to clear unexploded munitions from the Nigerian Army's Ikeja Cantonment Area in Lagos.

- Thirty-one members of 51 (Greater London) Support Regiment travelled to Volgograd – formerly Stalingrad – via Moscow to tour the Second World War battlefields on which two million Russians died defending the city in 1942.
- Several members of the Royal Mon-

mouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), led by commanding officer Lt Col Ian Thompson, visited their sister regiment, 6 Field Engineer Squadron, Royal Canadian Engineers, at the unit's headquarters in Vancouver. The Canadian sappers were presented with a print of Minnow Bridge in Monmouth, home of the regimental headquarters.

## Guards in Balkans



Out of commission: M60 anti-tank guns and an 82mm mortar are displayed in front of the Welsh Guards' Saxons in the Prijedor region

## New boys get off to good start

THE 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards wasted no time in making their mark on their first tour in the Balkans. Within days of arriving in theatre to take over the UK Battle-group area of operations from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, the group made a substantial weapons find in the Prijedor area.

Four M60 anti-tank guns and an 82mm mortar were pulled from a purpose-built bunker about three miles from the Prijedor platoon location. Local police had received a tip-off as to the location of the cache and the rumour proved to be true.

Sgt Paul Squires of Number 5 Platoon, 2 Company, who was present when the weapons were uncovered, said: "These are relatively old Yugoslav weapons with no night-vision capability. It is likely the mortar was used to provide illumination so that the anti-tank guns could be brought to bear." The weapons were in full working order and had recently been greased and oiled.

The Aldershot-based Welsh Guards deployed with their Saxon APCs.

## Divers go back in time

A DIVE day organised by Corps No 1 Diver WO1 Tom Bridges RE at the Defence Diving School, Portsmouth raised nearly £7,000 as a practical "thank you" to the Wessex Cancer Trust, which had helped his wife. Using a suit (pictured) first worn by Royal Engineers in the 1830s, Tom arranged a challenge for sapper and civilian divers in a lake at the back of Portsmouth Harbour.





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## Grimsby Chums at rest together

A SERVICE of remembrance was held last month at the Point du Jour Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Athies in northern France to honour the remains of 23 soldiers of the First World War.

Twenty sets of the remains were found during an archaeological survey in June last year. They had been laid out side-by-side in a trench at Athies, not far from the site of the Battle of Arras.

The ceremony was attended by members of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, predecessors of the 10th Battalion, The Lincolnshire

Regiment, to which the 20 are believed to have belonged, and veterans of the regiment. Four of the dead were eventually identified as having served with the Lincolnshires - whose 10th Battalion was recruited in Grimsby and known as the Grimsby Chums. None, however, could be named.

Three further sets of remains discovered close by were reinterred at the same time. A separate ceremony was being held to honour a fourth set of remains, identified as being a member of the Royal Naval Division (Nelson Battalion).

# £1 billion contract to slam door on Army's out-of-date barracks

MODERN, high-quality, custom-built soldiers' quarters came a step closer last month when four of the biggest names in the construction industry went head-to-head for a billion-pound contract to provide up to 40,000 units of Type Z single-living accommodation for the Army.

The preferred bidder - to come from Amec, Carillion, Citex or Debut (Bovis) - is expected to be announced in July and the contract awarded in October. Work on the first project should begin in April next year, with the first Type Z (single rooms with *en suite* facilities) accommodation ready for occupation in autumn next year.

Project Slam (or Single Living Accommodation Modernisation) is a tri-Service project designed to raise standards in England and Wales. Similar initiatives in Scotland and Northern Ireland (Project Challenger), Germany (Puma) and elsewhere are also in the pipeline.

Although this is a fast-moving project - from conception to awarding the contract within 18 months - a word of caution was sounded to soldiers who may expect their new accommodation to be ready soon.

"This is not a quick-fix option, like Project Reader," said Col Glyn Taylor, head of the Customer Focus Team based in Aldershot. "A lot of thought has gone into our customers' requirements and, unfortunately, rebuild and refurbishment cannot happen overnight."

Project Slam was set up following the

Defence Secretary's decision last year that £1 billion of new funding would be found to match an existing £1 billion to be spent over ten years on accommodation. Barracks long past their best years have been condemned by politicians and senior officers alike.

Soldiers across all ranks have been consulted about what they want in their new homes, while representatives of focus groups have been involved in the procurement process.

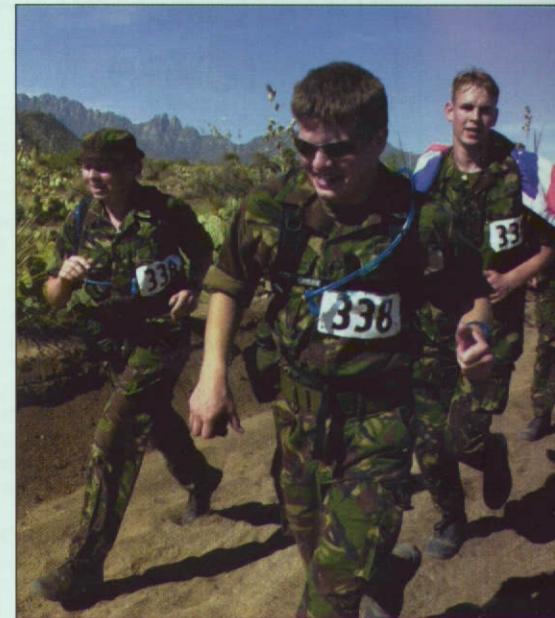
Service personnel moving into Type Z from 2003 can expect one of two types of accommodation. The options are a six-person flat with six *en suite* single rooms, a common room and a utility room; or a hotel-style building in which central facilities are shared by up to 20 people.

Individual establishments will decide whether they want flat or hotel-style construction.

"The key point that came out of the focus groups was that they wanted privacy, space and somewhere to store their kit as well as a social area incorporating a snack facility," said Col Taylor.

"They will get at least 11 sq m of living space and 2m of storage space in their rooms. We are also providing car parking and 2 sq m of secure external storage space."

Project Slam will provide between 15,000 and 20,000 bed spaces over the first five years across the three Services, and the rest over the second five years.



Winning ways: Gunners of 47 Air Defence Regt RA on the road to two gold medals in the 26-mile Bataan Memorial Death March in New Mexico

Picture: Chris Fletcher

## Drugs story wins award

A FEATURE highlighting the dangers of drugs has won *Soldier* writer Anthony Stone an award of excellence from the British Association of Communicators in Business.

Anthony's story, published in the May 2001 issue, told how a former drug dealer and a soldier kicked out of the Army for taking Ecstasy have joined forces to give hard-hitting advice to military units.

"Wow. If this didn't make your readers sit up and take note about drugs, then nothing would," said the judge.

### Windmill project

A 100-year-old windmill on Senelager training area in Germany is to be restored by volunteer civilian craftsmen from the British Army Range Control Troop and German Army Troop. Built in 1896, the windmill was the saluting base for the Queen's Silver Jubilee parade in 1977.

### Sapper trekkers

Fourteen soldiers from 75 Engineer Regiment (V) trekked the Giant's Cup Trail in the Drakensburg mountains of South Africa. They scaled Cathedral Peak and the 800m Amphitheatre cliff on the Lesotho border.

### On road for charity

Army chaplain the Rev Clinton Langston and Capt Clem Cleminson from ATR Lichfield completed a return bike ride to ATR Bassingbourn near Cambridge to raise about £1,800 for the Lichfield Garrison Church appeal for local and national charities. The ride was sponsored by Leek Cycles.

### Brazilian adventure

SSAFA-Forces Help is looking for long-distance walkers to join an 84km trek in Brazil. The event, from September 14-24, starts at Alto Paraiso. Participants will need to pay a deposit and raise sponsorship. For details contact Gabriele Ghany on 020 7463 9260 or e-mail [gabi.g@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:gabi.g@ssafa.org.uk)



## Under Big Ben

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

## Flinstones jibe: truth revealed

WHY have British forces in Kabul been nicknamed "The Flinstones" by their American counterparts?

Soldier asked the question in the Backchat column last month and Shadow Defence Secretary Bernard Jenkin answered it in the House of Commons.

Soon after returning from a parliamentary visit to Kabul he told MPs during the Armed Forces personnel debate on April 11 that he was distressed to learn of the light-hearted tag given to the British.

He said the nickname was "not a comment on our forces' professional ability to do the job, but on what are regarded as the stone-age facilities that they live out of, compared with those available to other forces".

Acknowledging that such deployments had to be carried out with speed and lightness, he said that had to be counter-balanced by proper force-planning for the longer-term.

"Huge amounts of the Royal Engineers' time and money are used in making do with hand-to-mouth facilities instead of setting up more permanent and efficient washing and toilet facilities," he said.

"Indeed, such a false economy ultimately affects the personal hygiene and cleanliness of our soldiers.

"I do not think that British soldiers are going soft, but it is right to report that this welfare issue was raised with us on our visit."

Mr Jenkin congratulated 1 Royal Anglian Regiment on the "supremely professional" performance of its duties in Kabul, patrolling on foot while other armies were less bold in getting out of their armoured personnel carriers to meet the public.

"The enthusiasm expressed by the population of Kabul for British forces in particular and Isaf in general was obvious," he said.

**TA numbers:** As at April 12 there were 415 members of the Territorial Army serving on operations, including 174 in Bosnia and 155 in Kosovo.

**War pensions:** In the last five years war pensions have been awarded to 3,048 people who have been granted a medical discharge from the Armed Forces.

**SA80:** In a written reply, Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said: "The modified SA80 is attracting excellent reports from units. Minor issues, common to any modification programme, have been identified and dealt with."

## Missile glitch will not delay Apache

APACHE, the Army's attack helicopter, is still expected to be operational on schedule in August 2004 despite reported problems with its missile system.

The UK version – the Longbow WAH-64 – has not been grounded and has not suffered damage resulting from Hellfire missile firings. The Army Air Corps helicopter has not fired the weapon and no airborne firings have taken place in the UK. US Army tests suggested that design changes in the

missile's motor section had resulted in parts of the tail section of the helicopter being pitted by minor foreign objects.

Training in the UK is due to start in July, with restrictions on the missile launch station. Because the tail rotor is on the port side, the starboard tail rail would provide a clear exhaust space for the missile. It is expected that Apache's full capability of 16 missiles will be available to pilots when the first squadron becomes operational.

## Heavy cavalry receives final Challenger 2



**All yours:** The Army's 386th and final Challenger 2 main battle tank rolls off a transporter during a handing-over ceremony on Salisbury Plain last month. Procurement Minister Lord Bach watched as the tank was handed over by Vickers Defence Systems to A Squadron, 1st Royal Tank Regiment, near its base in Warminster. The Challenger 2 acquisition programme was worth £2.3 billion. Picture: Steve Dock

## Caution issued on battle-noise simulator

PERSONNEL involved with the SBN L28A1 battle noise simulator have been reminded to use gloves when using it. The warning was issued after a spate of recent incidents in which soldiers sustained injuries as a result of failing to stick to guidelines.

The simulator, which is not a substitute for the hand grenade, is meant to be issued only to exercise-directing staff trained in its use – to simulate battle

noise at appropriate times during engagements.

Users are required to wear issue combat gloves to protect their hands against excessive flaring, which can burn the thrower's hands.

Gloves need not be worn when using the new A2 version of the battle-noise simulator, now entering service. It has a longer handle, a longer striker and a less volatile initiator.

### IN BRIEF

- Training Support Command (Germany) has changed its name to the **Land Warfare Collective Training Group (Germany)** – LWCTG(G) – as part of the reorganisation of collective training worldwide centred on the new Land Warfare Centre (LWC) located in Warminster. The mission, activity and output will remain the same and
- Four members of **5 Equipment Support Company RLC** "rowed" from St Eligius Lines in Obilic, Kosovo to their base in Colchester and raised more than £2,000 for the

Sennelager Training Centre, which runs both the camp and the training area, will be largely unaffected.

National Autistic Society. They completed the 2,300km in 21 days using rowing machines which they fitted on the back of a lorry so they could tour other units in theatre. The four rowers were SSgt Dave Brunton REME and RLC members Sgt Colin Osborne, Cpl Harry Marshall and Cpl Mark Simpson.



**Limbering up:** Honourable Artillery Company soldiers prepare for the Boston Marathon, which they had hoped to complete towing a 2,000lb field gun and limber. Mrs Elizabeth Turner and her son, William, are pictured immediately behind the gun

## Gun-runners honour Trade Centre victim

MEMBERS of the Sergeants' Mess of The Honourable Artillery Company made Herculean efforts to raise money for the education of four-month-old William, whose father, Simon Turner, was killed in the attack on the World Trade Centre.

Simon (39), from north London, was a former battery sergeant major in the HAC's gun troop, which fires royal and ceremonial salutes from the Tower of London.

Mrs Elizabeth Turner was seven months into her pregnancy when her husband died in the September 11 atrocity. "When the Sergeants' Mess told me they wanted to pull a gun 26 miles in Boston in memory of Simon I was completely overwhelmed," she said, adding that her late husband was very close to the Territorial Army regiment.

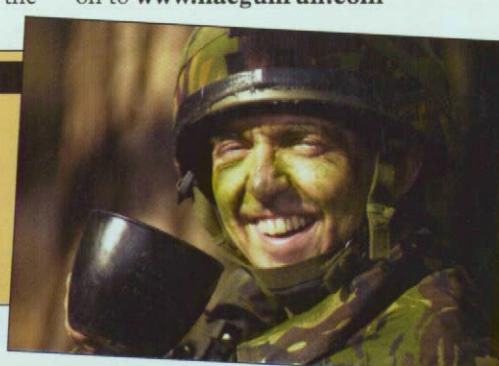
The team chose the marathon because of the HAC's links with the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, which Simon had visited three times. In the event the



**Thank you:** World Trade Centre widow Elizabeth Turner hugs RSM Steve Ashley, HAC after he had crossed the line in Boston, his second marathon in three days. Picture: Cpl Victor Karczewski

Sergeants' Mess was not allowed to take the artillery piece to America so settled instead for pulling it 26 miles around Pirbright before flying to Boston the following day to run in the marathon.

To make a donation to the appeal, log on to [www.hacgunrun.com](http://www.hacgunrun.com)



**Cpl Rob McMullan**, left, a Home Office civil servant with 253 Provost Company RMP (V), takes a tea break during the Courage Trophy military skills competition at Longmoor in Hampshire. The event, for London-based Territorial Army units, was won by a team entered by the 4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment's 10 Company, located at White City.

## Operational honours

### Northern Ireland

**CBE:** Brig A J N Graham, MBE, late A and SH. **OBE:** Lt Col E R Duncan, Int Corps; Lt Col I W H Stafford, R Irish; Lt Col A J S Storrie, MBE, D and D. **MBE:** Lt Col C M J Barnett, AGC (Army Legal Services); SSgt L A Collins, Int Corps; SSgt C J Kingsbury, RE; WO2 W A Moore, R Irish; Maj N S Pond, RA; WO2 J Tate, BEM, RDG. **GM:** WO1 A J Modd, RLC. **Mid:** WO1 M M Henderson, QGM, Para; Pte S M Hodgetts, WFR; Sgt G Johnson, WFR; Cpl M L Paul, RTR; SSgt P D Quinn, RLC. **QCB:** SSgt P A Burton, RLC; SSgt A Johnson, RLC. **QCVS:** WO1 N J Barlett, R Signals; SSgt S J Carmichael, R Signals; Sgt H A F Corke, RLC; CSgt N P Cresswell, WFR; Lt Col N R Davies, MBE MC, Para; Cpl P J Davies, R Signals; Lt Col S Davies, MBE, QLR; CSgt D Doherty, R Irish; LSgt A F Gordon, SG; Sgt J Halliday, SG; Capt J A Harker, QLR; Maj G J Hetherington, R Irish; CSgt A M Hinchliffe, R Irish; Maj Gen A D Leakey CBE, late RTR; Brig W E B Loudon, OBE, late RHF; CSgt J McClelland, R Irish; Maj J McClung, REME; Col H M Purcell OBE, late RGBWR; Capt M C Rees, WFR; WO2 J R Thompson, R Irish; Maj E J Tyson, RA.

### Former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Kosovo)

**CBE:** Brig G J Binns, MBE MC, late PWO. **OBE:** Lt Col N G Borwell, Duke of Wellington's Regiment; Lt Col I J S James, MBE, RE. **MBE:** Capt D J Bailey, REME, TA. **QGM:** Capt D G Walker, RE. **Mid:** SSgt J P Mortimer, Int Corps. **QCB:** Capt P Corcoran, 9/12 R Lancers; Sgt S J W Hall, RLC; Bdr M C Hardman, RA; Sgt G C Hearn, RTR. **QCVS:** Brig J M J Balfour, CBE, late RGJ; Maj Gen R J Hillier CMM CD, late Royal Canadian Dragoons; Cpl M I Howden, Int Corps; Maj B J Hughes, RE; Maj J G Lewis, RE; Capt P D L Rennie, BW; Lt Col M L Riddell-Webster, BW; Capt R G Streastfield, RGJ; WO2 A Tebay, RLC; SSgt P I Timmis, R Signals; Lt Col A E H Worsley, MBE, RGJ.

### Former Yugoslavia (Macedonia)

**Mid:** CSgt R A Peters, Para. **QCVS:** WO2 G J Duncan, RA; WO2 A M Hodgson, Para; Maj T D McMurtrie, MBE, LI; Lt Col M W Poffley, RLC; Capt D B Simmons, PWRR.

### Sierra Leone

**CBE:** Brig N R Parker, late RGJ. **OBE:** Lt Col G A C Hughes, RGR. **QCB:** Sgt J E Mason, RE. **QCVS:** Brig A J Faith OBE, late RA; Brig S J Knappe CBE MC, late Staffs; Lt Col J G Wilford MBE, Para.

### Miscellaneous

**QCB:** SSgt S Jones, AAC; Cpl I McDonald, AGC(RMP).

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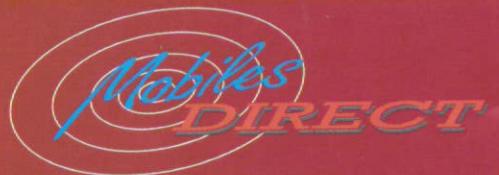
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Picture: Chris Fletcher



**Best foot forward:** Soldiers of 4 Regiment AAC march through Ipswich to exercise their new Freedom of the town. Taking the salute is the mayor, Councillor Maureen Carrington-Brown.

The Wattisham-based regiment, commanded by Lt Col David Turner, has close

ties with the town. Its personnel perform ceremonial roles during civic events and take part in the annual Remembrance Day service.

Ipswich's other two active "freedoms" were granted to The Royal Anglian Regiment and the Royal Navy's HMS *Grafton*.

## Veterans get new all-in-one agency

A SINGLE helpline and one-stop website are two immediate advantages of the new Veterans' Agency, which has drawn together the War Pensions Agency (WPA), the Veterans' Advice Unit and ex-Service organisations.

The reorganisation, announced last month, follows the transfer last June of the WPA to the Ministry of Defence.

As well as administering the war pensions scheme, one of the first tasks of the new agency was to establish a single helpline for veterans, providing a range of advice and information across the broad

spectrum of MoD business. The WPA's well-established call centre is now a helpline for veterans' issues. The new free number, which replaces the advice unit number, is 0800 169 22 77 (UK only). Callers from abroad should dial +44 1 253 866043. A new website can be found at [www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk)

It provides information and links about services offered by the WPA, Veterans' Advice Unit and ex-Service organisations. Eventually the site will be expanded to give veterans access to wider Government initiatives relevant to them.

## Royal billing

AS a public gesture of thanks for its hard work during last year's foot-and-mouth crisis, the Royal Agricultural Society of England has given the Army star billing at the Royal Show at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire from July 1 to 4. A series of displays reflecting the Army's work in Europe will take centre-stage in the main arena every day. There will also be an activity park where visitors can talk to soldiers and try equipment.



A casino night, left, held by Support Battalion in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at HQ ARRC raised 3,000 euros for the Army Benevolent Fund.

## Paper talk

### What the Press has been saying

● The Armed Forces: Undisputed stars of the show. The funeral demonstrated that in parading, in organisation, in the provision of heart-rending ceremony faultlessly performed by stout sergeants and strong young men in shining boots of whom any mother would be proud, they are second to none. — *Guardian*

● US Army scientists have come up with a sandwich capable of surviving a 10,000ft airdrop, Arctic battlefields, scorching desert manoeuvres, bacteria and moisture. Its inventors claim it will stay as fresh as the day it was made for three years. — *Daily Mail*

● British soldiers who saved a CIA agent's life in Afghanistan are to be given one of America's highest honours. The heroes will get the US Congressional Medal of Honour for fighting at Mazar-e-Sharif. — *Mirror*

● Prince Harry, who is hoping to train at Sandhurst, has been fascinated by the Army since seeing the film *Zulu* as a young boy. — *Mail on Sunday*

● The Army is being forced to slash its garrison in Kosovo by 75 per cent as the MoD tries to stay within its budget. — *Daily Telegraph*

● Nato is planning to merge its three operations in the Balkans, which will lead to reductions in British troops and the 60,000-strong alliance forces currently in Bosnia, Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. — *Times*

● Hong Kong-born Coldstream Guardsman Arthur Rutt has become the first Chinese soldier to patrol Buckingham Palace. He and his brother Ben, Gren Gds, are the only two Chinese soldiers in the Army. — *Mirror*

● Military-style boot camps designed to deter young criminals from reoffending by instilling military discipline and teaching them drill have been condemned as a failure in a Home Office study. Those attending an Army-run camp in Essex committed more serious crimes on release than those who had attended a normal institution. — *Independent*

● In anticipation of a UN protocol preventing the use of children in war, the Army has amended its rules to ensure no one under 18 can be deployed on military operations abroad where there is a possibility of hostilities. — *Daily Telegraph*

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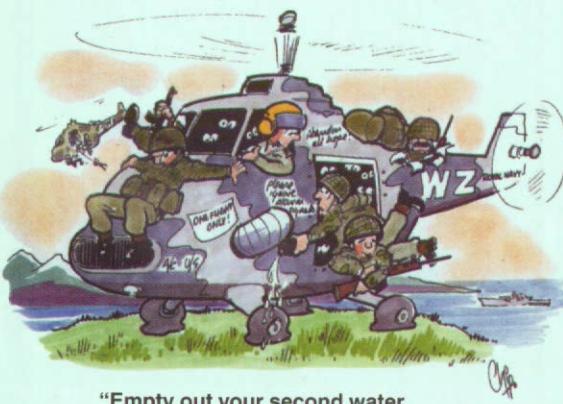
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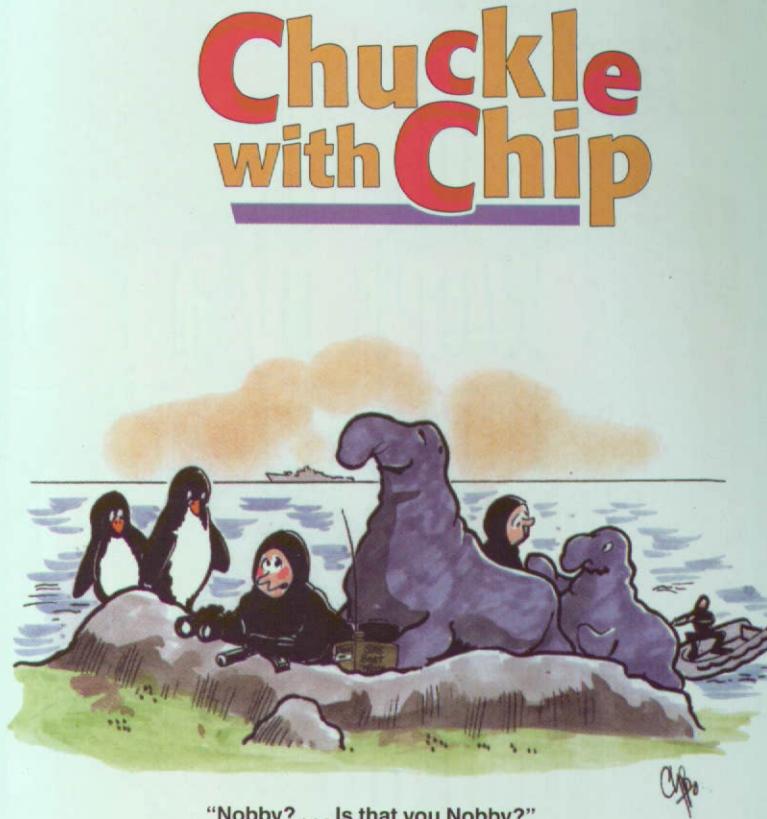
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"Empty out your second water bottle and we might get off."



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# Holy orders

Soldiers in Podujevo guard Serb church around the clock

Report: Ray Routledge  
Picture: Mike Weston

THERE have been no congregations, let alone services, there for three years. So what's so special about this church that it needs a military presence?

The reason is that it was once a place of worship for Serbs living in Podujevo, Kosovo. Today there are no Serbs in town and, if there were no soldiers to protect it, the likelihood is that it would be attacked.

"We're here to prevent the church, grounds and the graveyard from being desecrated, burned down or blown up," said LCpl David Killick, of 3rd Troop, C Squadron, The Queen's Royal Hussars, whose small team was on guard when *Soldier* visited. It is a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week duty.

He and three others were patrolling the perimeter of the hilltop church and graveyard, which are several hundred metres from the nearest house.

Many churches across Kosovo have been vandalised and booby-trapped, their gravestones desecrated or smashed. The Podujevo church and cemetery are fenced in by barbed wire.

"Most of the people here are friendly," said LCpl Killick. "We react to shots fired within 300 metres of the church, but if they are any further away we contact the UN Mission in Kosovo or local police to investigate. We keep communications with other patrols and with the police station."

Podujevo's Serb church has already seen its fair share of foul play. During the Kosovo crisis a murder was committed within its sanctuary.

Perhaps one day normal services will be resumed. Until then, soldiers will continue to keep watch over it.

Church parade: LCpl James Smith, left, and Tpr Kevin Twyford stay vigilant at the Podujevo church



# Flashpoint Mitrovica

A company of Highlanders seized the chance to work with a French battle-group bringing stability to an ethnic hotspot

Report: Ray Routledge  
Pictures: Mike Weston

WATCHING them watching us watching them may sound like an innocent game, but it's deadly serious business for troops posted to the divided town of Mitrovica in north-western Kosovo.

Mitrovica, divided roughly north-south by the river Ibar, is ethnically split. About 90 per cent of its 80,000 population are Albanians who live on the south side of the river while the rest, Serbs, are concentrated in an enclave north of the river.

With its recent history of riots, injuries and death, the town is potentially the most volatile flashpoint in Kosovo. It falls within the sector controlled by the Stabilisation Force's French battle-group and, in common with Pristina, it soaks up peacekeeping troops.

This is where a company of British soldiers found themselves serving alongside, learning from, and teaching troops of the resident French formation.

Their deployment came as a welcome change for men of B Company of the 1st Battalion, The Highlanders, who had been attached to The Queen's Royal Hussars battle-group in Podujevo and spent much of their time on rural patrols. Urban soldiering came as a welcome change.

The French connection followed a suggestion by Kfor's French commander, Lt Gen Marcel Valentin, that having different nationalities in Mitrovica would illustrate the multi-ethnicity within his force and provide an example to local people.

"Mitrovica has been an awkward nut to crack," said QRH battle-group commander Lt Col David Swann. "It's a

flashpoint and a big problem and there does not seem to be a solution.

"The French have been there from the outset and I think there is a feeling of frustration on their behalf.

The arrival of a French commander in the autumn signalled a willingness to try to change the situation. He came up with this idea of putting a company from a different country into Mitrovica so the population could see another nationality around the place."

The Highlanders followed the Americans, the Danes and a combined Austrian, German and Turkish unit for the three-week deployment.

Company commander Maj Philip White said his men had adapted quickly



**Building up rapport:**  
Maj Philip White

and built up a rapport with local people and their French hosts.

"The boys have been getting on with the locals and chatting to them," he said. "It is not something the French do. We quickly gathered a great deal of low-level information this way."

They went out on foot patrols with the French (under either British or French command), secured school runs for children travelling from the north to the south, and helped Albanian court employees to get to work safely at a court building in the north.

Although primarily responsible for a densely populated area south of the river, the Highlanders also guarded the sensitive West Bridge which links the Serb and Albanian enclaves. Symbolically, the Union flag was flown above their post.

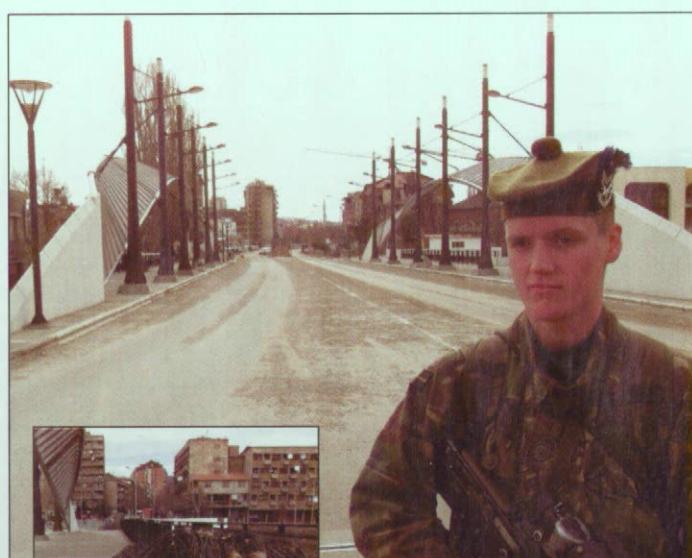
"The flag caused a great deal of interest, particularly among the Serb bridge-watchers," said Maj White. "They can rally hundreds of people onto the streets in minutes. The northern enclave is their domain and they regard it as a stronghold. If the watchers see an Albanian who is not known to them crossing the bridge they can organise instant mass demonstrations."

The Scots caused something of a stir by crossing over for a cup of coffee and a chat in a café used by bridge-watchers.

There were incidents, albeit mild ones, according to Sgt Tony Rawlinson, who was in charge of the barriers on the bridge. Albanian youths baiting Serbs and the attentions of a few drunks were about as bad as it got while his men were on guard.

Despite the French reputation

**'The Scots caused something of a stir by crossing over for a cup of coffee and a chat in a café used by bridge-watchers'**



**Keeping watch:** Hldr Alan Leiper, above, stands guard at the strategically important Austerlitz bridge



**Ready for trouble:** Coils of barbed wire, left, at the side of the bridge



**All for one and one for all:** A combined Anglo-French patrol in the Serbian area of Mitrovica, proving the two countries can work together well. Hldr Sean Downie leads, followed by 2nd Lt Alex Logie and two soldiers of the 152nd Infantry Battalion. At the rear is Hldr Adam Kelly

for cuisine, the Highlanders reckoned the food they were served was not as good as that prepared by British military chefs at Waterloo Lines in Podujevo.

"We've had kangaroo, ostrich and, I think, horse, but that has not been confirmed," said Maj White. "It was a challenge."

But everyone agreed the French had been hospitable.

"We have done some good work and with joint training we are able to foster a better working relationship," said Maj White. "We have done low-level weapons training and, by and large, we have been impressed with French kit, especially

their radios. They have got a digital, channel-hopping, secure, lightweight, reliable, fail-safe radio system.

"They also have sophisticated night-vision equipment, including a hand-held thermal imager about half the size of ours and half the weight. It's a great bit of kit."

CSM Paul Longwell was delighted to have had the chance to serve with the French. "We showed them tactics we use, many learned in Northern Ireland," he said.

"Their patrol techniques are different from ours. We haven't tried to teach them to suck eggs but demonstrated tactics

based on experience in Northern Ireland. That is relevant to Mitrovica and has gone down very well.

"The main difference between us is that they don't interact with local people in the same way we do. They keep themselves to themselves and are just there to be seen."

"But the deployment has been a success and shows that two countries can work together even at a basic level."

"It's all about agreement and cooperation," concluded Lt Col Swann. "It has been a positive start and the French can see what is on offer and what benefits can be drawn from having another nationality under command."

For the Highlanders, there were benefits to be gained, too. After all, a change is as good as a rest.



**Delighted:** CSM Paul Longwell

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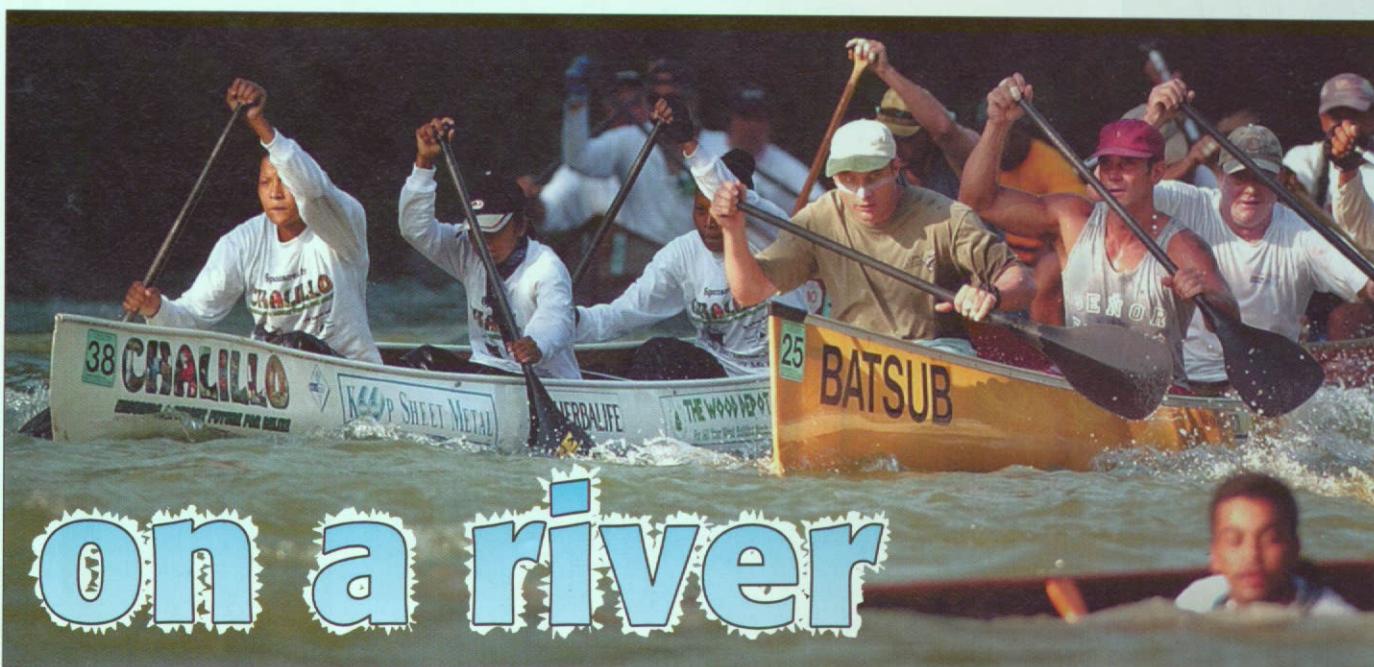
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# Messing about



**River Poachers:** Soldiers, above, from A Company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment carry out a patrol deep in the jungle in Belize. Many had recently completed a short-term training mission in Sierra Leone. Run by the British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB), the jungle exercise taught the Chepstow-based

troops to live and fight in this dangerous and inhospitable environment. Survival training formed an important element of the six-week deployment, during which the Duke of York paid a flying visit to watch demonstrations of some of the jungle military skills acquired by the Royal Anglians and to enjoy an informal barbecue.



**Go for it:** A British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB) canoe crewed by Sgt Paul Carr, front, and commanding officer Lt Col David Leigh fights for clear water at the start of the 180-mile La Ruta Maya River Challenge, writes Dennis Barnes.

The gruelling four-day marathon from San Ignacio bridge to Belize City attracted 68 teams, including nine British Army

entries. Eight of those were from BATSUB staff and the ninth was entered by a Germany-based REME unit.

With teams ranging from state-of-the-art equipped professional crews hell-bent on winning the £20,000 prize money to canoes which might once have graced a municipal pond, there was plenty of scope for smash-ups and spills in waters infested with croco-

dile and snakes. On the second day teams paddled for eight hours, followed by seven the next and a final four-hour sprint on the fourth day. The race ended in the centre of Belize City, with the professionals well ahead of the Army entries and crews from Canada, Mexico and the USA. The first Army canoe to finish crossed the line in 15th place, with the others not far behind.

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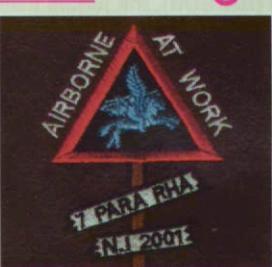


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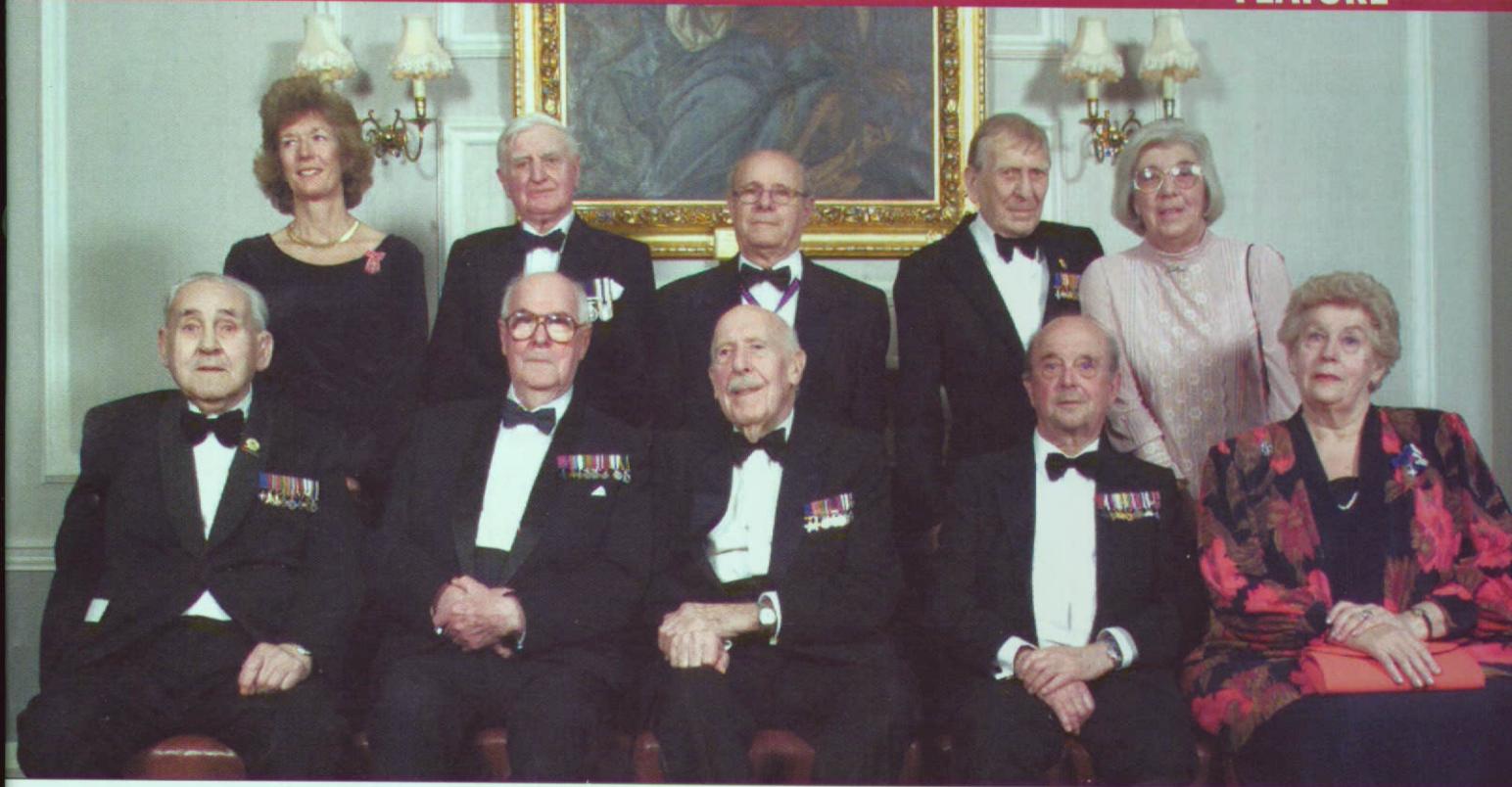
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Bravest of the brave: Lining up at the Royal Hospital Chelsea are, from left, front, Frank Naughton GC, Flt Lt John Cruickshank VC, Col Stuart Archer GC, Lt Cdr Ian Fraser VC, Mrs Margaret Purves GC; rear, Mrs Sara Jones, widow of Lt Col H Jones VC, Lt Col George Styles GC, Dr George Du Puis, High Commissioner for Malta GC, Charlie Wilcox GC, and Mrs Freda McKay, mother of the late Sgt Ian McKay VC

# History-makers

Army charity pays tribute to the valour and gallantry of VCs and GCs

Report: Chris Horrocks  
Picture: Steve Dock

IT WAS an historic gathering on an historic day.

Holders of the Victoria Cross and George Cross, Britain's highest awards for valour and gallantry, joined Fd Marshal the Duke of Kent and 250 guests from the armed forces, politics and industry at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for a commemorative service and dinner.

There, too, were Sara Jones and Freda McKay, whose husband and son respectively – Col H Jones and Sgt Ian McKay – were posthumously awarded the VC for their actions in the Falklands campaign.

The event, marking the 20th anniversary of the day the Argentine flag was raised over South Georgia, took place 144 years to the day after three VCs were won at Lucknow.

Former Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Guthrie, President of the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF), the charity which hosted the evening, paid tribute to the "supremely brave men and women" present who had selflessly faced death so that others would live, and saluted also those who had made the final sacrifice in the service of their country.

Baroness Thatcher, whose husband Sir Denis was among the guests, sent a mes-

sage saying that none of those to whom tribute was being paid would be forgotten – "not just because their acts will be marked down in history but because their heroism will stand as a beacon through the ages. We salute them all".

Among items silently auctioned during the evening in aid of the ABF, which needs to raise up to £5m a year, was a leather-bound edition of Gen Sir John Wilsey's biography *H Jones VC*, signed by

the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Kent, Baroness Thatcher, Fd Marshal Lord Bramall, Sara Jones and the author. Royalties from the book will also go to the ABF, and to the VC and GC Association.

Regimental marches of the VC and GC holders were performed by the Band of the Grenadier Guards. Victory Beating and Dinner Call were by the Corps of Drums of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, The Rifle Volunteers.

## These are their stories of courage

THE widow and son of Sgt Michael Willetts GC, 3 Para, who gave his life protecting others from a terrorist bomb in Belfast on May 25, 1971, were among special guests at the commemorative event.

In our picture above with Mrs Sara Jones and Mrs Freda McKay are:

- Lt Cdr Ian Fraser VC, DSC, RD, who, in a daring midget sub raid, attacked a Japanese heavy cruiser off Singapore in 1945.

- Flt Lt John Cruickshank VC, formerly a gunner in 129 Regiment RA, who sank a U-boat while his aircraft was subject to intense anti-aircraft fire in 1944; his navigator was killed and he sustained 72 wounds.

- Dr George Du Puis, High Commissioner for Malta. The besieged island was awarded the GC during the Second World War.

- Col Stuart Archer GC, OBE, ERD,

awarded the GC for his courage as a Royal Engineers bomb disposal officer in 1940.

- Lt Col George Styles GC, decorated for his dismantling of explosive devices in Belfast in 1971 while serving in the RAOC.

- Mrs Margaret Purves GC, who became the last living person to be awarded the Albert Medal when at the age of 14 she rescued two Scouts in difficulties in the sea off Wales. She later served with QARANC; her medal was translated to GC in 1971.

- Capt Frank Naughton GC, ex-Royal Tank Corps, whose Empire Gallantry Medal for saving a fellow soldier from drowning in 1936 was also later translated to the GC.

- Charlie Wilcox GC, formerly 1 Bn South Staffs, who saved a man from falling from a high window ledge while painting a building in Birmingham in 1949.

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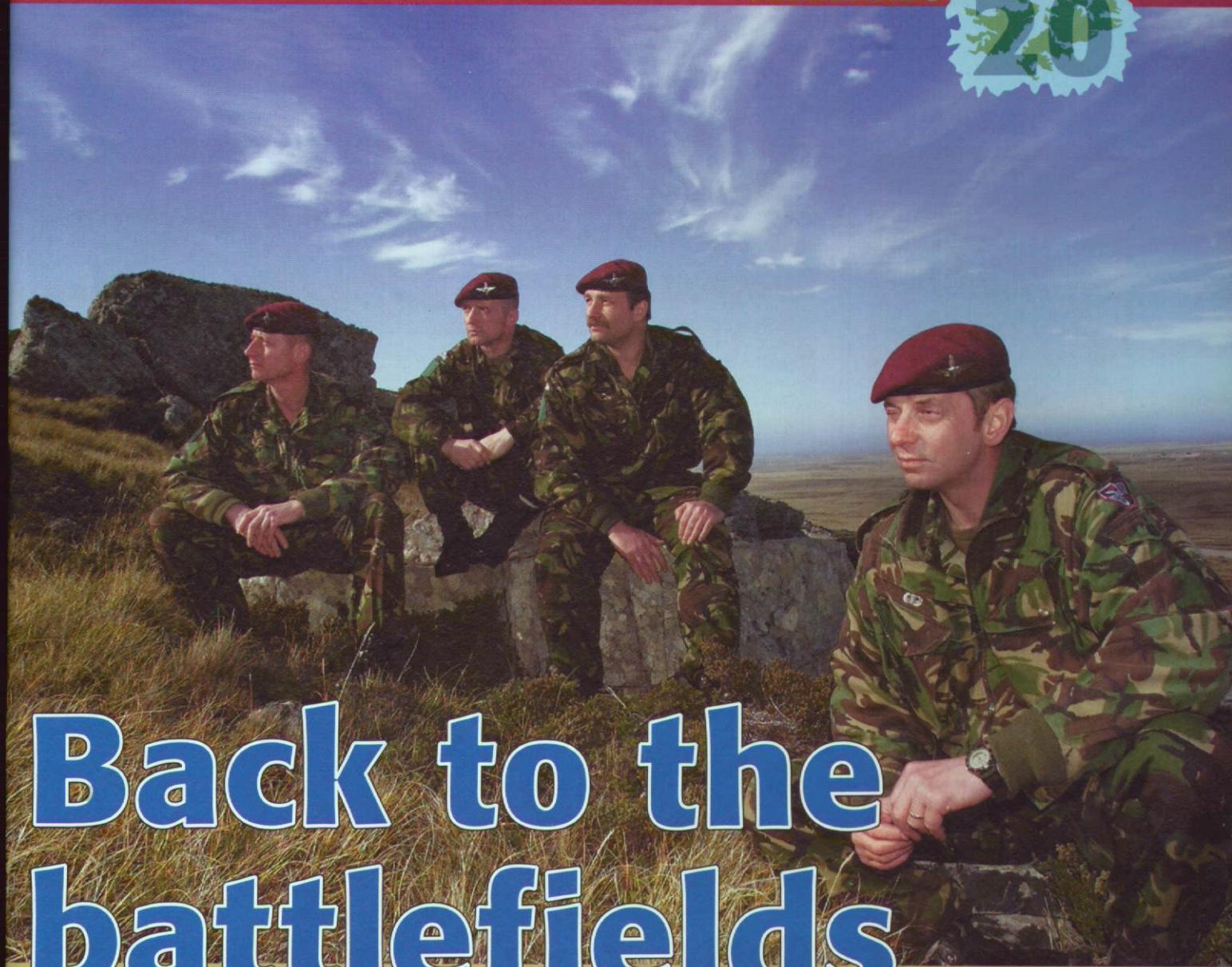
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# Back to the battlefields

We spoke to four Parachute Regiment veterans of the Falklands War who are still serving. They returned south for the first time since 1982

**Report: Ray Routledge**  
**Pictures: Mike Weston**

RELIVING the sounds and smells of battle, experiencing again the adrenalin rush and the fear is not something to be taken lightly.

Four soldiers of The Parachute Regiment who returned to the Falkland Islands for the first time in 20 years left those emotions in the past. Although all four recall the fighting and the fear vividly, they have simply got on with their lives.

As part of the roulement infantry company stationed at Mount Pleasant they were able to visit their battlefields. It had been a strange but not sombre experience.

"We walked over the same ground that we did in 1982 but in slow time and under no pressure," said Capt Dave Abols, 2ic of a composite company of soldiers from all

four battalions of The Parachute Regiment. Now with Colchester-based 3 Para, in 1982 he was a corporal in 1 Platoon, A Coy, 2 Para. "It took time to orient ourselves because back then, every time we moved, it was in the dark. The countryside here is so open much of it looks the same."

Capt Dave Abols He recalled that the fighting on Darwin Ridge – the crucial first land battle of the campaign – had been like something from a book. Neither he nor his colleagues had been in battle before.

"The really frightening time was when we were under fire from artillery because there was nowhere to hide." He remembered long days with no sleep and kit that was always a day behind them.

**On reflection:** Four war veterans return to the islands for the first time in 20 years. From left, CSM Harry Harrison, Capt Dave Abols, CSgt Tommo Thomson and Cpl Jim Fearon

CSM Harry Harrison, a 19-year-old private with the 3rd Battalion in 1982, recollected the now legendary "big tab".

"My feet were tender after that tab," he said. "That distance on Salisbury Plain would have been tough but not exceptional. Because of the boggy terrain here and the fact that our feet were always wet, it was bad. We had no bergens or sleeping bags because we were in fighting order."

Like Capt Abols, he said there had been no time to be anxious during the battle. "I know it is a bit of a cliché but when you are busy, there is no thought of apprehension and certainly during the battle I was busy. When there was a bit of a lull however, when things stopped, that was when I

● Turn to next page



**CSM Harry Harrison**

## Memories

### Welsh Guards, Gurkhas, Scots Gds, QE2, 4 Fd RA RE

I CAN picture some events very clearly, even after 20 years, first of all being on the QE2 with the Welsh Guards, Gurkhas, and the Scots Guards.

PT was running around the deck and the range was aft of the ship, shooting an LMG at floats and remote-

controlled aircraft. Then there was waking up one morning to see an armada of Royal Navy ships, all shapes and sizes – what a sight.

Disembarking the QE2, loaded up with packs exceeding 80lb, I made my way down to the bowels of the ship. The loadmaster saying: "When the landing craft comes up, just jump aboard." It sounded simple until I looked into the night to see the landing craft, which seemed to be a half-mile down below us. When the loadmaster told me to go I nearly jumped over the landing craft into the dark blue sea – thankfully someone grabbed hold of me.

Because I was with 4 Field RA as a forward observation observer and they did not have a battery to replace us, we stayed for an extra month after the war. The unit was tasked with minefield clearance, so some sappers were attached to us and gave a general brief on the type of munitions we would come across and the type of booby traps there might be.

Off we went around Port Stanley clearing mines, on all fours with a bayonet in hand, prodding the earth, finding all sorts of munitions which the sappers disposed of, normally with a loud bang.

After I left the Army I got bored and joined the local TA Royal Engineer unit. Suffice to say I am now a platty (MT) lard-arse and am sticking to it. – A Passam (ex-97 Bty, 4 Fd Regt RA), 72 Fd Sqn RE, Newcastle.



## Rock reunion for Para war veterans

TWENTY years after the Falklands conflict, two veterans of the war met up in Gibraltar. Col Tom Camp, Chief-of-Staff at HQ British Forces Gibraltar, won the Military Medal as a corporal serving with A Company, 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in 1982. As a section commander he took part in the battle for Darwin Ridge and Goose Green.

With him is SSgt Dave Burns, now with the Royal Engineers to complete a series of construction projects on the Rock. Twenty years ago he was a private in 3 Para, providing mortar cover for the units ahead of him.

Dave recalled: "He didn't like it very much when we were putting down supporting



How it was: Col Tom Camp, left, and SSgt Dave Burns  
Picture: Cpl Martin Sadler, RAF

mortar fire very close to him." The two men met up again when Col Camp visited the construction works completed by SSgt Burns and the engineer squadron in which he serves.

# The battlefields

### ● From Page 33

started to get a bit windy ... especially during the days on Mount Longdon where we had 36 hours up there under bombardment. It was bad when you had to go on stags at night for a couple of hours and there were shells coming in."

Cpl Jim Fearon, a private aged 20 in the anti-tank platoon in 1982, had his own thoughts about the big tab. "A lot of it was done at night so you couldn't see the bogs or the tussock grass and that made it hard going. The men were constantly falling over and cursing.

"We didn't comprehend death. We just thought: get out of this, get back and have a



Cpl Jim  
Fearon

few beers. I lost quite a few mates and the next day we picked up the bodies of our own blokes. It was after that and during the lulls you thought it could have been you."

CSgt Tommo Thomson said: "I lost mates but we buried them 20 years ago and we said goodbye to them then. Of course, when we visit their graves we pay our respects, but I have never had any nightmares, and no post-traumatic stress. We still live in the military environment and we have a robust sense of humour and that is important.

"After the Falklands, we just felt life goes on. You have to put it behind you and you can't keep going back to it."

## Argentine cemetery stirs emotions

THE four Paras were surprised by their reactions when they visited for the first time graves of their former enemy at the Argentinian graveyard near Goose Green.

"Their grave-markers have the names of their officers, but not of the ordinary men. Those just say 'An Argentinian soldier', said CSgt Tommo Thomson.

"The only time we had a bit of emotion was when we visited the Argentinian cemetery and saw the crosses," added Capt Dave Abols. "We have been paying our respects to our own blokes for 20 years but had never before done so to the Argentinians. Seeing their cemetery brought a lump to my throat. They may have been a conscript army, but they could fight."

Capt Abols felt that the enemy soldiers had been poorly led and demotivated by the attitude and

actions of many of their officers and NCOs. "If you look at their grave markers you can see that some of them died before any of the battles. Before the fighting their officers stayed in the comfort of Stanley while the soldiers were living in the hills. That to us is unprofessional."

All four welcomed the chance to visit the battlefield and graveyards. "It has been good to go back to the Falklands," said Cpl Jim Fearon.

CSM Harry Harrison also remembered the Argentinians as tough opponents. "I leave the Army later this year and have welcomed the opportunity to come back to the Falklands. The war was the most important part of my career and people seldom get the chance to do that and walk away from it without a scratch, physically or mentally."

All four veterans clearly feel the Argentinians earned their respect as fighting men.

# End result was close-run thing

Better planning by the Argentinians could have turned the tables

AGAINST the odds the Task Force succeeded, but the outcome could so easily have been different, writes **Anthony Stone**.

"It was a close-run thing," concedes Maj Gen Julian Thompson, the man who commanded 3rd Commando Brigade which carried out the initial landings and fought most of the subsequent land battles.

"Had the Argentinians got it right they could have either won or fought us to a stalemate."

His views on those ten weeks spent in the South Atlantic have not changed in the two decades since.

"The years have merely reinforced my view that we were right to go and take them back and the lives spent doing so were not wasted."

Julian Thompson joined the Royal Marines a month after this 18th birthday and served for 34 years.

"Though we could not have known it at the time, the result of taking the Falklands back was the fall of the Argentinian junta and the return of democracy. The islanders were able to have the choice as to who would govern them."

A consequence of the action was that Britain had demonstrated to Russia that it was prepared to fight for a principle.

The decision to assemble the Task Force and despatch it 8,000 miles could easily have unravelled if the Argentinians had taken different decisions.

There were two areas where they could have "made life difficult", Gen Thompson believes.

First at the beginning when the Argentinian airforce opted to attack warships rather than logistics vessels. And secondly, if they had better prepared their positions and worked out more counter-attack plans.

Another grave concern was the logistical problem of maintaining an operation so far from home.

"The ships in the Task Force were beginning to run down in the sense that they could not be maintained that far south," Gen

Thompson said. "It was a much closer-run thing than people imagine. They were only 300 miles from their homeland and we were 8,000 miles. We could blockade with submarines but they had aeroplanes flying in and out up till the last day.

"Really they lacked the initiative and planning ability and the get-their-act-together ability which meant they lost."

On the road to victory, soldiers were hampered by inadequate boots.

"They were designed for sitting in the back of an APC in the British Army of the Rhine and marching, but not over wet terrain. They were absolutely useless."

"We did not have the range of stuff that they have now like bivvy bags and Gore-Tex,



**Yomp:** Men of 45 Commando Royal Marines walk into Stanley

**Inset:** Maj Gen Julian Thompson

so people got wet and when they got wet they stayed wet. Sometimes they stayed wet for weeks."

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but there are not many things the general would have done differently. Apart from Goose Green.

"I would have had two units involved, not just 2 Para – because it was really a job for two battalions," he said. "I would have taken some light armour down as well."

But, this aside, of the things that were within his control, he would make the same decisions again.

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## Memories

### Badly wounded NCO made good recovery

AT the time of the Argentinian invasion I was a lance corporal radio operator in the Recce Platoon of 1/7 Gurkha Rifles on a six-month tour in Belize. On return to the UK we were issued Arctic clothes and deployed to the Falklands.

When we landed at San Carlos we quickly dug shellscrapes and waited for the order to move. As the battle continued, we were not re-supplied for a week and I remember being very hungry.

On the night move for the final assault on Port Stanley, Recce Platoon acted as stretcher team. I remember one casualty, a rifleman. His leg was injured, but he was still able to walk with help and was screaming for a doctor.

I offered to help him and take him to the doctor but he was afraid that he would sustain further injuries as in all the confusion he had lost his helmet. After giving him mine he agreed to go.

Another painful memory is of a corporal who had a severe stomach injury. His internal organs were clearly visible. He pleaded for me to kill him. He was the worst injured among the Gurkhas.

Now he is in good health living in Nepal. His son, CSgt Ragubir Rai, is serving with 2 RGR.

I remember the happiness when OC A Coy shouted "cease fire" and a Scots Guards piper started playing. A week later one of my contemporaries was killed by a grenade trap while clearing Goose Green.

Today there are 12 soldiers and officers from 7 GR still serving, including one officer who was the youngest rifleman in the battalion at the time. – Capt (QGO) Panchabir Rai, 2 RGR, Bosnia.



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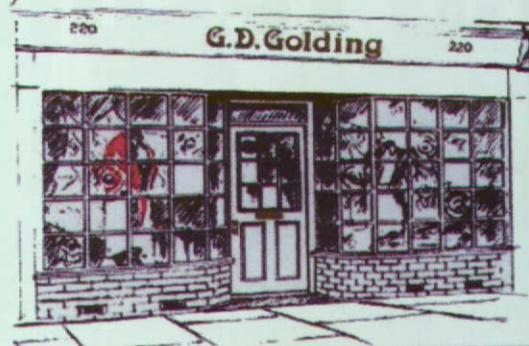
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Our kinda town: Troops from 60 Headquarters and Support Squadron, 39 Engineer Regiment march through Gibraltar with swords drawn and bayonets fixed to celebrate the Freedom awarded to the Corps of Royal Engineers 30 years ago

Pictures: Chris Fletcher

# Sappers mark link with Rock

BRITAIN'S presence in Gibraltar was underlined when troops from 60 Headquarters and Support Squadron (Air Support) exercised the Freedom of the Corps of Royal Engineers on the Rock.

Marching to the beat of the corps' band, the squadron and 50 veterans of the Royal Engineers Association took part in the parade, which was inspected by the City Mayor of Gibraltar, Cllr Alcantarra, and the Chief Engineer, Lt Gen Sir Scott Grant.

The event was the culmination of a six-

week deployment by the unit, part of 39 Engineer Regiment, during which a range of construction tasks for both the garrison and the local community were completed.

The Waterbeach-based sappers had flown to Gibraltar while their colleagues from 24 (Air Support) Squadron were in Afghanistan to repair Kabul airport.

They erected a new 400m-long safety fence along the sheer cliff edge at Buffadero training area. Because they were working so close to the cliffs, the soldiers had to carry in 20 tonnes of concrete and do everything by hand, including digging in 250 metal poles to support the fence.

Other tasks included the installation of a kitchen in the garrison library, building a garden and six garages for Army personnel serving on the Rock, and refurbishing the church and an operational centre at Gibraltar airport. They also lifted a 15-tonne fibreglass boat from the seabed. It had sunk during a storm three years ago and had become a hazard to windsurfers.



Cutting edge: A sapper works on a hazardous wreck

## Manage your money



David Mapes is Assistant Director of Credit Action and will be pleased to answer specific questions addressed to the Editor. These will be treated in confidence.

### Catalogues, 0% finance and doorstep borrowing

WE'VE looked at borrowing in several ways. Indirect – using overdraft or credit card (or store card) – borrowing can be good because if we pay it back quickly we only pay interest for the amount and time we're borrowing.

Direct borrowing through loans and HP (higher purchase) mean interest and charges are included and we're "tied in", making payments regularly over a period.

As money becomes more available, lenders find new ways of encouraging us to spend (and borrow).

Buying from a mail-order catalogue or a catalogue run by a friend is a common way of obtaining furniture and clothing. We can often pay in instalments, too. How much does it cost? Are the products we're buying available cheaper from a high-street retailer or discount store?

#### No-interest borrowing

Nought per cent finance is widely available on furniture, computers and electrical equipment. What are the things to watch for? For example, what happens if we're late on a payment – does the creditor start charging interest? If interest becomes chargeable, what APR is used? What happens if our financial circumstances change?

Borrowing money from companies who visit us at home is also widespread. What should we look for? Again, start with APR – how much does it cost to borrow the money? What happens if we can't afford to make the payments?

#### Thinking about borrowing

It seems to me that the best thing I can encourage you to do is THINK before you borrow (or buy on credit). Think before borrowing money. Take time out from the sales environment – have a coffee and talk about it with someone else. Ask some questions, such as: Do I need what I'm thinking about borrowing the money for? Can I repair the old one, buy one second-hand or make do without? How much will it cost – the total cost – to borrow the money? Can I get the money cheaper from somewhere else?

#### If you want to talk

With credit, borrowing money can seem very straightforward when we're focused on what we want to buy. But we need to be aware of all of the aspects of our needs and the costs of borrowing before we make a decision. If you want someone independent to talk to, call our HelpLine.

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# Healing hands hold out hope

Villagers treat Colchester-based medical team like pop stars

**Pictures: Mike Weston**

IT'S standing room only at the weekly clinics held by 19 Air Assault Medical Squadron RAMC in the village of Gulbaz, outside Kabul. As soon as the medics arrive they are deluged with requests for help. More than 100 people, about a fifth of the village's population, turn up to ask for advice and treatment.

The squadron, along with Colchester-based 16 Close Support Regiment RAMC, has been on the ground since January providing medical support to the International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) and also helping local communities.

Capt Andy West is fast becoming an expert on the skin disease leishmaniasis, a parasitic infection caused by sandfly bites. It is endemic around Kabul and, although treatable, usually leaves scars.

It is one of the diseases that children often catch and, fortunately, looks worse than it is. Treatment is through lotions and injections into the sites of infection.

The popularity of these clinics has been immense. The regiment's adjutant, Capt Ian Robertson, said: "Clinics for the local population were held once a week and were extremely well-attended, with problems ranging from simple skin problems to old gunshot wounds. Due to their overwhelming popularity we are now putting on extra clinics."

The regiment's work has been nothing if not varied, involving medicine, dentistry and psychiatry as well as providing an immediate response team. The regiment has helped to set up a fledgling ambulance service for the capital, using two former NHS vehicles bought with funds raised in the UK.

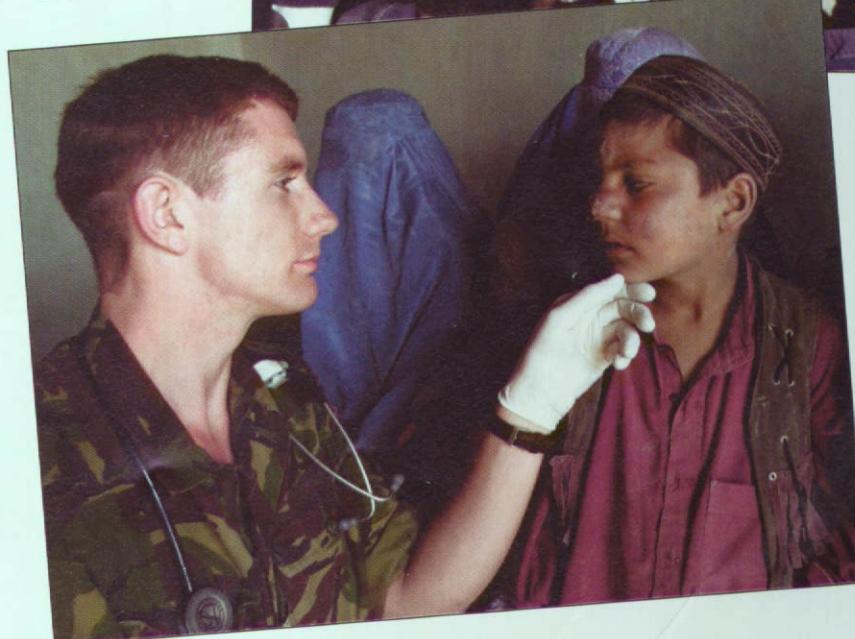
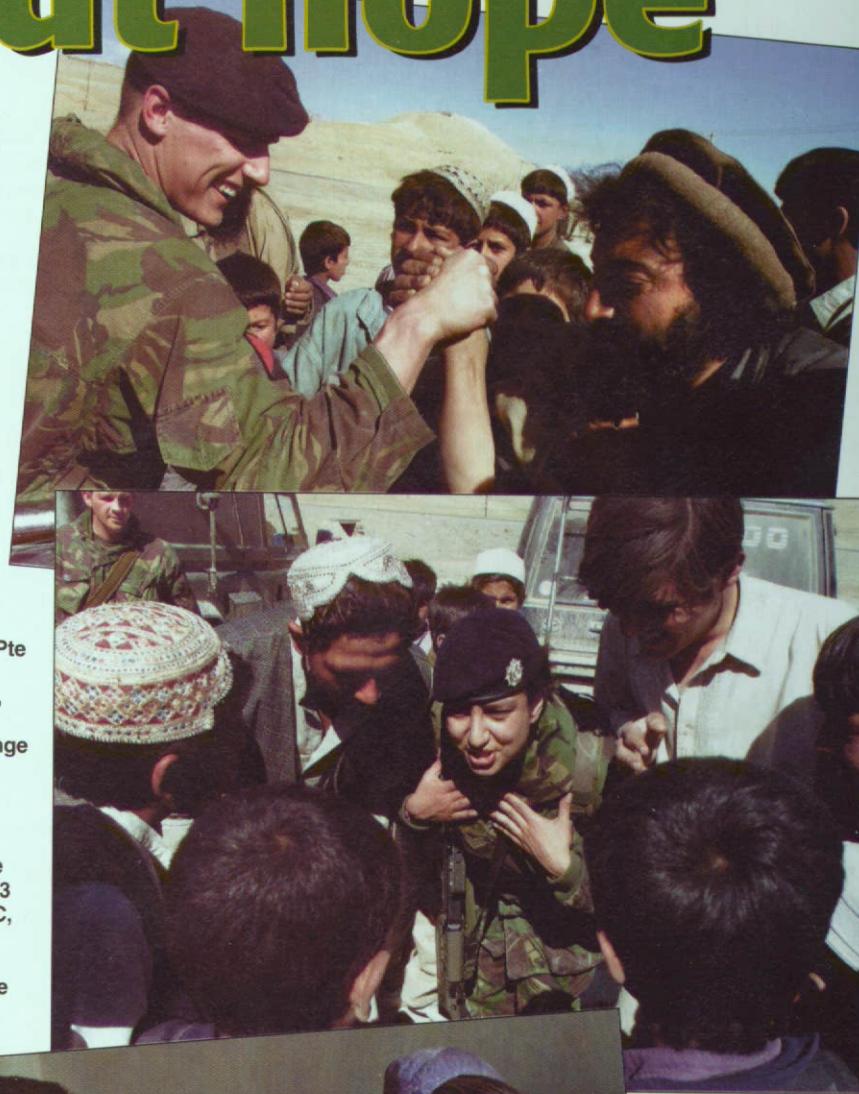
Other tasks have included a call-out to an avalanche in the region and the transfer of Northern Alliance soldiers from Kabul airport to the military hospital.

When the medics arrived they had to use kit carried on their backs as most of their equipment was weeks behind them.

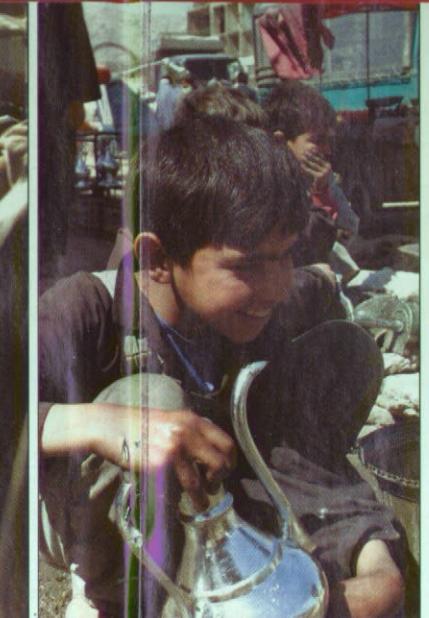
Lt Col Martin Nadin said: "This has been an opportunity to encounter medical conditions that we would never see back home."

**Making friends:** Pte Marcus Grant, above, 16 CSMR, accepts an arm-wrestling challenge from one of the villagers

**Getting to know you:** Sgt Michelle Bradford, right, 63 Sqn, 13 Regt RLC, attached to 16 CSMR, meets locals outside the clinic



**First aid:** Capt Andy West, left, 19 Air Assault Medical Squadron, examines a young boy with the skin disease leishmaniasis at the clinic in Gulbaz

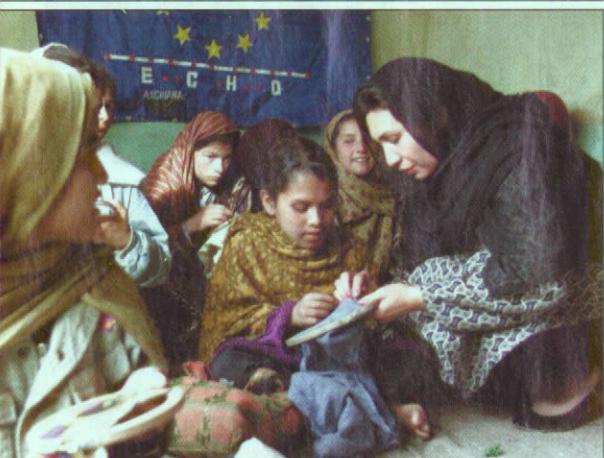


Undercover operation: Burka-clad women, above, walk to the market on a shopping expedition. Under the Taliban they were not allowed out without a male escort

Lost innocence: Child labourers work for a pittance by clearing rubble in front of the Darul Aman Palace, left

# Kabul camera

*Soldier* photographer Mike Weston captures the joy and vivacity of a city stepping out from the shadow of the Taliban



Helping hand: 2 Para have provided food, clothes and medical supplies to the Achiana children's centre, above. Children from the streets are taught basic reading, writing and trades such as electrical repair and woodwork

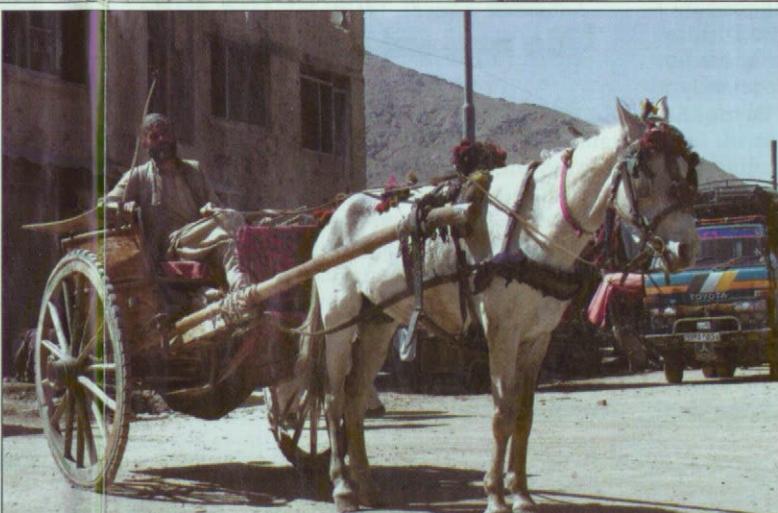


The long unwinding road: Men, left, head for the city centre on bicycles

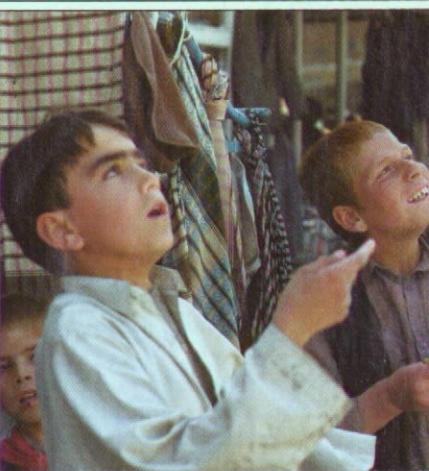
Horse power: The most reliable and cost-effective transport system in Kabul remains the four-legged variety, right



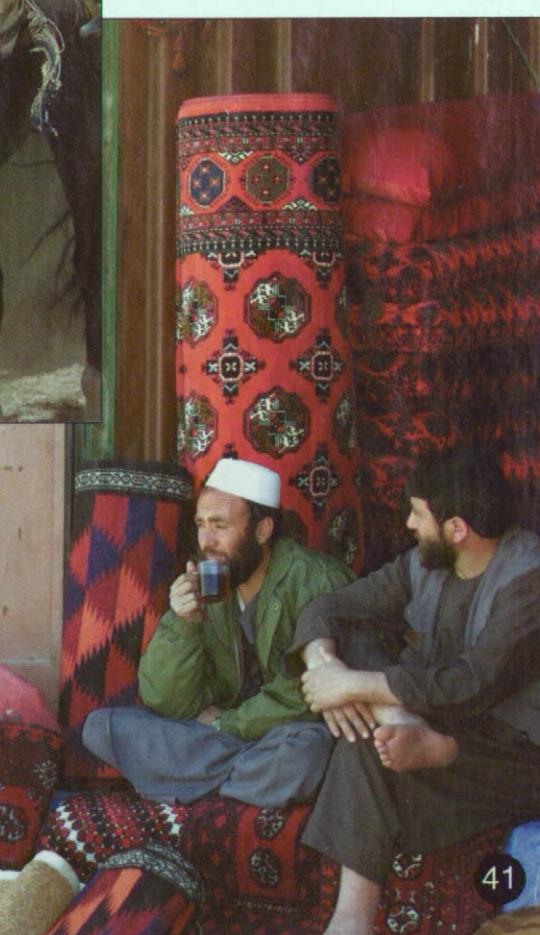
Melée-go-round: Buzkashi, the Afghan national sport, is played by two teams of horsemen, above. The aim is to transport the boz (a headless calf) from one end of the pitch to the other. Almost anything goes, including riding into the crowd to prevent opponents from winning



Tea-break: Carpet traders, right, pass the time of day outside their shop



Sky's the limit: Kite-flying, above, was banned under Taliban. These simple pleasures are now more popular than ever



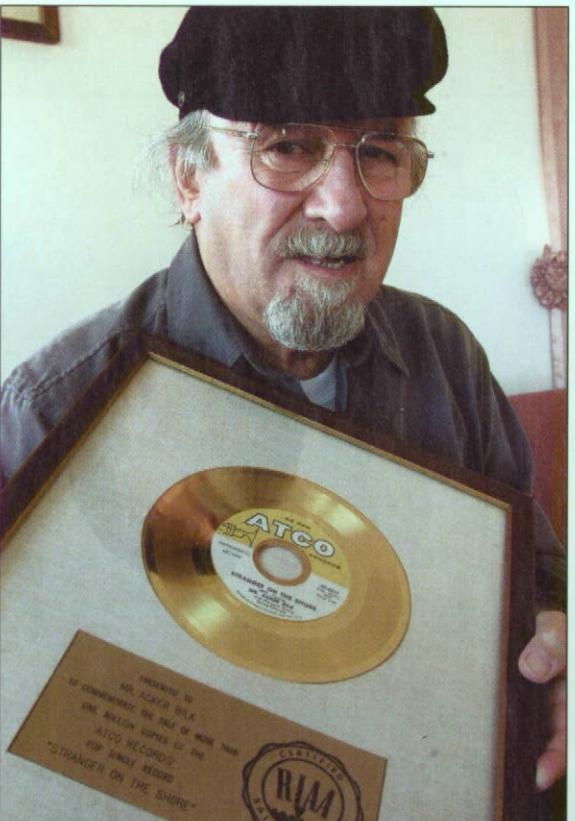
# How Sapper Bilk turned tunesmith

This living legend of British jazz owes his musical beginnings to his time in the Royal Engineers – and a borrowed clarinet

Interview: Ray Routledge  
Pictures: Mike Weston

ACKER BILK, complete with his trademark bowler hat, racy waistcoats, and moody, bewitching clarinet, has been a major name on the British music scene for more than four decades. And he owes his start to his time in the Army.

Although unfamiliar to a younger generation, the music of this quietly-spoken Somerset man earned him chart-topping international acclaim 40 years ago.



Gold disc: The award for *Stranger on the Shore* is one of many held by the Somerset jazz giant

His best-remembered composition is the haunting *Stranger on the Shore*.

In the late 1940s Acker (real name Bernard) found himself in the Suez Canal Zone. It was a tour that lasted almost three years, extended in his case by three months in a military prison.

"I was a National Serviceman with the Royal Engineers," he said at his home in the Somerset countryside. "Like everyone else I tried to do as little as possible."

"My three years included 84 days in a military prison – I was caught sleeping on guard. When I came out of the nick they said I would have to do another three months to make up for it. On top of that everyone had to do another three months because of hostilities, so I wasn't too chuffed."

Prison life was tough: inmates were made to build an assault course in the desert. "It was hard work, but what was worse was that when we finished building it, we had to run over it. I asked if we could build another instead."

Being in prison didn't hold him back.

"They promoted me to lance-corporal about a month after I got out of the nick, which was great as I had to do a guard every five days instead of two on, four off." More importantly, it was during his time in Egypt that Acker took up the clarinet.

"A guy named John Britton lent me a little e-flat marching clarinet. He couldn't play it so I borrowed it permanently. That is how I started. Later I managed to get a proper clarinet and we formed a jazz band."

"We weren't very good but we enjoyed it and I learned a lot about the instrument out there."

Acker's time in the Army was hard



Stage persona: Acker Bilk with his trademark bowler and waistcoat

but fun. "We had some good laughs," he said, recalling that he and his mates constantly dreamed up scams.

A captain who believed Acker was a trained blacksmith gave him a drawing of a tin pot and asked him to make it. "I couldn't so I got a local Egyptian to do it,"

**'They promoted me to lance-corporal about a month after I got out of the nick, which was great as I had to do a guard every five days instead of two on, four off'**

he said. The captain was so impressed he authorised an extra weekly trade payment for the undeserving sapper.

"We had loads of tricks and there was a lot of thieving going on with the engineering plant . . . not that I did much. All I could flog was an anvil and nobody wanted that."

"We had 60ft-long graders to construct airport runways. A bloke flogged one of them. He drove it out the gate but the buyer didn't show up so he left it by the

# How Sapper Bilk turned tunesmith

## Gig guide

If you want to catch Acker Bilk in concert his gigs over the next few months include:

May 12, Theatre by the Lake, Keswick;

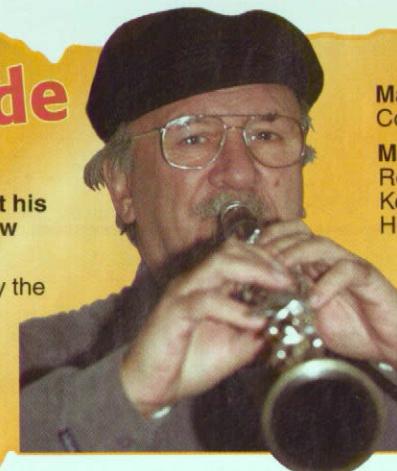
May 14, Marina Theatre, Lowestoft;

May 16, National Concert Hall, Dublin;

May 19, Theatre Royal, Norwich (with Kenny Ball and Humphrey Lyttelton);

June 22, Gregynog Festival, South Wales; and

July 7, The Mill, Sonning, Berkshire.



side of the road. It was there for ages.

"Another bloke was trying to work his ticket by pretending to be mad. Trouble was he'd been at it so long he really went bonkers."

On leaving the Army, Acker returned to his home village of Pensford to become an apprentice blacksmith. But his day job rapidly played second fiddle to the band he formed.

After developing a style at local gigs, they began to perform on the Bristol scene before Acker headed for London with the Ken Colyer Band. He didn't take to the big city and returned to Bristol to form the Paramount Jazz Band.

Trad jazz was enjoying boom times and by the early 1960s Acker had enjoyed several chart successes, and a top-five record called *Summer Set*. In 1961 he recorded

one of the most familiar instrumental records of the past 50 years.

"It was originally titled *Jenny*, after my daughter," he explained. "Kevin Sheldon, a BBC producer, wanted me to write the theme music for a TV series, so we changed the title to match the series. It was *Stranger on the Shore*."

It was a phenomenal success, becoming the first record to be number one simultaneously in the UK and the USA. Awards poured in and Acker and his band were in

## Borderline decision

A Territorial Army corporal is in the UK's front line in its war against illegal immigrants

HAVE you ever wondered what immigration officials are looking for when they check your passport at airports, docks and the Channel Tunnel?

Mark Jefferies can tell you, writes Ray Routledge. As well as being a corporal with four years' experience with 253 Provost Company, Royal Military Police (Volunteers) at Tulse Hill in London, Mark's day job is as an immigration officer at Coquelles in France, where he checks passengers about to journey through the Tunnel.

Mark qualified as a palaeopathologist, someone who studies human remains to determine age and sex and work out how they died.

"But it is a very tough profession to get into as a career, there are so few openings," Mark told us as he travelled to work in France from his home in Canterbury.

Nevertheless, he enjoys the variety offered by the Immigration Service. "No two days are the same and you are not stuck in an office. We ensure that everyone has a passport with the right entry clearance.

"However, the many American and Nato armed forces personnel and their families we see travelling on orders are exempt from the normal controls and do not need an entry clearance or stamp in their passports."

He and his colleagues have the power of arrest and are trained to spot fake or altered passports. Their duties include freight searches for illegal immigrants.

In Mark's experience, which nationality is the rudest to officers? "The British," he answered without hesitation.

If you in the TA and have an interesting job we would like to hear from you. E-mail [routledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:routledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk) or write to him at *Soldier* (details in Page 86).



Control: Mark Jefferies

Picture: Graeme Main

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# League leaders



Star man: LCpl Kev Maddox helped guide 1 RRW to victory

Picture: Graeme Main

## Welsh crowned Nines champions

BRITISH Army (Germany) Rugby Union champions 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales proved their sporting versatility by storming to victory in the Army Rugby League's Nines competition at The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut.

Arriving from operations in Kosovo, 1 RRW made clear their intentions to return to the Balkans with the silverware by scoring 18 unanswered points against 25 Engineer Regiment in their opening match.

A well-disciplined 10-0 victory over 40 Commando Squadron followed, paving the way for a semi-final clash with one of the pre-tournament favourites, 1 RSME. LCpl Kev Maddox (1 RRW) proved the difference in a fiercely contested encounter that could have gone either way. Maddox's outstanding ball handling and composure under pressure ensured that his side, despite conceding their first points of the competition, finished 10-6 winners.

The final against reigning Army inter-unit champions SEAE, which looked on paper to be the Welsh side's toughest tie of the Naafi-sponsored competition, was a surprisingly one-sided affair and 1 RRW recorded their second 18-0 scoreline of the day.

Maddox, who was later named best overall player of the tournament by former Bradford, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan professional Keith Ashcroft, was again instrumental, ripping through the SEAE defence with his short passing and excellent kicking game.

# Megève medal mania

Picture: Cpl James Elmer (RLC)

THE Army's ski and snowboard teams left little of the silverware for the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force at the Inter-Services championships in Megève, France.

The women's skiing competition was dominated by Army team skipper Capt Lucy Mackenzie (RA), who won gold in both the Super G and giant slalom, and was named overall combined alpine individual champion. Capt Melanie Hilton (RLC) helped the Army to the team title with a bronze in both the downhill and Super G events.

A bronze for Cpl Tony McGill in the Super G, and consistently strong performances from other team

members, ensured that the men were also awarded the championship trophy.

In the veterans' competition Capt Sacha Zvegintzov (AAC) won silver in every event but was pipped to the title of individual champion by the RAF's Roger Cruickshank, who is hoping to be selected for the 2006 Olympic squad.

Army snowboarding champion Cpl John Craig (REME) kept the medal haul rolling with silver in the slalom and giant slalom races. Sgt Pete Couch (RA) took the bronze in the giant slalom, and in doing so secured the team trophy for the Army.

In the women's snowboarding, a

discipline making its debut at Inter-Services level, 2nd Lt Nicola Bass (AGC) scooped all three gold medals on offer and was deservedly crowned individual champion.

Lt Tessa Loyd (RE) completed the medal tally with two silvers, finishing behind Bass in both the slalom and giant slalom.



# Royals rumble

Frith delivers knockout blow to Royal Irish championship bid

FORTUNATELY for 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales, LCpl Stuart Frith's nerve is as strong as his punch, writes Andy Simms.

Having watched from ringside as 2nd Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment clawed back a 4-2 deficit to level the scores in the finals of the Major Unit championships, the heavyweight entered the ring against LCpl Robert Costello knowing that the outcome of his bout would determine which team would be crowned champions.

But if Frith was feeling the pressure as he climbed through the ropes of the Maida Gymnasium ring in Aldershot it certainly did not show. Indeed, the raised glove and knowing nod to his watching team-mates suggested a high degree of confidence.

And after hearing the first, and last, bell of the contest there was nothing unsure about his approach to the fight. With a slight height and reach advantage over his opponent, Frith emerged from his corner in top gear and immediately set about unlocking Costello's defence with well-worked combinations.

Caught cold by the ferocity of this opening attack, Costello was rocked back on his heels and duly received a standing eight count from the fight referee. Sensing an early end to proceedings Frith showed no let-up in pace and soon had



Nowhere to hide: Pte Brian Hollard (1 RRW), left, corners 2 Royal Irish's Pte Gary Weir

his Irish counterpart facing a second enforced break of the night. Again Costello survived the count but this time his reprieve lasted just seconds, a flurry of hooks immediately after the restart prompted the referee to intervene for a third and final time.

Speaking after the bout a jubilant Frith told *Soldier*: "There was a lot of pressure on me but I just remained focused on

doing what I had to do. Winning the title is just a fantastic feeling." A sentiment shared by 1 RRW's coach Capt Martin Jones. "I was always confident of the win but all credit to the Royal Irish, they gave us a good battle," he said. "I never imagined the score would go to 5-4 but I am not complaining.

"The boys from the unit in Kosovo have really had to tighten their belts and

work hard to release my team for training. Winning the title is our way of saying thank you to them."

Before Frith's heroics, Pte Gareth Had dock, Pte Chris Bushby, Pte Brian Hollard and LCpl Gareth Hollard all recorded vital wins for 1 RRW. Pte Paul Johnston, Pte Kenneth Johnston, LCpl Robert Cassels and Cpl David Finney notched up victories for 2 R Irish.

# RAF grounded

THE Army cleared the first hurdle in the Willis-sponsored Inter-Services championship at Rotherham with some style, beating the Royal Air Force 74-3.

In ideal weather the Army pack, led by Scotland's Cpl Mattie Stewart (PWRR) and Cpl Chris Budgen (RWF), produced a platform for the back-row to play attacking rugby. International Sevens stars Gnr Andy Dawling (7 Para RHA) and Pte Apolesi Satala (RS) led surge after surge into the light blue defence, while Cpl Andy Smith (RLC) and Bdr Lee Soper (7 Para RHA) thundered in with the extra poundage to secure the driven ball.

The backs division functioned well under new skipper Capt Howard Graham (AGC), but it was particularly pleasing to see the Fijian dimension open the throttle with Pte Saula Roko (RGBW) and Pte Emosi Naisaramaki (RS) both scoring excellent tries.

This was a first-class all round perfor-



Cpl Mattie Stewart, left, and Cpl Andy Smith

mance, but, make no mistake, the Royal Navy at Twickenham on May 4 will be an entirely different kettle of fish.

● Army/Navy ticket hotline – 01252 334415.

## RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . .

**ATHLETICS:** Inter-Services cross country championships, junior men's – 1, Army; 2, RAF. Senior men's – 1, Army; 2, RN; 3, RAF. Veteran men's – 1, RN; 2, RAF; 3, Army. Women's – 1, Army; 2, RN; 3, RAF.

**Army half marathon championships, individual women** – 1, Sgt Lisa Yates (ATR Pirbright); 2, Sgt Sonia Hurst (ASPT); 3, Capt Deborah Thorne (AGC). **Veteran men** – 1, Maj Nick Bateson (3 DSR); 2, Maj Jim Wood (HQ 4 Div); 3, SSgt David Wright (3 DSR). **Senior men** – 1, WO2 Kenny Butler (RLC); 2, WO2 Craig McBurney (1 Li); 3, Sgt John Creak (SEME). **Women's team results** – 1, ATR Pirbright (Sgt Yates, Bdr Maria Antoniou, Jo Grant). **Men's team results** – 1, 3 DSR (Cpl Ian Smith, Maj Bateson, SSgt Wright); 2, SEME (Sgt Creak, Sgt Kevin Pritchard, Capt Simon Smith); 3, 3 Royal Irish (Pte Simon Young, LCpl Paul Woolley, CSgt Andrew McCarroll).

**Karate, senior kumite** – 1, Cpl Hadley; 2, Capt Ian Rennie (QARANC); 3, SSgt Mac McInroy (AGC). **Junior kumite (10-7 kyu)** – 1, Pte Richie Lort (R Irish); 2, Spr Jamie De Pauw (RE); 3, SSgt Phil Roby (AGC). **Junior kumite (6-5 kyu)** – 1, LCpl Jitendra Shakya (RGR); 2, WO2 Trevor Wallis (RLC); 3, Sgt Andy Howarth (RA).

**Senior kata** – 1, Cpl Hadley; 2, Spr David Fisk (RE); 3, Sgt Brian Hall (REME). **Junior kata** – 1, Sgt Howarth; 2, Pte Lort; 3, Lt Col Eric Blyth (R Signals). **Team kumite** – 1, CSS; 2, AMS.

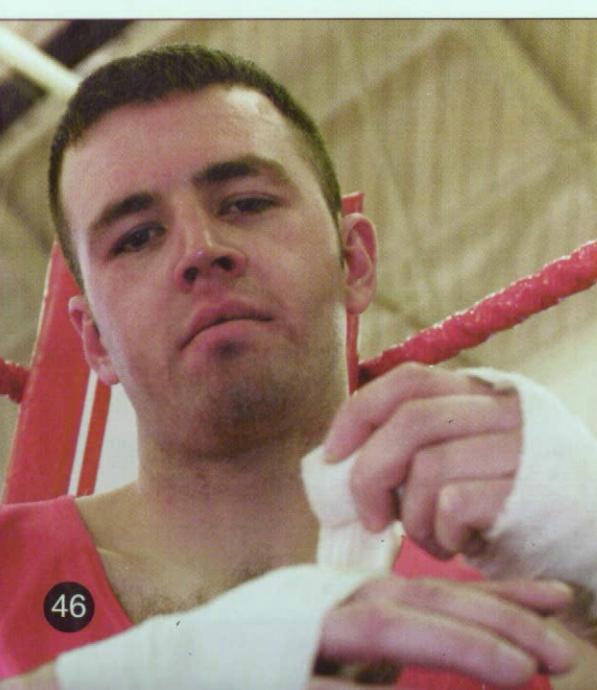
**Kendo, men's** – 1, Spr Fisk; 2, Sgt Howarth; 3, Maj David Worsley (QARANC).

**Women's** – 1, Cpl Leanne Gabitas (RLC); 2, Sgt Stace. **Weapons kata** – 1, Maj Worsley; 2, Sgt Howarth; 3, Spr Martin Pennock (RE).

**NETBALL:** Inter-Services championships – Army 48 RN 24; Army 37 RAF 42.

**SQUASH:** British Army (Germany) Major Unit championships – 1, 35 Engineer Regiment; 2, 32 Engineer Regiment.

**TENNIS:** Inter-Services B championships – 1, Army (Maj Darrell Amison (RLC), Cpl Jamie Friend (RLC), Lt Dan Loxton (AAC) and Lt Steve Alford (LD)); 2, RAF; 3, RN.



## Commonwealth contenders

FORMER Welsh schoolboy international Cpl James Whitfield (RLC) attached to 2 R Anglian) is hoping to end his first season on the Army boxing team on a high – by representing his country at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester this summer.

The chef, pictured left, put himself in serious contention for a place at the Games with an explosive display in the finals of the Welsh ABA National championships at the Afan Lido in Port Talbot.

Whitfield stopped the highly-rated Jamie Walters (Prince of Wales ABC)

midway through the second round of their light-heavyweight final. Hammering his opponent with three- and four-punch combinations every time he stepped forward, Whitfield was awarded the bout after amassing a 15-point lead.

Despite his emphatic victory, the Welshman's place at the Games is far from guaranteed, but a strong performance at the British Championships, due to be held in County Kerry, Ireland as *Soldier* went to press, should be enough to convince the Welsh selectors of his quality.

Whitfield's Army team-mate and the new English ABA flyweight champion, Spr Duncan Barriball (RE), will also be determined to prove a point in Ireland.

The 27-year-old won the first ABA title of his career in Barnsley last month and his coach, SSgt Vinny Powell, believes that he is capable of boxing his way in to the England squad.

"Barriball has always had the ability to win titles but in the past has lacked the self-belief to do so," he said. "Now that I have got him believing in himself I see no reason why he cannot go to Ireland and win the British title."

## SHORTS

## Football fundamentals

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

Course dates include: Level two – May 27 – June 2, June 24–30 and September 2–8; Level three – September 16–22. For further information contact Steve Stone on 01252 347962 or Mil 94222 2962.

## All hands on deck

CREW members are still needed to help sail a 67ft Joint Services sailing boat from Gosport to the Baltic via the North Cape, the White Sea and the Russian inland waterways.

The sailing expedition, named Exercise White Bear, begins later this month and will be divided into two-week legs with crew changes in Aberdeen, Bodo, Murmansk, Petrozavodsk, St Petersburg and Kiel. For further information contact Lt Cdr Andrew Spring on 01252 451817.

## International call-up

A REME recovery mechanic serving with 2 CS Regt RLC has broken into the international ranks of Rugby Union... with Malta. Selected as a trialist, LCpl Martin Cuschieri played alongside his brother in Malta's first international victory – an 8–0 win over Monaco.

Cuschieri has since featured in Malta's starting line-up in games against Bulgaria and Norway.

## Holden holds on to lead

THE Army recorded a credible second-place finish in the Belgian Army's annual climbing competition at the Klimax Sports Centre in Puurs. OCdt Joanne Holden (RMCS Shruivenham) led the British charge, beating competitors from Belgium, France, Holland and Germany to win the women's individual title.

## New king of the court

AN outstanding performance from the newly-crowned Army squash champion Pte Mick Grehan (RLC) helped guide the Army to the senior men's title at the Inter-Services championships at HMS *Temeraire*. The women's team then completed an Army double by convincingly winning their competition.

## Walker strolls to title

THE 1 (UK) Armoured Division ski championships at Les Contamines-Montjoie in the French Alps proved the perfect tonic for Cpl Marc Walker (1 GS Regt RLC). The Nordic skier exorcised the disappointment of just missing out on this year's Winter Olympic Games by retaining the individual nordic combination title for the fifth successive year.

# Gunners bang on target

Favourites win the battle of the big guns

7 Para RHA 42  
22 AD Regt RA 8

BOMBARDMENT and counter-bombardment were traded when 7 Para RHA clashed with 22 Air Defence Regiment RA in the Thames Water Challenge Cup final at Larkhill – the first all-gunner final in the Major Unit competition's history.

In recent years 7 Para RHA have dominated the championships and against the Welsh Air Defenders eventually rose to their imperious best, but not before their opponents had asserted themselves with a powerful passage of play and a little magic, writes Roger Thompson.

Indeed, when the Air Defence fly-half Cfn Gareth Slade-Jones, an Army cap and truly Welsh gunner, carved up the Para defence to score near the posts it briefly appeared that, just maybe, the good-size crowd was in for a shock.

But in the second half 7 Para's deep seam of rugby talent, which included ten Army caps in their starting line-up, told. A constant supply of good ball from the rampant pack too frequently allowed Gnr Rory Greenslade-Jones and SSgt Will Willcoxson to take out two or three defenders at a time.

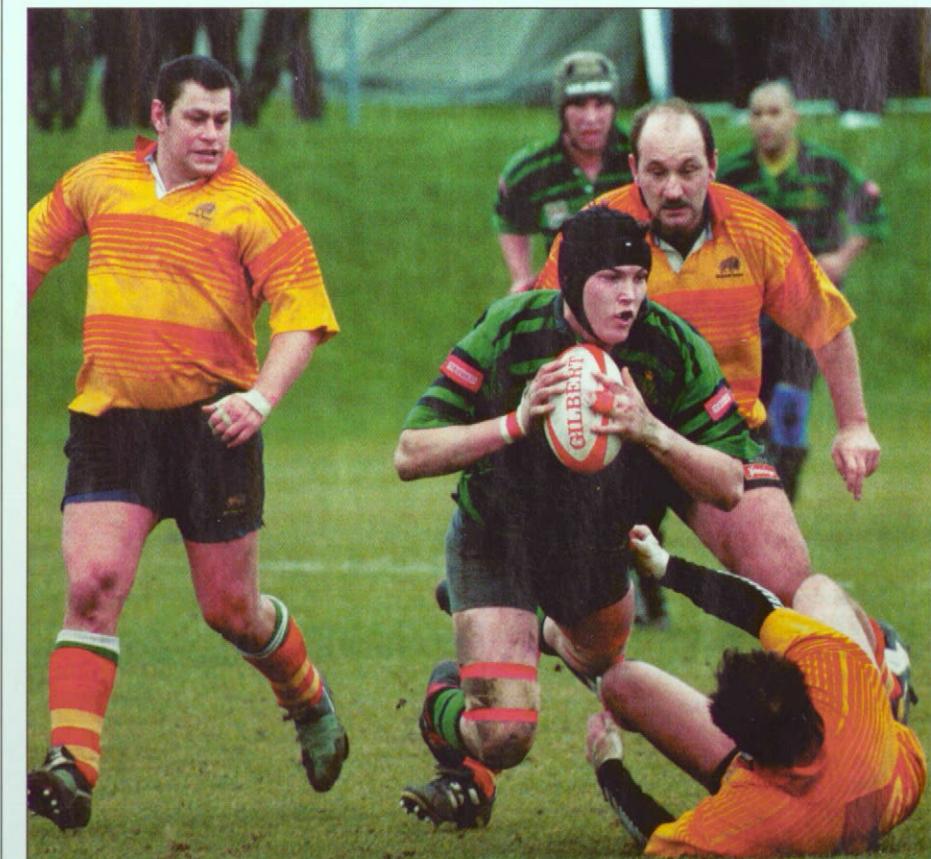
This unleashed, in the opinion of many, man-of-the-match Gnr Filipe Tagavagatini, a player of immense agility and guile, who dinked into free space before lighting the afterburners to sprint under the posts. He scored two memorable tries to sink a gallant Air Defence side that, despite injuries, never gave up.

Between the pack and Tagavagatini another Fijian, Gnr Derek Jang, coolly emerged from the Army under-21 scene to produce the smoothest of hinges alongside the venerable SSgt John Denwood at scrum-half.

A memorable final ended with a predictable but well deserved result. The Army Challenge Cup was returned in style to Lille Barracks, Aldershot for yet another year.



Determined: SSgt Will Willcoxson (7 Para RHA), centre, bursts through the 22 AD Regt defence



Ringing endorsement: Spr Darrel Bell (42 Survey Regt), centre, dominated proceedings

## FIXTURES

## Your sporting guide to May ...

**ANGLING:** 8–10 – Army boat championships (Langstone).

**ATHLETICS:** 8 – HQ NI divisional championships (TBC); 5 Div championships (Tidworth); 9 – 2 Div championships (Catterick); 16 – Zone BF(G) championships (Senkelager); 17 – London district championships (Barnet); Zone BF championships (Senkelager); 29 – 4 Div championships (Colchester); 30 – 4 Div championships (Aldershot).

**BADMINTON:** 9–10 – REME championships (Larkhill).

**CLIMBING:** 3 – Army championships (Rock City, Hull).

**CRICKET:** 1–3 – Army festival (RMAS); 2 – Army U25s v Cambridge University Crusaders (Pembroke Ground); 23 – Hampshire 2nd XI v Army (Hampshire Rose Bowl); 24 – Army v Stock Exchange (Aldershot); 26 – Army v Free Foresters (Aldershot); 27 – Army U25s v Wiltshire Development XI (Aldershot); 28 – Army v Isle of Wight CC (Aldershot).

**EQUITATION:** 4–6 – Aldershot Show: Inter-Services championships (Rushmoor Arena, Aldershot); 8–9 – Army horse trials (Tidworth).

**FOOTBALL:** 8 – REME Junior Craftsman's Cup final (UK v BA(G)) (Arborfield); Senior Craftsman's Cup final (UK v BA(G)) (Arborfield); 10 – R Signals v AAC (Blandford); Int Corps v RA (Chicksands); REME (UK) v REME (BA(G)) (Arborfield); 13 – RA v REME (Woolwich); R Signals v RE (Woolwich); RA v R Signals (Woolwich); RE v REME (Woolwich); 17 – RA v RE (Woolwich); REME v R Signals (Woolwich); 24 – RA inter-battery shield cup final (Woolwich).

**GOLF:** 12–17 – Army/inter-corps match-play championships (West Lancashire GC).

**HOCKEY:** 1 – Combined Services cup winners cup (TBC); 11–12 – County championship preliminary round (TBC); 25–26 – County championship finals (TBC).

**REAL TENNIS:** 12 – Seacourt v Army (Portsmouth).

**RUGBY LEAGUE:** 18–20 – RDG v SEAE; Harrogate Ladies v BA(G) Ladies; RLC v BA(G) (RASS).

**RUGBY UNION:** 4 – Army v Navy (Twickenham); 15 – Army Sevens (Aldershot).

**SHINTY:** 11 – The Highlanders v Glenorchy (Home).

**SHOOTING:** 1–6 – English open (Bisley); 2 – Inter-corps competition (Bisley).

**WINDSURFING:** 7–9 – Open championships (Weymouth).

# Sappers dig deep

## Incessant runners-up toast victory at Larkhill

42 Survey Regiment 24  
Armour Centre 13

THREE-times runners-up 42 Survey Regiment were finally able to celebrate winning the Thames Water-sponsored Minor Unit championship title after defeating the Armour Centre (Bovingdon) in an open final at Larkhill, writes Roger Thompson.

The Armour Centre, a rejuvenated club under the management of WO2 Kes Kvesic (KRH), put up a spirited resistance before their pack was worn down by a rugged sapper eight, which grew in confidence after LCpl Ben Jones kicked four penalties. Tries by LCpl Martin Reeves and Lt Dan Parkinson, one of which Jones converted, were real gems.

At half-time the Armour Centre, with a fierce gale at their backs, looked handily placed to overcome a 14–5 points deficit, but were found to be a few players short of an eight-pack.

They failed to use the extreme elements to any sort of advantage, most noticeably not putting the sappers under aerial pressure in front of their own posts.

In fairness the eventual champions were dominating the scrums and lineouts with Spr Darrel Bell outstanding. The 20-year-old, who has represented the Combined Services at under-21 level and is now picking up games with Newbury in National League division two, rang the changes and controlled the peels at every set-piece.

For the Armour Centre, Sgt Mark Bevan (QRH) and scrum-half Sgt Alan Ruddock (LD) both contributed telling performances.

This was a hard-fought final and either side would have been worthy champions. Referee John Voss and his touch judges controlled a potential hornets' nest with a remarkably light hand – even though that hand was, on two occasions, forced to flash the yellow card. At a time when referees of all persuasions and backgrounds are being forced to take refuge in the butts, this was a particularly good advertisement for the man in the middle.

## CONTACT US

**SOLDIER'S** sports desk welcomes your stories, results and opinions.

Write to: Andy Simms, Sports Editor, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU or e-mail him at [asimms@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:asimms@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

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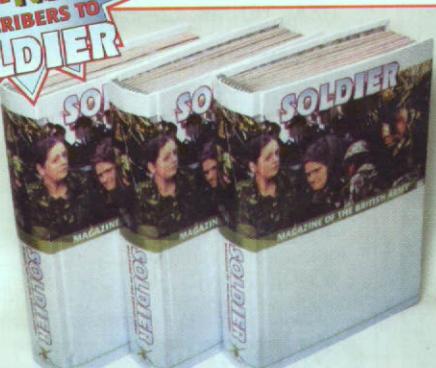
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# Army fire blanks

## Constantinople Cup dreams shattered

Army 0  
Royal Navy 0

MUCH to the frustration of head coach Capt Alan Higgins (R Signals), the Army reaffirmed the old football adage that it's harder to beat ten men than it is 11 during their Inter-Services title decider against the Royal Navy.

Having drawn 3-3 with the Royal Air Force, Higgins's squad took to the waterlogged pitch of Aldershot's Military Stadium knowing that a win would earn them the right to lift the Constantinople Cup – a piece of silverware that has eluded the Army's grasp for eight years.

And when LPT Steve O'Neill (HMS Caledonia) was shown a second yellow card on 66 minutes for a scything challenge on SSgt Peter Tagg (RAMC) it looked as though the odds were stacked firmly in the Army's favour.

But the Navy, who netted six times against the RAF and needed only a draw to be crowned champions, had clearly not read the script.

Indeed, despite the Army's numerical advantage it was the visitors who almost broke the deadlock on the 70-minute mark. Spotting the Army's goalkeeper Cpl Jim Panniers (RE) off his line, LPT Dave Wilson (HMS Glasgow) chanced his luck from long range with a speculative shot that bounced just wide of the right-hand post.

Rallied by the tireless running and



Getting stuck in: Pte Neal Bartlett (2 PWRR), centre, battles for the ball

Picture: Graeme Main

neat touches of Pte Neal Bartlett (2 PWRR) in the middle of the park the Army pushed frantically in search of the crucial strike, but a combination of misfortune and lack of conviction in front of goal conspired against them.

Cpl Gary Atkins (RE) was unlucky not to get on the scoresheet on 76 minutes when his lofted effort beat a stranded OM John Thompson (HMS Ranger) in the Navy goal but not the woodwork, and Cpl Alan Jordan (HCR) agonisingly fired a shot over the crossbar in the dying seconds when a flick-on from a LCpl Brian Wood (PWRR) corner bounced up unkindly in front of him.

### MATCH FACTS

ARMY	TOTAL SHOTS	NAVY
15		9
SHOTS ON TARGET		
2		1
CORNERS		
6		8
FOULS		
11		9
YELLOW CARDS		
5		
RED CARDS		
		1



Champion: Sgt Sean Olsson

## Olympian flies the Banner

GREAT Britain's hero of the 1998 Winter Olympic Games proved that he can still handle life in the fast lane by driving his two-man sled into first place at the Banner Business Supplies-sponsored Army bobsleigh championships in Lillehammer.

Pushed by Cpl Chris Gray (RTR), bronze medallist Sgt Sean Olsson (1 Para) stamped his authority on the competition, beating LCpl Dai Palmer and Tpr Neil Armstrong (both 1 QDG) into pole position by a clear second.

The final spot on the winners' podium was

claimed by veteran racers Lt Col Matt Perkin (KORBR) and brakeman SSgt Kenny Pereira (RAMC), who boast a combined age of 79.

◆ Bolstered by the return of Olympians LCpl Neil Scarisbrick (1 RTR) and Cpl Dean Ward (2 Para) the Army wrested the Scottish Courage-sponsored Inter-Services bobsleigh title from holders the Royal Air Force. The Army dominated proceedings, with Scarisbrick and Ward beating Royal Navy 1, driven by Great Britain's Mne Lee Johnston, to the individual team trophy and Sgt Olsson and Cpl Gray claiming third place.

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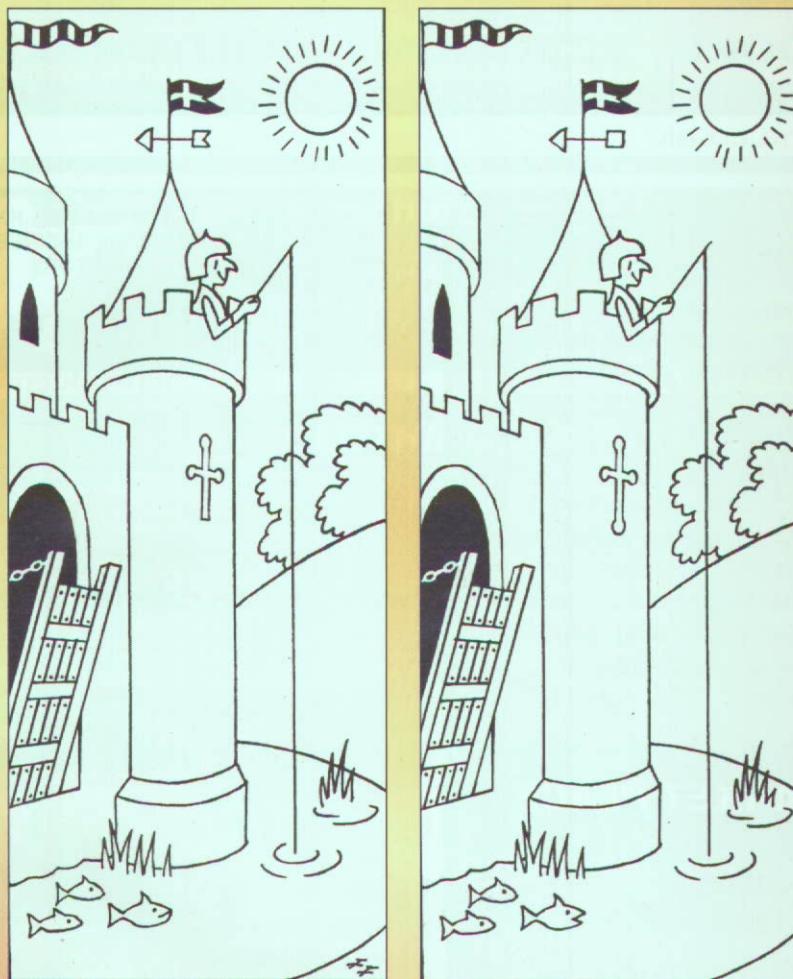
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No 726

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Smylie, 12 Tpt Sqn, 1 GS Regt RLC, BFPO 47 and Capt (QM) J B Duckworth, 7 ABSS, BFPO 30, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: Left-

hand man's boot and mouth; centre man's leg; right-hand man's jersey; boat tiller, transom and each oar; whale's tail-fin and water above it.

Frank Finch has made ten changes in detail to one of his drawings taken from our archive. Circle the differences in the lower image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 726, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by May 31.

*A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted.*

*Do not include anything else in your envelope.*

*First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.*

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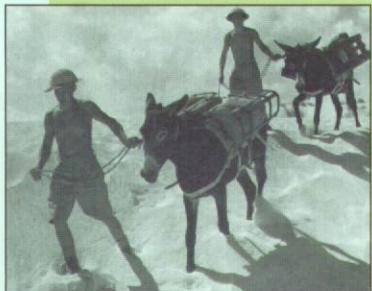
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The shortfalls in the medical services begin to hit the Brain Surgeons' Corps

Write your own funny caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in October 1961. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply. Entries – on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope – should reach us by May 31.



WHAT a droll lot you are. There were many variations on "ass" and "beach" themes for March's photo, left, but we chose "HQ Land's latest attempt to do away with vehicle mechanics was doomed to fail" from Cpl D C Ring, GS Coy, 6 Bn REME.

We also liked, although not enough to send them a prize, "Does the desert make my ass look big" from LCpl Sarah

Dunleavy, 14 Geo Sqn RE, Mönchengladbach; "I told you when you made out the indent that it wasn't for ASS90", from ex-WO2 R Taylor, Anfield; "Pte Jones ponders over whether or not to tell the RSM that camels have humps on their backs", from Cpl Thurston, 156 Pro Coy, RMP, Colchester; "Hey, John, lovely



ass", from A Vickers, 259 Sig Sqn, Episkopi; and "Lack of children led to a slow day for the 1st Donkey Corps undergoing initial training at Blackpool prior to deploying" from SSgt P D Hoyle, HQ RMPTS, Chichester.



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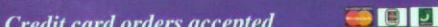
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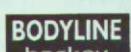
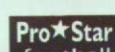


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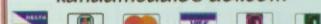
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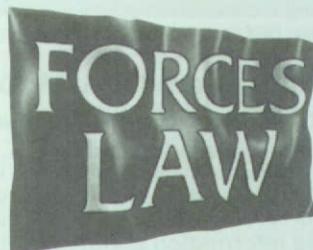
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## PEN PAL REPLIES:

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Email: [hshekyls@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:hshekyls@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Carol**, (50), 5ft with blonde hair and fair skin. Works full time and enjoys flower arranging, travel, dancing, cooking, sunny holidays, swimming, music, TV and homelife. Romantic person, loyal, truthful, impulsive and adaptable. Seeking pen pals, 40-55. P075

**Grace**, (70), 5'4", medium build. Enjoys writing, radio, TV and reading. Seeking pen pals of any age. P076

**Simon**, (23), with blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys socialising, drawing, football, reading and playing pool. In the armed forces, seeking pen pals to write to, any age group. P077

**David**, 5'7" with brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys extreme sports, clubs and meeting new people. Seeking female pen pals, 20-25. P078

**Gayle**, (22), 5'8" with brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys reading, listening to music of many types, walking the dog in the local countryside and TV. Seeking pen pals, 19-25. P079

**Rachel**, (17), 5'4" with blonde hair. Enjoys music, films, cooking, decorating and reading. Sensitive and kind, seeking pen pals, 19-30. P080

**Kelly**, (28), 5'2", slim build with blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys pubs, cinema, football, travel, meeting new people, socialising and having lots of fun. Seeking fun-loving soldiers who are up for a good laugh, 25-35. P081

**Marie**, (21), 5'3" with shoulder length brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys swimming, going to the gym, cross-stitch and having fun. Seeking pen pals, any age. P082

**Kym**, 5'6" with mid length brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys the gym, dancing, pubs, clubs and socialising. Seeking pen pals, 17-22. P083

**Debbie**, (42), 5'2" with blonde hair. A fun and bubbly air stewardess who enjoys foreign travel, eating out, most types of music, theatre and the cinema. Seeking male pen pals worldwide and serving officers, single or divorced with GSOH, 36-45. P084

**Rachel**, (23), 5'8" with blonde hair. Enjoys swimming, pubs, clubs, evenings in and out and the cinema. Seeking pen pals with similar interests and GSOH, 23-30. P085

**Julie**, (40), 5'6" with golden blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys all aspects of living a healthy lifestyle, cycling, running, walking, aerobics and gym work. Avid animal lover especially cats. Professional lady, ex-forces childhood background. Seeking pen pals, 35-45. P086

**Claire**, 5'6", slim, attractive with long red hair with blonde highlights and grey eyes. Works in a health club and enjoys clubs and pubs. Seeking pen pals of any age group. P087

**Gill**, (37), 5'4", slim with long dark chestnut hair and brown eyes. Loves animals, especially dogs, enjoys cosy evenings in and days out, antiques, the countryside, meeting interesting and unusual people. Seeking fit male soldiers with integrity, intelligence and GSOH for genuine friendship, 33-43. P088

**Sarah**, (29), slim with medium length blonde hair and blue eyes. Has two children and enjoys swimming, walking, gardening, pubs and clubs. Would love to hear from pen pals who are friendly, outgoing and good conversationalists, 27-37. P089

**Steven**, (31), 5'5" with fair hair. Non-smoker who enjoys most sports, travelling, evenings in and out and trying to keep fit. Seeking pen pals 26-35 who love children. P090

**Tracey**, (25), North West gal, looking to meet new friends and have some fun. Works at a gym and enjoys aerobics and socialising. Seeking pen pals of any age group. P091

**Sara**, (36), 5'2" with brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys reading, letter writing, cinema, cross-stitch, photography and history. GSOH and enjoys meets new people and would like to write to like-minded pen pals, 30-40. P092

**Julia**, (25), 5'3" brunette with long hair. Enjoys walking, going to the gym, cinema, eating out and enjoying life. Qualified hairdresser, down to earth with GSOH. Seeking pen pals, 25-40. P093

**Maxine**, (30), 5'3" with light brown hair and blue-grey eyes. Enjoys reading, walking, cinema and spending time with my two sons, 7 and 14 years old. Seeking honest and genuine pen pals who like children, 30-37. P094

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 14-way tie for 2nd Place (21 Goals, £378.57 each): LCpl JP Ashurst, 38 Engr Regt, Ripon; Lt Col P Carter, Comd Efficiency Unit, Salisbury; Cpl AP Cook, 1 Bn REME, Osnabruck; Pte AK Davies, 4 GS Med Regt, Aldershot; SSgt J Driver, JSSU (AN), Ayios Nikolaos; Capt MRP Mackenzie, 1 RGBW, Ballykinler; Sgt GDS Mahon, 16 CS Med Regt, Colchester; Capt CG Milne, 11 Signal Regt, Blandford; Sgt KA Murray, 150 Pro Coy RMP, Catterick; Cpl DJ Needham, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, Balford; Spr AM Newsome, 36 Engr Regt, Maidstone; LCpl MT Schofield, 2 CS Regt RLC, Gutersloh; Sgt DC Woodhouse, 667 (D&T) Sqn AAC, Middle Wallop; SSgt PAJ Yates, 205 Fd Hosp (V).

**16 March 2002**

4-way tie for 1st Place (25 Goals, £2925.00 each): Tpr RNF Houghton, QRH, Sennelager; LCpl M James, 2 PWRR, Aldershot; Sgt JH Marshall, HQ Dhekelai Garrison; Cpl DL Melia, 36 Engr Regt, Maidstone  
 21-way tie for 5th Place (24 Goals, £180.95 each): LCpl LJ Amos, HCR, Windsor; Cpl EA Barrass, 89 PCU RLC, Heidelberg; Tpr AJ Boyd,

CATC Armd Sqn, Warminster; Capt RJ Carter, RMAS, Sandhurst; Capt JL Day, HQ Ashchurch Stn; Pte SMA Deacon, 1 WFR, Omagh; Sgt BJ Devlin, 4 Bn REME, Bordon; Cpl A Dryland, ATR Pirbright; Pte KW Farquharson, 1 BW, Fallingbostel; Capt BS Haggerty, HQ DCSA, Corsham; Maj AM Hulme, HCR, Windsor; SSgt WM Lawie, 1 (UK) ADSR, Herford; PTE G Lynch, 1 RHA, Tidworth; Capt MS McClellan, RAC Centre Regt, Bovington; Sgt GJ Nicolls, 1 RHA, Tidworth; SSgt ME Peebles, Army Apprentices Coll, Arborfield; Sgt P Scott, 14 Regt RA, Larkhill; Cpl KJP Slater, 14 Sig Regt (EW), Brawdy; Sgt JA Spencer, 3 RHA, Hohne; SSgt BJ Stoddart, 1 GH, Warminster; Cpl TG Tilcock, 21 Engr Regt, Osnabruck

**23 March 2002**

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 24-way tie for 5th Place (20 Goals, £158.33 each): WO2 P Almond, 1 RRF, Celle; Sgt P Batty, 7 Air Asslt Bn REME, Wattisham; WO2 DW Boyes, Rhine Area Sp Unit, Rheindahlen; Cpl LM Cole, 1 Regt AAC, Gutersloh; Cpl LA Corlett, 4 Armd Bde Sig Sqn, Osnabruck; Cpl

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**30 March 2002**

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 22-way tie for 5th Place (21 Goals, £172.73 each): SGT J Ashford, AFCO Mansfield; Lt Col L Bale, MOD COMDT, London; Sgt JG Bethell, HQ BF Cyprus; Sgt JS Boylan, 1 CS Med Regt, Munster; LCpl PWF Casey, BATU Suffield; WO1 SV Chancellor, 101 Pro Coy RMP, Rheindahlen; WO2 AH Colderley, 14 Regt RA, Larkhill; Maj RG Corbey, RSC Pirbright; Cpl MA Cordy, Rhine Area Sp Unit, Rheindahlen; Lt Col JG Davies, DEME (A) ESS Team, Arborfield; WO2 SA Dicks, RMSM; Cpl MW Duffy, 2 Para RHA, Aldershot; Pte RH Evans, Army Foundation Coll, Harrogate; Maj RJ Hare, RHQ AFNORTH, AFCENT; Cpl J McAllister, 1 BW, Fallingbostel; Cpl K McLean, 32 Engr Regt, Hohne; Sgt IY Patterson, Normandy Band, Catterick; Lt FK Peebles, 10/78 AEC, Tidworth; Sgt SJ Pengelly, Royal Sch of Signals, Blandford; Capt KM Smith, 25 Trg Sp Regt RLC, Deepcut; Maj N Sutherland, 42 Engr Regt (GEO), Hermitage; SSgt Tikaprasad Rai, 10 Tpt Regt RLC, Colchester

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## REUNIONS

**Middlesex Regiment (DCO):** Annual reunion at the Victory Services Club, London, May 11, for members and families. Further details from Ron Morris 020 89497605.

**North Irish Horse Centenary:** Reunions planned for May 11-12 at Victory Services Club, London; May 25-26 at Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry; and Sept 7-8 at Shane's Castle, Antrim. Details from PSAO, 69 (NIH) Yeo Sig Sqn(V), TA Centre, Limavady, BFPO 802 (tel 028 77721577) or PSAO, B (NIH) Sqn QOY(V), Dunmore Park, BFPO 806 (tel 028 90420545).

**Combined Cavalry Old Comrades:** 78th annual parade and Service, May 12, at Hyde Park, London (assemble 1030). Ring 0207 414 5233 for details.

**2 Para, Operation Corporate,** Falklands 20th anniversary: Reunion and drumhead service to be held at Meanee Barracks, Colchester, May 24. Details from Capt Dave Lee on 01206 783275.

**Queen's Royal Regiment and associated regiments:** Reunion dinner June 1, Farnham Drill Hall, Surrey. Contact Stuart Browning, 8 Littleford Lane, Shamley Green, Guildford GU5 0RH or tel 01483 892474.

**Amphibious Bombardment Association:** Reunion and open day, June 15, (starts 1000). Bar and curry lunch. ABA members and ex-NGS wishing to attend contact CRS Jepson on 01202 20 2276.

**The Armourer's Association:** Reunion for armourers, artificers weapon and gun fitters, REME, RAOC and RM, serving and retired to be held at Victory Services Club, London on June 22. Details from C Dennis on 01905 755334 or [willow18@supanet.com](mailto:willow18@supanet.com)

**653 Squadron AAC,** 60th anniversary and open day: Reunion for members and families on Jun 22. Join in activities and catch up with old friends. Details from Capt Rob Phayre on 01449 728341.

**Royal Leicestershire Regiment:** Reunion of Royal Tigers Association and Leicestershire Branch of Royal Anglian Regiment Association in Leicester on June 22 and Royal Tigers Wood, June 23. By ticket only, details from TA Centre, Ulverscroft Road, Leicester LE4 6BY.

**2 Sqn 39 Sig Regt (V):** Reunion for ex-members and regulars, in Dundee on June 29. Contact L McGann [dunderex2sqn@aol.com](mailto:dunderex2sqn@aol.com) or 07712 431278.

**Bailleul WOs' & Sgts' Mess REME diamond jubilee:** Summer function on July 5 is part of weekend activities. For details and returns contact WO2 (CSM) Wright 01189 763650.

**Medical Support Unit, Hereford:** 2nd reunion dinner, July 5. Contact Sgt Dek Lower 0207 4148820 or [deklower@aol.com](mailto:deklower@aol.com)

**Cheshire Regiment Association, 7th Berlin Northern Ireland:** Reunion for past members and wives to be held in Ellesmere Port, July 6. Tickets and information from Alan Gregson 01244 301478 or [ag.gregson@talk21.com](mailto:ag.gregson@talk21.com)

**Northants Regimental Association and**

**Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Northants Branch):** Reunion in Northampton on July 6-7. Entrance by ticket only. Details from TA Centre, Clare Street, Northampton NN1 3JQ.

**Final Junior Leaders' RAC Bovington, July 1992-93:** Reunion at Beeches Family Club, Bulford July 13 for all junior leaders, staff and families. For details, contact Adam Dymocks, 30 Hampshire Close, Bulford SP4 9HL, tel 01980 553259 or e-mail [dymocks@ntworld.com](mailto:dymocks@ntworld.com)

**56 Signal Squadron (V), Eastbourne:** Freedom of Eastbourne parade, reunion dinner, Jul 13. Information from PSAO, 56 Sqn Sig Sqn (V), TA Centre, Seaside, Eastbourne BN22 0TQ.

**Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW:** Regimental association reunions to be held on July 13-14 at **Salisbury** (call 01722 414536 for details) and July 27-28 at **Reading** (call 01722 414536).

**RGBW/Glosters:** Reunion of WOs' and Sgts' Mess (past and present) July 20 at The Moat

House hotel, Gloucester. Call Tim Godden on 01453 835019 or [tim\\_godden@lineone.net](mailto:tim_godden@lineone.net)

**Fusilier Gathering 2002:** Hosted by 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers at St George's Barracks, Luffenham, the gathering will take place on Sept 14-15. Regional details from Northumberland, 01665 510211; Warwickshire, 01926 491653; London, 0207 4885610; Lancashire, 0161 7642208; ex-3 RRF should call 0207 8204042.

**London Borough of Battersea, Clapham Junction Army Cadets 1942:** Reunion planned for Sept 21 to celebrate 60 years since formation of the unit. Details from Maj B Joannou, Army Cadet Centre, 27 St John's Hill, London SW11 1TT or 020 72283602.

**Infantry Boys/Junior Leaders' Battalion 1950s-70s:** Eighth annual reunion for those serving at Tuxford, Harrogate, Plymouth, Oswestry or Shorncliffe, Oct 12, at The Royal Rifle Volunteers Training Centre, Milton Keynes. Send SAE for details to H Johnson, 35 Maes-y-Sarn, Pentyrch, Cardiff CF15 9QQ or 02920 891274.

## Sapper band to play at Hohne concert

BRITISH and German charities are to benefit from a concert by the Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers at Hohne on June 8. The Anglo-German event, organised by locally-based 32 Engineer Regiment, will be held in the Sports Halle Heistercamp in Bergen town. It is open to the public and seating and beer and refreshment tents will be on site. The charities to benefit from the afternoon concert (it starts at 1400 and will last about two hours) will be Homestart UK and a local German charity for disabled children.

## APPOINTMENTS

**Brigadiers:** S J L Roberts, RCDS, Jan 4; R L Scott-Bowden, Comd 52 (Lowland) Bde, Dec 12; A J N Graham, D RP Army, Dec 17; M F N Mans, ACOS Plans HQ Land, Dec 17; D M Santa-Olalla, Comd 2(SE) Bde, Dec 17; D R Bill, RCDS, Jan 7; A C Mantell, RCDS, Jan 7; N R Parker, RCDS, Jan 7; M J Rutledge, RCDS, Jan 7; T N Tyler, RCDS, Jan 7; M D Wood, RCDS, Jan 7; P J Mostyn, ACOS(Pol), Jan 8; R M M Sykes, DCC(A), Mar 28; S J Tetlow MBE, Dir Directorate EME, Feb 25.

**Colonels:** D G Benest, Col Def Studies DG D&D, Feb 25; P A R Rouse, Col MO4 DMO, Mar 4; T C S Bonas, Dep Comd, HQ Gutersloh Gar, Mar 4; D N Challes Col Force Dev HQ DRA, Mar 4.

**Lieutenant Colonels:** R W Barnes, Kings, NDC, Feb 19; M H Bazire RLC, DGES(L), Dec 10; C C S Booth LI, HQ RRC Italy, Feb 4; A L S Boswell, A and SH, HQ RRC Italy, May 6; I J Bradshaw, R Signals, HQ ARRC, Maj 27; D W Brown RGJ, MA/AG, Feb 4; G Bullivant, Int Corps, IMS, June 5; S A Burley RE, HQ TSC(G), Mar 25; W A Common RHF, DST, July 19; S Davies QLR, HQ 3(UK) Div, Jan 28; P Dennis RGBW, HQ DLO, Mar 4.

G Draper AGC(ETS), CB (Pers), Feb 4; A D Duncan REME, D/Bowman, Apr 22; T J Dyer RA, HQ SOinC(A), Jan 8; W H M Ferguson RE, MES (Wks), Jan 21; J A L Forsyth QRH, RMCS, Mar 4; D A Gibson AGC(SPS), FMOD Berlin, Jan 6; R P Giles, R Signals, DJW, Fen 4; D J Greenwood RA, PJHQ(UK), Apr 15; D Hopwood AGC(ETS), HQ Land, Mar 25; A G Hughes QRL, MA/AGCS, Jan 18; C D S Ince RE, HQ SFOR, Jan 4; S A Jasper RTR, HQ

TSC(L), Mar 25; J E Knowles RLC, DMCS, Apr 15; J S Lawton, AAC, DAAv, Oct 22.

J G O Lowe RLC, HQ DLO, July 8; A R Macdonald PWRR, HQ KFOR, Feb 22; N Marshall RA, HQ Land, Mar 18; S W Marshall AAC, DGD&D, June 10; J K McKee, R Signals, HQ NI, Apr 29; R A McPherson RA WSU, Dec 11; A M W Mortimer LI, DOMA, Mar 18; M Nicholls, Kings, MONUC, June 30; R M Orchard RE, MES(Wks), Dec 3; P A Pendlebury RE, APC, Nov 26; R A J Phasey, Gren Gds, P/Alexander, Jan 21; M H K Quaile RA, DPA, Mar 4; N J Ridout AGC(RMP), DA Tashkent, Mar 1; C J Rose RE, SHAPE, July 8.

N A Russell AGC(SPS), BMATT SL, Apr 15; P R Sartain LI, IMATT SL, Mar 27; R J Semple RE, D Def Pol, Feb 18; A J N Simpkins AAC, DAAv, Apr 4; I G Standen, R Signals, HQ SOinC(A), Apr 8; K M Toal AGC(SPS), JDCC, Feb 25; D P Turner AAC, DLD, June 20; R N H Wade, A and SH, HQ ARRC, June 19; M D Wentworth RA, HQ MND(SW), Feb 20; A J White RA, HQ AG, Feb 25; J P Wilson, R Signals, DGD&D, Mar 25; R P Wilson, R Signals, BMATT SL, Mar 8; T R Wilson QDG, BMM Kuwait, June 12.

## SOLDIER COMPETITIONS

**Salt Lake 2002 (Feb)** Winners: J Bushell, Chesham; S Harvey, West Sussex; WO1 Davies, HQ 5 Div Shrewsbury (Answer: Sgt Sean Olsson).

**Ghost Recon (Mar)** Winners: 2nd Lt M Rodger, Inverness; 244 Cpl Blake, BFPO 30; K Russell, Swindon; WO2 Morgan, BFPO 40; R Wileman, Melbourne.

# MS support group's there for you

## ● Confidential help and advice

EVERY year a surprising number of members of the Armed Forces are diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and the days following diagnosis are usually traumatic.

Can life ever be the same again? What will the effect be on career and family?

Ten years ago Royal Air Force officers Flt Lt Kim Bartlett and Flt Lt Suzanne Crighton and Sue Smith of the Royal Navy were diagnosed with MS.

In turning to each other for support, they decided to form an organisation for other Service people diagnosed with MS. Within weeks, Mutual Support, the Armed Forces Support Group of the MS Society, was formed. Since its conception with just three members,

Mutual Support has grown to more than 200 retired and serving personnel. Its aim is exactly as the name implies, to provide mutual support to its members. Recognized by the MS Society UK, it has charitable status and works closely with the MS Society UK. Its welfare team extends throughout the UK and offers support to individuals from the moment of diagnosis.

Statistics and averages suggest that there may be as many as 150 Servicemen and women diagnosed with MS who are still not in touch with Mutual Support.

Admitting you have MS is difficult... there is a natural reluctance to acknowledge that your career may be in jeopardy. The first days and weeks after diagnosis can be critical and that is where Mutual Support can offer the

greatest support. Our members are treading, or have trodden, the path that the newly-diagnosed must follow and their experiences and advice can offer much advice, comfort and information. This alone can allay many fears and anxieties. Membership of Mutual Support is open to serving and former members of the Armed Forces and reserves. Dependents and carers are also welcome, as are other Service personnel who would like to help.

If you need confidential help and support contact welfare co-ordinator Richard Ludford on 01666 824709, fax 01666 825076 or at work on 01249 890381 ext 6657, or by e-mail to [rludford@aol.com](mailto:rludford@aol.com). Alternatively, contact chairman Roger Langdon on 01895 815668 ([aloj55@gtnet.gov.uk](mailto:aloj55@gtnet.gov.uk)).

## SEARCHLINE

**BFES teacher Darrylyn Lawton, Detmold 1963**, later married Capt Heyer-Lyford, sought by teacher training college friend Diane Maxwell, née Brettell, 01634 722097.

**Ex-REs Phil Griffiths and Dave Clements, Cassino Troop, B Sqn, Junior Leaders RE, 1960**, Old Park Barracks, Dover, please contact Stan Hooper on 01482 829380.

**"Early Knees" and "Early Legs" June 1982** at the Joint Services Military Rehab Unit RAF Chessington, especially inmates of Huts 12, 14, 15 and 16. Please contact Steve King who "escaped" in 1983. [s24456544k@aol.com](mailto:s24456544k@aol.com)

**Intake 1/93, Owens Tp ACC/RLC School of Catering**, mates sought for reunion at wedding Aug 17. [darren.wadham@btinternet.com](mailto:darren.wadham@btinternet.com)

Engraved silver bracelet "Major JAS Armstrong, EARA to JASA", former PoW at Rotenburg Fulda, bought by T Travis, information to [trebor@travist.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:trebor@travist.freeserve.co.uk)

Mates of Lee "Troll" Tuson, formerly of 47 AD

**RCT, Colchester 1979-85**, interested in a reunion next year are asked to contact [mrstrollreunite@hotmail.com](mailto:mrstrollreunite@hotmail.com)

**Dave Barley, ex-7 Armd Div Sig Sqn RPC, Soltau**, sought by Chalky White. Information to [chris@palacio-white.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:chris@palacio-white.freeserve.co.uk) or tel 01380 724408.

**Ex-R Signals SSM G T "Jim" Reeves**, Allied Forces NE, NEFDA, Kolsaas, Oslo 1982-86, is asked to contact USAF SSgt Gary Lee Maloy at [gary.maloy@ovds.no](mailto:gary.maloy@ovds.no)

**Former WO1 Robert F Stonier**, D Tp, 3 Sqn, 8 Sig Regt, Catterick 1992 sought by old friend in Canada via [auld@primus.ca](mailto:auld@primus.ca)

**Freiwillige Feuerwehr** at Klixbuell, near Niebull, North Friesland, believe their flag was taken as a souvenir by British troops towards end of the Second World War. If you can help with any information contact Derek Wareham, 11 Bishop Laney Drive, Ely, Cambs CB6 1BZ.

All ex-E&F Sqn JTR/AAC 1963-65, including

Gerry Knight, Eric Inge and Richard Spalding, sought for reunion in January 2003. Tel 01977 730874 or [petermurthick@hotmail.com](mailto:petermurthick@hotmail.com)

Veterans of the **Battle of the Wesel Pocket**, March 9, 1945, who would be interested in a reunion to be held next year, possibly at Windsor, are asked to contact former Sgt Frank Goldsby 0121 6325388.

**John W Boston**, ex-3 Bn, Queen's Regiment 1969-78, living in California, wants to contact old mates via [amorgosboston@cox.net](mailto:amorgosboston@cox.net)

**Michael De Costa**, ex-1st Bn, Queen's Regiment, seeks fellow trainees from Bassingbourn, Aug 1980 to Jan 1981, also copy of group photo pre-passing out parade. Replies to [michaeldecosta133@msn.com](mailto:michaeldecosta133@msn.com)

**14243132 David Goldstein**, 652 Corps of Royal Engineers 1942-47, including service in India, is seeking contact with any old Army buddies. Write c/o 1102 SW Heather Street, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34983, USA or via e-mail [abgrape@adelphia.net](mailto:abgrape@adelphia.net)

## Useful numbers

**Army Benevolent Fund** 020 7591 2000; [www.armybenevolentfund.com](http://www.armybenevolentfund.com)

**Army Families Advice Bureau** 01722 436569

**Army Welfare Service** 01722 436565

**Army Families Federation** 01980 615525; [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

**British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association** 020 8590 1124; [www.blesma.org.uk](http://www.blesma.org.uk)

**Confidential support lines:**

**UK** 0800 731 4880

**Germany** 0800 1827 395

**Cyprus** 080 91065

**Bosnia** 0800 731 4880

**Others** UK 1980 630854

**Operations worldwide** Paradigm Homelink Access Number \*2999@thePINprompt  
**Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society**

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

**Family Escort Service** 020 7463 9249

**Gulf Veterans Association** 0191 230 1065

**Joint Service Housing Advice Office** 01722 436575

**Mutual Support** (Forces Multiple Sclerosis support group) 01666 824709

**National Gulf Veterans and Families**

**Association Office** (0900-1700) 01482

808730; 24-hour helpline on 01482 833812; [www.ngvfa.com](http://www.ngvfa.com)

**Regular Forces Employment Association** 0207 321 2011; [www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

**Royal British Legion's Legionline** 0845

7725 725; [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**RBL Industries Vocational Assessment**

**Centre** 01622 717202/718484; [www.rbl.co.uk](http://www.rbl.co.uk)

**St Dunstan's Home** for blind ex-Servicemen

and women 020 7723 5021; [www.st-dunstans.org.uk](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk)

**Samaritans** 08457 90 90 90

**Service Children's Education** 01980 618244

**Services Cotswold Centre** 01225 810358

**SSAFA Forces Help** 020 7403 8783; [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

**SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service** 01722 436400

**Veterans' Agency encompassing former**

**Veteran's Advice Unit and War Pensions Agency** 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044

1253 866043 (from overseas); [www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk)

**Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help)** in Germany 02161 47 2272; from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

**WRVS** General enquiries 02920 739906; [www.wrvs.org.uk](http://www.wrvs.org.uk)

## DATES

## MAY

18: Massed bands, Firepower Museum, Woolwich, 1800.  
24-26: Putting on the Blitz, Firepower Museum, Woolwich.

## JUNE

1: Trooping the Colour, Major General's Review, Horse Guards.  
4: Queen's Golden Jubilee military tattoo at Stowe School, Buckinghamshire. Organised by ABF and SSAFA-Forces Help.  
7-8: Inaugural Manchester Military Tattoo, Manchester Evening News Arena (box office 0161 930 8000).  
8: Trooping the Colour, Colonel's Review. Tickets: 020 7414 2479.  
8: Falkland Islands 20th anniversary liberation memorial service, Cenotaph, Market Drayton.  
15: Queen's Birthday Parade.  
20: Evening lecture: Capture of Stanley – 2 Para's final action, by Brig David Chaudler, Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot. Tickets from 01252 349619.  
23: Colchester Garrison Country Day (information on 01206 782020 or (mil) 94651 2020).

## JULY

1-4: Overlord Military Vehicle Show, Horndean, nr Portsmouth ([www.solentmvt.co.uk](http://www.solentmvt.co.uk))  
17-21: War and Peace Show. World's largest military vehicle gathering at Hop Farm Country Park, Beltring, Kent.

## AUGUST

2-24: Edinburgh Military Tattoo, [www.edintattoo.co.uk](http://www.edintattoo.co.uk)

♦ If you want to help the Army help David Shepherd help Zambia's dwindling national herd of elephant, you can sign up for a £60-a-head black-tie dinner and auction at the Madejski Stadium in Reading on June 8. Main items under the hammer will be an original Shepherd painting, a signed print and a safari in Zambia.

Proceeds will fund another Exercise Helping Hand (see Diary, Feb), under which REME soldiers repair, rebuild and service vehicles, radios and boats used by Zambian rangers to combat the poachers. They have already saved the authorities more than £100,000 in garage bills.

To buy a ticket, book a table, or find out more, ring Maj Nick Weller on 0118 9763482 or e-mail him at [thewellers@tesco.net](mailto:thewellers@tesco.net)

♦ Farriers from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment took part in the horse-shoeing competition at the National Shire Horse Show in Peterborough. Stars of the event were about 2,000 shires.

## Museum in battle tour business

A programme of battlefield tours based on its unique archival resources has been launched by the Imperial War Museum in association with Tours with Experts Ltd.

The knowledge of museum staff and other international experts will also be drawn on for a series of trips beginning with Vimy Ridge and the Somme from July 25 to 28. It will be led by military historian and TV documentary maker Malcolm Brown, writer of many authoritative IWM books on the First World war and its campaigns.

Other destinations during the autumn include the Western Front, Gallipoli, D-Day and Normandy battlefields, the Channel Islands and Thailand-Burma.

For a Battlefield Tours with Experts brochure or to make reservations, telephone 0151 520 1290.

## Guards' Royal opening

FIRST visitors to be shown around the refurbished Guards Museum in Wellington Barracks, London were the Queen – pictured below with the curator, Capt (Retd) David Horn, Gren Gds – and the Duke of Edinburgh.

The display the Queen is looking at depicts her Coronation.

Lighting and exhibits have been brought up to date in the museum, the reopening of which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the Queen as Colonel of the Grenadier Guards.

Picture: Sgt Shaun Lewis



PRINCESS Muna of Jordan, left, widow of the late King Hussein of Jordan and mother of the present king, is pictured with Col Iona Leith-Macgregor, Colonel Commandant of Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, following a service in the Garrison Church, Aldershot, to celebrate 100 years of Army nursing. The QARANC has enjoyed a close professional relationship with the Jordanian Army Medical Services for many years.

Princess Muna also met Col Bridget McEvilly, Director Army Nursing Services and Matron-in-Chief (Army), and Corps RSM, WO1 Karen Quinn.



## Green Jackets' VCs featured in new display

Curator Ken Grey, left, shows off 12 Victoria Crosses in a new display in the Royal Green Jackets Museum in Winchester. The exhibit

lists every member of the antecedent regiments of RGJ to be awarded the medal, while a touch screen allows visitors to read the

individual citations. Among the 59 regimental VC recipients are the only father and son VC to have served in the same regiment.



Going at a lick: Cpl Lee Robson and Cpl Martin McQuillan, both serving with the British Army Training Liaison Staff Kenya, cycle across the wide-open spaces of the country's Chalbi salt desert during a 700km fund-raising marathon. Nine members of BATLSK took to their saddles to raise £2,000 for the African Medical and Research Foundation, which will use the money to improve health and sanitation facilities for the thousands who live in Kibera, Nairobi's largest slum. The charity's director, Lt Col Alexander Héroys, a former Grenadier, can be contacted at AMREF UK, 4 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7HJ, tel 020 7201 6070 or via the website [www.amref.org](http://www.amref.org)

## Jubilee Medal finds a place in the order of precedence

PERSONNEL receiving the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal have commented on its size... it is appreciably smaller than other medals currently issued.

But a glance at the reference books reveals that the four previous jubilee commemoratives have been roughly the same size. The first, issued by Queen Victoria in 1887, was 30mm in diameter, 2mm smaller than the Silver Jubilee Medal of 1977 and the 2002 version. By way of contrast, the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal is, in common with other gallantry decorations, campaign honours and general service awards, 36mm.

Incidentally, for those with other medals already on their chests, the Golden Jubilee is fifth in precedence. First are British orders such as the DSO, OBE and MBE; second are British decorations (eg DSC and MC); third, British gallantry and distinguished

conduct medals (DCM, DSM, MM); fourth, war medals, including UN and Nato in tour date order; fifth, Golden Jubilee; sixth, MSM; seventh, Accumulated Campaign Service Medal; and eighth, the LS and GC Medal.



Smaller by far: From left to right are the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal, the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, which will be mounted in front of both

## Still serving after all these years

IS this the face of Britain's longest-serving ex-National Serviceman? Lt Col John Hamilton RAMC, right, joined the Royal Air Force as a National Serviceman in December 1955. Two years later he went to medical school and in 1961 joined the Territorial Army, serving for 12 years as a private in the Honourable Artillery Company.

John was commissioned into the RAMC and served with several units. He has just started his sixth and final operational tour, with 22 Field Hospital in Sipovo, Bosnia.

He is reluctantly looking forward to his last day of service in July, when he reaches his 65th birthday. John reckons that if anyone currently serving can beat his claim, he'll buy them a pint. Over to you.



## Legends of the regiments and corps

34

Falkland Islands Museum, Stanley



"This is 2 Para": How the British Army cleared way to Bluff Cove settlement

## Phone tab paid off

AN old-fashioned crank-handle telephone preserved in the Falklands Museum in Stanley played a small but crucial part in the war of 1982.

Following the crucial victory by 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment at Goose Green, 5 Brigade's Brig Tony Wilson needed to know what was happening at Bluff Cove, farther down the coast. This required serious "tabbing" by his troops.

But camp manager Brook Hardcastle came up with a suggestion that saved the soldiers miles of foot-slogging: use the camp telephone still in operation between Swan Inlet and Fitzroy to find out what was happening in the Fitzroy and Bluff Cove area.

### 'THEY'VE LEFT'

CSgt Morris of 2 Para cranked the handle and 14 miles away 13-year-old Michelle Binnie called her father, settlement manager Ron Binnie, to the phone. "This is the British Army," said Morris. "Can you speak freely?"

"Yes," replied Binnie.

"Are there any Argentinians near you?"

"No. They blew up the bridge at Bluff Cove and left."

"Fine, we will be with you shortly."

And with that 78 heavily-armed men crammed into the only surviving Chinook and deployed to Fitzroy and Bluff Cove to regroup for the final push on Stanley.

The Falkland Islands Museum in Britannia House, Ross Road West, Stanley, is open Tue to Fri 1000-1600 and 1400-1600, and 1400-1600 at weekends. There is an admission fee. E-mail [falklands.museum@horizon.co.fk](mailto:falklands.museum@horizon.co.fk)

# Switched on . . .



## ALL MAPPED OUT

WITH more than 38,000 programmed locations, the Traveller is the ideal in-car companion. Simply enter where you are travelling from, and to, and it will direct you round every roundabout and junction as you drive.

The route information is supplied by the AA and is stored on a plug-in digital map, which can be upgraded in the future. It also provides a mass of additional journey information including cost of journey and estimated time of arrival.

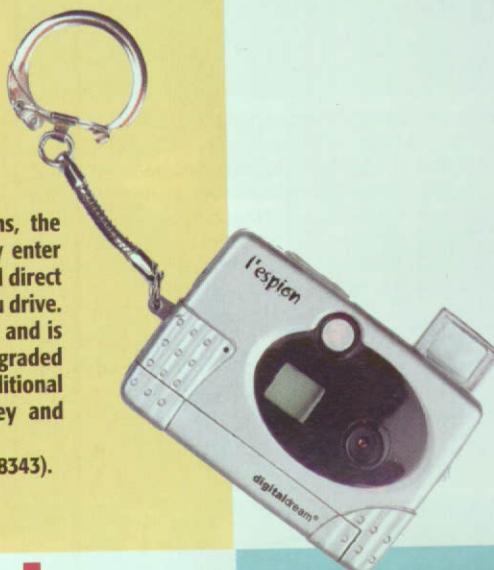
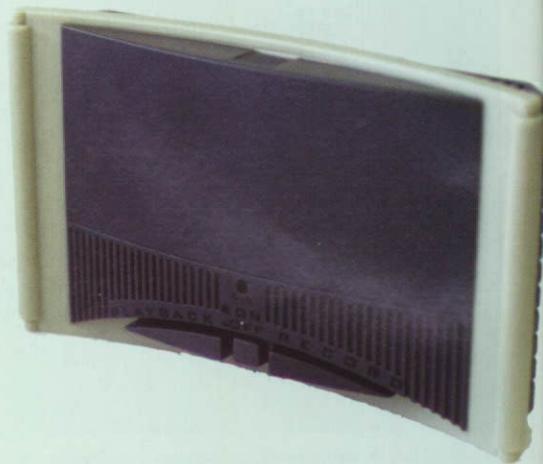
① £80, from [www.gadgetshop.com](http://www.gadgetshop.com) (0800 7838343).

## GET THE PICTURE

MEASURING just 58mm x 40mm, the L'espion digital camera (below) brings new meaning to the term pocket-sized.

As well as being able to store 20 high-resolution images (352 x 288 pixels) or 80 low-resolution pictures (176 x 144 pixels), the camera also features a web-cam and an ingenious short video clip function.

① £39.95, from [www.firebox.com](http://www.firebox.com) (0870 2414289).



# Game on . . .

## F1 2002, XBOX

EA Sports' *F1 2002* is the first game on any platform to include the complete 2002 FIA Formula One championship, allowing gamers to take control of new kids on the grid Toyota.

And although Toyota may struggle to make an impression on the constructors' championship this season, expect *F1 2002* to race to the top of the gaming charts.

Taking full advantage of the new technological capabilities of the Xbox, EA have married the excitement, glamour and drama that is Formula One with breathtaking new graphical detail and incredibly competitive artificial intelligence.

Every driver on the track will fight, battle and react to maintain their current position, while constantly looking for the next opportunity to overtake, creating a high pressure racing experience.

A feeling intensified by the fact that *F1 2002* runs at a higher resolution and higher frame rate than any other F1 game released to date.

But perhaps most impressive technically are the wet weather visuals, which include raindrops on the camera that reverse the image you see through them and fade and blur with time, and reflections of all the cars on the road surface.

**VERDICT:** Laps ahead of the competition. 9/10

## OUT NOW



## WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN . . .

FANCY yourself as the next Jenson Button? Electronic Arts are offering wannabe drivers the opportunity to gain some valuable race-day practice.

For your chance to win one of five copies of *F1 2002* for the Xbox, simply name one of Toyota's drivers for the 2002 season.

Send your answers on a postcard to *F1 2002* competition, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU by June 1. Usual rules apply.

## SUBTLE REMIN-DOOR

THIS clever device automatically plays back a pre-recorded message whenever the door it is fixed to is opened.

The Remindoors, which is powered by three AAA batteries, can also be used as a normal memo recorder.

① £9.99, from [www.tiggypig.com](http://www.tiggypig.com) (01603 890359).

## BYTE-SIZE NEWS

THE Barbican Gallery in London is to host *Game On* – the first major and most comprehensive UK exhibition to explore the 40-year history of computer gaming.

On show from May 16 – September 15, the exhibition will explore the creativity and influence of computer games on contemporary culture. For information and ticket bookings call 0207 6388891.

GULF War veteran Andy McNab has struck a four-year deal with computer games company Rage Software to put his name to a new action hero game for the PlayStation 2 and Xbox.

CODEMASTERs are set to release a third-person adventure game based around allied-escape attempts from prisoner-of-war camps during the Second World War next month.

*Prisoner of War* will be available for the PC, PlayStation 2 and Xbox.

ELECTRONIC Arts has announced that the next game in their 17-million-selling *Command & Conquer* franchise will be in the shops by Christmas. *Command & Conquer Generals* will be a 3D real-time strategy game for the PC.

## METAL GEAR SOLID 2, PS2

THIS sequel to 1998's critically acclaimed best-seller *Metal Gear Solid* broke retail sales records when it was launched in America late last year.

It generated more than \$18.8 million of sales in its first week and this figure is expected to reach \$90 million with additional revenues from merchandise, outstripping many Hollywood movie earnings.

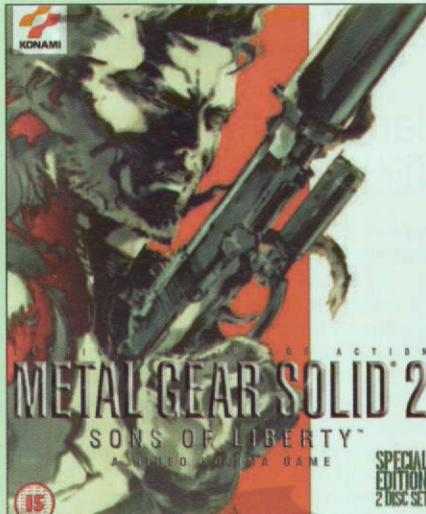
Released in the UK in March, the game's opening weekend's takings are thought to have tipped £9 million – rivalling those of the movie *Monsters Inc.*

So what is all the fuss about? Well how about the fact that *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty* is the closest thing available to a real spy movie on a video game console. It combines unique first-person gameplay with stylish cinematic presentation, a fair dose of political intrigue and some of the best graphics seen on the PlayStation 2 to date.

The player controls both Solid Snake (*Metal Gear Solid*'s lead character) and his new protege Raiden, as they infiltrate a terrorist installation where plans to resurrect a new secret weapon are under way.

Using guile, strength and whatever weapons come to hand, the player is dropped into a game world where anything goes. Guards must be avoided or taken out and security systems bypassed, while care must be taken not to alert other patrols to your

## OUT NOW



whereabouts. Similarly, the game employs an unprecedented level of artificial intelligence, with guards which actively seek out infiltrators.

In addition to the main game, *Metal Gear Solid 2* features a "Boss Survival" mode where players embark on a series of fights against Snake's many adversaries, including Olga, Fatman, Solidus and Vamp.

**VERDICT:** A reported four years in the making, this sequel has been well worth the wait.

9/10

## WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN

**SOLDIER** has joined forces with computer game giants Konami to offer you the opportunity to play this year's blockbuster release for the PlayStation 2.



For your chance to win one of five limited edition copies of *Metal Gear Solid 2* (MGS2), simply answer the following question: What is the full title of *Metal Gear Solid 2*?

- a) MGS2: Daughters of Hear'say
- b) MGS2: Sons of Liberty
- c) MGS2: Cousins of Will Young

Send your answers on a postcard to *Metal Gear Solid 2* competition, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by June 1. Usual rules apply.

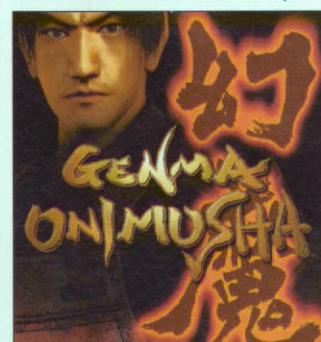
## MAD DASH RACING, XBOX

*MAD Dash Racing* is a high-speed combat racing game designed exclusively for the Xbox.

Featuring a soundtrack that includes tracks from Moby, Fatboy Slim and the Propellerheads, players can choose from nine crafty characters, each with one of three special abilities – dashing, bashing or gliding.

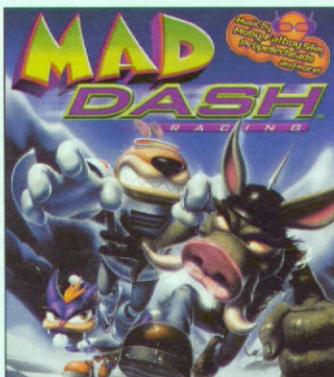
The aim of the game is simple, race through nine dazzling environments doing whatever it takes to cross the finish line first. Play hard, play dirty, or don't play at all.

## GENMA ONIMUSHI, XBOX



**VERDICT:** Sure to emulate the outstanding success of its predecessor.

## OUT NOW



**VERDICT:** Worth buying for the soundtrack alone. A great multi-player title.

7/10

## OUT NOW

SET in 16th century Japan, *Genma Onimusha* introduces players to Samanosuke, a legendary Samurai fighter faced with rescuing a kidnapped princess from a legion of demon warriors.

Based on the award-winning *Onimusha: Warlords*, this third-person adventure uses the Xbox's powerful graphic capabilities to display large numbers of enemies simultaneously, ensuring constant sword swinging action. This sequel also boasts a new attack system and improved visuals and costumes.

## ROCK MANAGER, PC

EVER fancied yourself as a bit of a musical entrepreneur like Simon "Pop Idol" Cowell? If so, then Pan Interactive's *Rock Manager* is the game for you.

As the title suggests *Rock Manager* puts you in control of your very own rock band and your task is simple – make them superstars.

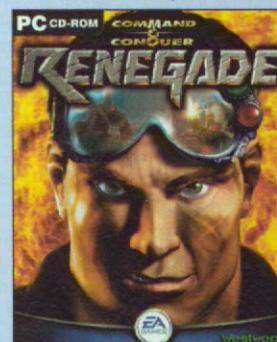
How you achieve that goal is up to you. You can rely on the record-buying public or resort to more sinister tactics like buying hundreds of copies of your own single, bribing local radio stations and massaging the self-absorbed egos of your musicians.



**VERDICT:** Unlikely to top the charts but a pleasant enough tune.

6/10

## OUT NOW



**VERDICT:** Superb up-close-and-personal action.

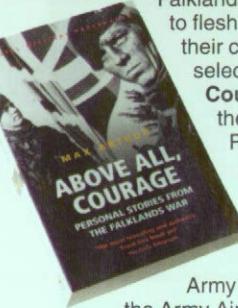
8/10

THIS latest title from the *Command & Conquer* series is a fast-paced 3D action game that puts players into the battle-worn boots of renegade commando Capt Nick "Havoc" Parker.

Played from either a first- or third-person viewpoint, gamers must battle through exotic indoor and outdoor environments, using either stealth or brute force to complete mission objectives. As well as having a vast array of weapons at their disposal, gamers can also commandeer a variety of combat vehicles, ranging from rocket bikes to flame tanks.

## Compelling stories of the Falklands heroes

FOR two years in the mid-Eighties, Max Arthur interviewed 200 men and women decorated for their part in the Falklands conflict, in order to flesh out the bare facts of their citations. The 29 selected for *Above All, Courage* (reissued in the Cassell Military Paperbacks series at £6.99) represent the Scots Guards, Welsh Guards, the Royal Artillery, the Paras, the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Army Air Corps, as well as the other Services. Like Arthur, even now the reader will find these first-hand stories "utterly compelling".



## Gurkhas' reputation went before them

IF, amid the recent coverage of the Falklands anniversary, you found yourself asking, "What about the Gurkhas?", take a look at *Gurkhas at War - In Their Own Words*, edited by J P Cross and Buddhist Gurung (Greenhill Books, £19.95). We are told the soldiers of 1/7 GR, part of 5 British Airborne Brigade, played only a small part

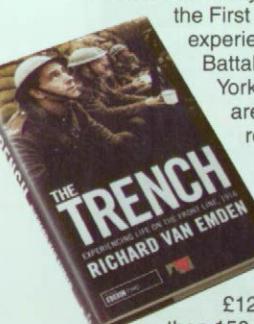
in the fighting - their reputation was such that they encountered little resistance. This enlightening book, covering 1939 to the present, also has first-hand accounts from the Gulf War, the Balkans and East Timor.



## Now discover what the trenches were really like

TWO books published to coincide with the BBC TV documentary in which modern-day volunteers relived the First World War experiences of the 10th Battalion, the East Yorkshire Regiment, are recommended reading. David Bilton's *The Trench: The Full Story of the 1st Hull Pals* (Pen & Sword, paperback, £12.95), has more

than 150 photographs and maps to illustrate the narrative and first-hand accounts. Richard Van Emden's TV tie-in, *The Trench: Experiencing Life on the Front Line, 1916* (Bantam Press, £18.99) contains extensive interviews with surviving veterans, complemented by many colour photographs.



# Feat of arms - and feet

Falklands veteran writes that 20 years after the conflict, we still need troops on the ground

AS a sergeant in a Milan anti-tank platoon with 3 Para, Graham Colbeck tabbed from Port San Carlos to Port Stanley and took part in one of the crucial battles of the conflict, the night assault on Mount Longdon. One of the few to keep a diary during the campaign, his notes bring an immediacy to With 3 Para to the Falklands, which has just been published by Greenhill Books at £19.95.

The battle itself is examined in detail in the book, but it is the chapters which deal with the build-up and the aftermath which are the most affecting, showing how ordinary men deal with extraordinary situations with humour and courage.

Colbeck retired from uniform in the rank of major this year after 23 years as a Regular followed by a further nine years in the TA. Here, in a special article, he reflects on a "unique" campaign, and considers its hard-won success on the ground in the light of the current war against terror.

I HAD been a professional soldier for 12 years and had studied military history since before I joined the Army Cadets at age 14.

I was conscious, therefore, as the SS Canberra slowly edged away from England, that I was following in the wake of countless thousands of British soldiers and sailors who had sailed from the very same port before me, bound for regions near and far on numerous campaigns and "expeditions", many of them never to return.

What a grand adventure it promised to be; a unique episode in my life that I resolved to record with a diary and a camera. There was a half-hearted attempt to ban the carrying of cameras by troops of the Task Force going ashore, but I heard of no such edict about diaries, which could also have been banned for the same reason - that if captured they could provide the enemy with valuable information.

If press reporters and cameramen were to be allowed to go ashore with us, I reasoned, then why should I leave my diary and camera behind? I took them with me, and the results have formed the basis of my book.

Each war is unique, of course, but the Falklands conflict of 1982 seemed especially so, partly because of the very remoteness of the islands and the amphibious nature of the operations, at a time when almost all our training (when it did not concern Northern Ireland) had been focused on defending Western Europe against a potential Soviet invasion.

If the British were going to fight a major campaign in 1982, it ought to have involved vast formations of tanks, armoured personnel carriers and tracked artillery. It was not

to be so: the very lack of armoured vehicles and the consequent sight of hundreds of men marching long distances over open terrain added to the unique nature of the conflict and is one of the reasons why interest in the Falklands campaign remains strong to this day.

Fortunately, our training in the Parachute Regiment was such that we were well prepared for the type of operations that would be necessary to recapture the islands: we took pride in the fact that we could move and fight on foot with what we could carry - the relative safety and comfort of an APC was not for us.

The Marines shared a similar ethos to that of the Paras, and we were confident that 3 Commando Brigade, with its two parachute battalions and three commando regiments, could have finished the job without the later addition of 5 Infantry Brigade, which we viewed as an unnecessary distraction and the cause of frustrating delays.

Such confidence is the result of high morale, which is essential for success in battle. The battles for the hills around Port Stanley were the hardest-fought by the British Army since the Korean War, and our night attack against the well-prepared defences of Mount Longdon was won as a result of a confidence which is characteristic of paratroopers the world over.

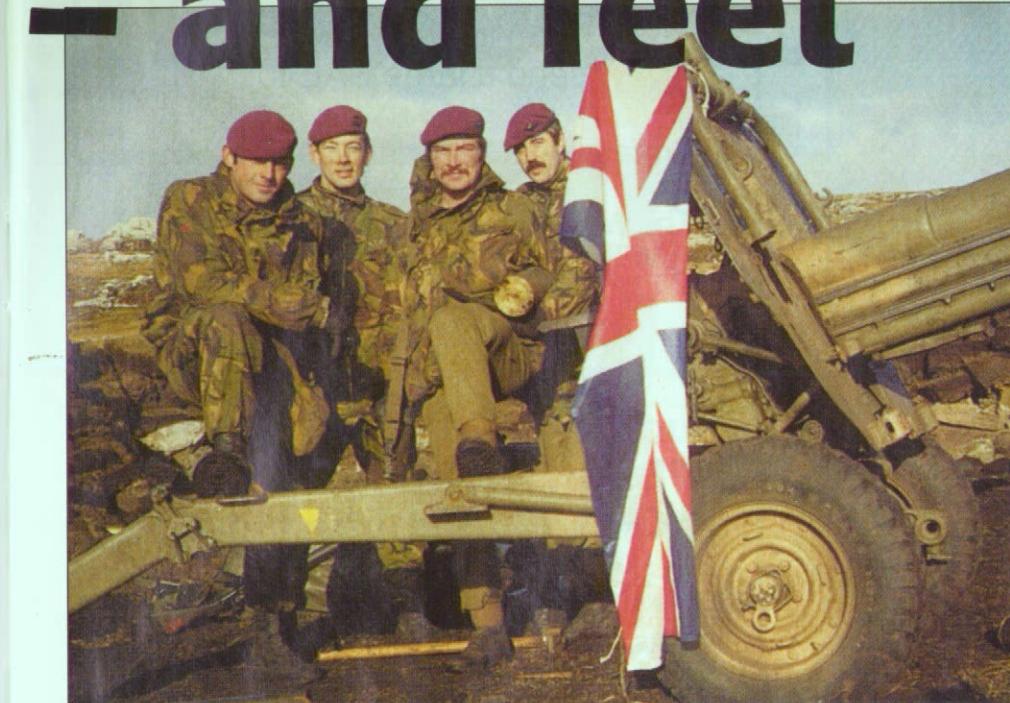
Our objective was captured not by the use of ingenious tactics, overwhelming force or superior technology; the battle was won by the dogged determination and bravery of the rank-and-file soldiers - the inheritors of a proud regimental tradition of aggressive attack and stubborn defence. Mistakes were

### IN BRIEF

**My Boy Jack?** By Tonie and Valmai Holt. Rudyard Kipling was devastated when his only son John was posted missing while serving with the Irish Guards at the Battle of Loos in 1915. In 1992 his final resting place was "identified" by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, but the Holts disagreed. This paperback reissue contains the evidence of four experts which helped persuade the Commission to reopen the investigation. (Pen & Sword, £12.95.)

**Soldier of the Raj** by Iain Gordon. The life of Richard Purvis - soldier, sailor and parson, 1789-1868. (Pen & Sword, £25.)

**Moon Over Malaya** by Jonathan Moffatt and Audrey Holmes McCormick. Britain's worst military disaster, in Singapore and Malaya, 1941-42, is seen in a more positive light using first-



Flag day: In this picture reproduced from Graham Colbeck's book *With 3 Para to the Falklands*, he lines up with members of his Milan anti-tank platoon alongside an Argentinian 105mm howitzer to the west of Stanley. From the left are Cpl Whittle, the author, Cpl Richardson and LCpl Rowell

made at all levels during the campaign, and I have avoided the temptation to drag a camouflage net over them or to omit them entirely from my account.

I would not believe any man who was there if he told me that he made no mistakes, or that there was no aspect of his performance that he could not have done better. Errors are always made on training exercises, and the actual experience of warfare makes them more likely - it is part of what Von Clausewitz called "the friction of war" - and I am suspicious of any military accounts that do not contain tales of human error and personal shortcomings.

The current trend in modern warfare, which became evident in the Gulf War, continued in the Balkans and is now a feature of

the "anti-terrorist" war in Afghanistan, is for overwhelming air-superiority and ground attack by aircraft with high-tech weapons.

Nice if you can get it, and it minimises our own casualties (a priority these days in terms of keeping public support for a war), but air power alone is unlikely to win any war: that requires men on the ground carrying weapons, just as it always has.

Just over a 100 years before the 1982 Task Force sailed for the South Atlantic, Maj-Gen Sir Frederick Roberts led a relieving column from Kabul to Kandahar, marching 300 miles in 20 days and defeating the Afghan Army there. The barracks that 3 Para occupied in Tidworth prior to our departure for Southampton was named, appropriately, Kandahar Barracks.

hand accounts by men of the 2nd Argylls and Royal Marines. (Tempus, paperback, £16.99.)

New in the Leo Cooper *Battleground Europe* paperback series, all at £9.95: **Flanders** by Trevor Pidgeon; **Combines** by Paul Reed; **Nijmegen** (US 82nd Airborne and Guards Armoured Division) and **Hell's Highway** (US 101st Airborne and Guards Armoured Div), both by Tim Saunders; **Sword Beach** (British 3rd Infantry Division/27th Armoured Brigade) by Tim Kilvert-Jones.

**Kitchener** by John Pollock. Engaging and honest biography, now in paperback, of a heroic soldier. (Robinson, £12.99.)

**Does Peace Lead to War?** By Matthew Hughes and Matthew S Seligman. Sub-titled *Peace Settlements and Conflict in the Modern Age*, this

book analyses the reasons why many of the major wars of the 20th century emerged from the ruins of previous peace agreements. (Sutton, £20.)

**The Secret War for the Falklands** by Nigel West. When first published five years ago this "revelatory" study by an author who specialises in espionage and intelligence matters was widely acclaimed for its brilliant research and quality of writing. Now in paperback (Warner Books, £8.99.)

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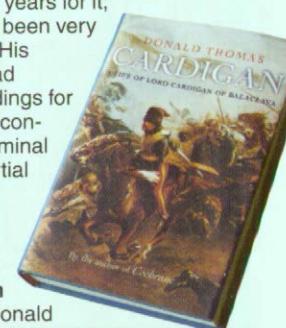
## Lessons to be learned from Kabul's history

A timely paperback reissue of Patrick Macrory's 1966 history *Kabul Catastrophe: The Invasion and Retreat 1839-1842*, has a foreword written last December by Gen Sir Michael Rose. In it, he cautions that unless military influence is exerted in Afghanistan in the longer term through foreign advisers or military training teams to allow humanitarian aid and civil reconstruction, creating the conditions for peace and security will again become almost impossible. The book (Prion, £10) is a superb account of an earlier conflict from which lessons are still being learned.



## Racy-pacy story of a hero and villain

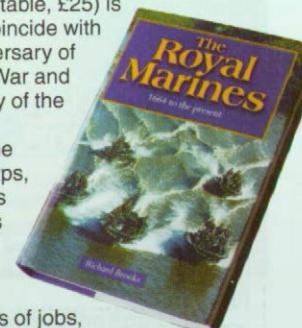
CARDIGAN'S heroic moment - well, 20 minutes, to be precise - was the Charge of the Light Brigade. He had to wait almost 60 years for it; until then he had been very much the villain. His chequered life had included proceedings for divorce, criminal conversation and criminal libel; a court-martial scandal; and a notorious affair with a woman less than half his age. In *Cardigan* (Cassell, £20), Donald Thomas tells the whole story in the racy-pacy style of a page-turning novel. The life of this villain-turned-hero certainly makes a good story.



## Versatility - the art of survival

CLAIMING to be the only single-volume history, Richard Brooks's *The Royal Marines: 1664 to the Present* (Constable, £25) is published to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the Falklands War and the bicentenary of the Royal prefix.

According to the author, the Corps, with its "curious existence", has survived only because it has been willing to take on all sorts of jobs, from butchers to bandsmen, and do them well. Marines made the first heli-borne assault (at Suez in 1956) and became capable of switching from jungle warfare to the Arctic at the drop of a green beret. Oh, and let's not forget Afghanistan...



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# Jubilee on the march

## MUSIC

Gordon Turner

**Orb & Sceptre** (BNA 5172) is available from Bandleader Recordings, 46 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1LD.

THIS superbly played and presented programme in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee is by the Minden Band of The Queen's Division and is appropriately titled **Orb & Sceptre**.

A generous helping of marches includes Sir William Walton's coronation epics *Crown Imperial* (1937), *Orb and Sceptre* (1952), Sir Edward Elgar's *Imperial March* and *Pomp and Circumstance No. 4*. There are also lesser-known marches such as *Splice the Mainbrace* (Bashford), *Golden Jubilee* (Flanigan) and *The Queen's Musician* (Hughes) appearing on CD for the first time.

Other featured favourites are *Bells across the Meadows*, *Salut D'Amour*, *Spitfire Prelude* and *Fugue* and *English Country Gardens*.

**The Best of Ireland** (BB 18) is available from Bandleader.

ALSO from Bandleader is a budget-priced CD comprising tracks taken from recordings of the Band of the Irish Guards and the Band, Pipes and



Drums of The Royal Irish Regiment.

This is a good mixture of marches, selections and miscellaneous works. There are 20 tracks in all and included are *Come Back Paddy Reilly*, *Phil the Fluter's Ball*, *Irish Tune from County Derry* (better known as *Danny Boy*)

and *Riverdance*.

**Mechanical Marches Volume One**, The Marenghi Fairground Organ (SLO 4013) is available from Soundline Recordings, 27, Moreton Close, Church Crookham GU13 0LQ.

FOR those who enjoy marches and are looking for something a little unusual, a CD of 21 parade marches played on a fairground organ is out.

It includes quite a few well-known ones such as *Great Little Army*, *Blaze Away*, *Colonel Bogey*, *Children of the Regiment* as well as some rarities: *Luna Park March*, *Rio King March*, *Paris Canaille* and *Guards Parade*.

No one appears to know who composed the last two, so if you can help, let me know. It is a really remarkable sound.

If you have difficulty buying these or other recordings, or any queries on military music, write to me c/o **Soldier**.

## Veteran Irish Guards join forces to raise charity cash

**A Century of Micks** (The Irish Guards Singers) is a 27-strong choir whose appearances have raised several thousands of pounds for Service charities such as the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA and the Royal British Legion.

To mark the regiment's centenary, the Singers – average age 70 – have produced a CD and tape, a few of which they still have in stock. You can buy the CD for £7 and the tape for £6 (p&p included) from John Hyland, right, 23 Glencourse Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 9JE (tel 0151 423 3004).

The ten items include an emotional new song by Cormac MacConnell which tells the story of the unofficial 1915 Christmas truce on the Somme. It caught on in Lancashire when a BBC radio station played it on Merseyside. Although there is a medley of Irish songs, the music is neither military nor particularly Irish.



## VIDEO/DVD

### BBC's 'lost' gem is rediscovered

JUST released on DVD is *The Great War*, a BBC masterpiece broadcast in 1964 but never repeated. Unseen for nearly 40 years, many thought it had been lost or destroyed.

Not so, after painstaking research and restoration by the BBC, DD Video and the Imperial War Museum, the monumental series has now been put on DVD. There was a huge response to the video version released last year. The seven DVD disc collection, sold with a 48-page guidebook, is available from all good stockists, priced £99.99.

Also on sale as videos are:

**War in the Falklands**, made by ITN and broadcast on Channel 5, concentrates on the military aspects of the campaign rather than the political. Price £14.99.

**Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother – A Tribute** includes the long-unavailable tribute produced by Movietone News to mark the Queen Mother's 75th birthday. Price £7.99.

**Total War** brings together almost 2½ hours of the most outstanding combat footage of the Second World War. Price £14.99.

**Pozieres – The Australians on the Somme 1916** tells the story of the Australian troops caught up in the horror and carnage of a tiny area of land around the small village of Pozieres in Northern France. It was the centre of one of the most fiercely-fought battles of the First World War. In seven weeks the Australians suffered 23,000 losses. Price £12.99.

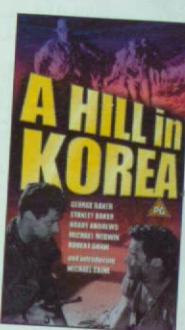
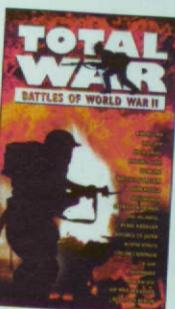
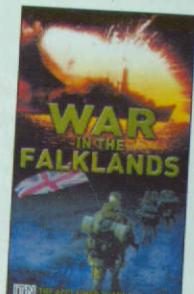
**The Bells Go Down**, starring Tommy Trinder, is one of the best films ever made about the Blitz of 1940. Also Trinder's **The Foreman Went to War**. Price £10.99 each.

**A Hill in Korea**, the film which launched Sir Michael Caine's long and illustrious career, is out on video for the first time from May 20. It was the first major film to portray British troops in action during the Korean War. In real life, 22486547 Fus Maurice Joseph Micklewhite (the name Caine was born with) was a less-than-enthusiastic Royal Fusilier in Korea. Priced £10.99.

**Inside the Nazi War Machine** is a guide to the uniforms, weapons and tactics of Nazi Germany. Presented by Brig Christopher Bullock. Price £16.99.

**Disasters at Sea and Disaster at the Front Line**, from the History Channel's Military Blunders series, look at moments in the Second World War when our leaders got it wrong. Price £12.99 each.

● All videos listed above are available from good retailers or direct from DD Video, Unit 1, Pool Bank Business Park, High Street, Tarvin, Chester CH3 8JH. Add £1.75 for p&p. Credit cards 01829 741490.



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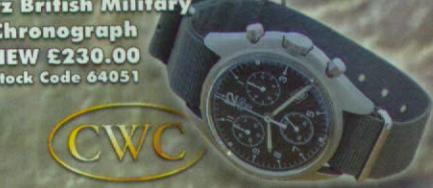
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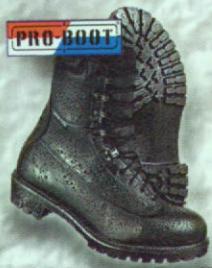
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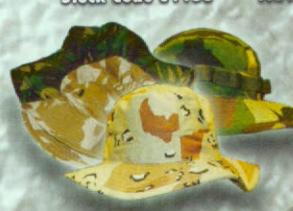
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## SOLDIER to soldier

# When the tough get going . . .

A DOZEN men in the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglians withdrew their notices to quit the Army as soon as they found out the unit was going to Afghanistan.

Former Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment officer Patrick Mercer MP told the Commons in last month's debate on Armed Forces' personnel matters that news of the impending deployment was a motivating factor in the decision.



The battalion realised it was going to be allowed to do a task that had been reserved for the units of 16 Air Assault Brigade "and that the two-tier Army was being put on the back burner", he said

"It was clear to the [commanding] officer that part of the retention problem, at least as far as he was concerned, turned on the tasks that the battalion was being given," he said. "The men understood two years in Londonderry [the battalion's last tour], but – by golly – they preferred a good, exciting tour in Afghanistan."

It can be no surprise that soldiers who spend their careers preparing for expeditionary warfare should jump at the chance to test their training against the real thing.



The very high-profile involvement of the Armed Forces in the Queen Mother's lying-in-state and funeral served as a reminder to the public – and the media – of just how good our Servicemen and women are at delivering a completely different military expertise.

This national event (albeit one shared with the rest of the world) was given the indelible stamp of dignity, precision and historical precedence for which the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force are without peer.

In a word, they were stunning.

### Home truths

Sue Bonney

# A send-off that made us proud

Have you got a local hero to tell us about?

JUST when you think the whole place is going down the tubes (and the media might be right about how awful things are in Britain) something happens to prove them wrong. Just occasionally we get our sense of national identity and pride back and we act like a community again.

Having been told they probably wouldn't care about the death of one old lady, the public took no notice and did what they felt was right and paid their respects to the Queen Mother in their tens of thousands. And then they came out to see and celebrate how good we are as a nation at ceremonial occasions and doing things properly.

The organisation and conduct of the Queen Mother's lying-in-state and funeral was masterly. All the Servicemen and women involved carried out their duties with great dignity and dedication. And as for those pipes and drums – a sound to make your soul stir.

It did the heart good and gave cause for hope that, underneath the veneer of modern society and despite devolution, there is still a sense of being part of a national community. I hope the public were as impressed and proud of their Armed Forces as I was – and that they realised that those same Service personnel would probably be back on operations within days.

### Sense of community

At least there is still such a thing as the Service community out there, in patches all over the world, coping with the demands of Service life and helping each other in difficult times. Did you know that AFF is looking for a community hero in Britain to honour? We are asking for nominations for our biennial Community Award, which is generously sponsored by Naafi. If you know someone, or a group of people, who has made



Sue Bonney is  
Editor of the AFF  
Families Journal

an outstanding contribution to your Army community or patch, we want to hear about them.

The winner will receive a £500 cheque for use in their community, as well as the Naafi Rosebowl for two years and a small memento of the occasion. The award is open to any individual or group in mainland GB and will be presented to the winner at our international conference in London in July.

So if you have a local hero doing things for the good of others, get writing that nomination and send it in to us by May 31. If you want to find out more, contact AFF Central Office on 01980 615525.

### Budgeting for students

● *SOLDIER* is going to press this month straight after Mr Brown's budget speech. As usual, it looks as though the financial pundits' guesswork got some of it right but most of it wrong and Mr Brown managed to surprise them. Not that his budget did much for the Bonney household – *Him Indoors* will have to pay more National Insurance and 6p extra on the cancer sticks, so that's my monthly bottle of Noilly Prat gone.

I had been hoping the Chancellor would create a childcare allowance for Returning Student Syndrome to help us aged parents support our offspring still living at home while trying to clear their debts, courtesy of student loans and overdrafts. It cuts no ice with the kids that the Government (not to mention the Services) think they are adults at 18.

I suspect they think 30 is a much nicer, rounder number. Mr Brown has yet to declare how he intends to divvy up the remaining loot between the various Government departments. It would be nice to think the MoD might get just enough to properly equip and support its Service personnel and their families during the various commitments coming their way.

**The organisation and conduct of the Queen Mother's lying-in-state and funeral was masterly. Those involved carried out their duties with great dedication .**



# Combat trousers are a pain in the . . .

AS a platoon sergeant serving with an infantry unit I despair at the endless mountain of paperwork which has to be gone through in order to exchange kit.

Gone are the days of just taking the soldier with his kit to the clothing store. On top of normal exchanges I have to hand in a specific return which prioritises soldiers in my platoon with regards to who is in the

most desperate need of Combat 95 trousers.

The reason for this is that there are only 20 pairs of combat trousers available to an infantry company every three months. Each platoon is given six pairs every three months, (there being three platoons in the company) and Company HQ get the rest.

I have a platoon of 24, so the unlucky

ones wait a year. You work it out. We're infantry, we are on operations and exercises a lot of the time, the trousers take a pounding, and it doesn't help that they are so thin you could spit through them (admittedly they dry fast, but they wear down far too quickly).

Some of my guys are walking about like tramps. Just give us more (or better) trousers. – **Name and unit supplied.**

## Are my years in this acting rank a record?

AM I the longest-serving acting rank sergeant? Currently my record stands at seven years (with potential for rising to ten), or is there competition from another career mismanaged (but not bitter) ranker out there?

I was promoted corporal in June 1991 and then to acting sergeant, with two promotional courses behind me, in June 1995. I still hold that rank and await the next promotions board with scepticism.

After yet another sergeant's course and a colour sergeant's course completed by February 2000, and three years in the role of technical colour sergeant, I wonder if mismanagement is the correct term.

As acting sergeant I am pensionable as a sergeant, but with only three years' ser-

vice left I fear the next board will pass me by again.

If I then complete my last six years doing a colour sergeant's job (with the occasional pay of higher rank), could I qualify for a colour sergeant's pension? – **Name and unit address supplied.**

▲ APC Glasgow informs us that a period of seven years in an acting rank is not a record and that you would only qualify for a CSgt's pension if you were a substantive sergeant holding acting CSgt rank.

The overall management of your career employment group rests with your Manning and Career Management Division (MCM) in the APC.

You could apply for an individual career interview with an MCM officer through your commanding officer. – **Editor**

**WHEN I was passed over for promotion, I approached my CO who told me I was too old. His wanted to promote younger lads with longer left in the regiment.**

I have been in the Army for 14 years, have eight years to go and have been a corporal since 1996. I am a crew commander and an instructor in five disciplines, as well as one of the regimental NVQ assessors. My last six confidential reports have been "A/Y".

I know I let myself down on my last tour of Bosnia, during which I paid a £900 fine, but surely this is being punished twice. I owe it to my family to reach the highest rank I can for my pension, and it seems I haven't a hope in my present job. Has anyone got any views? – **Name and address supplied.**

## Claiming 'actuals' is great idea

THE MoD Civil Service has just made an enlightened announcement. With effect from last month, civil servants who travel on duty have had a major boost to their subsistence claims, because they do not need any form of countersignatory on their claims and they are not subject to fixed amounts (in other words, they can claim all reasonable receipted costs).

For example, lunch can be a hot or cold two-course meal with a non-alcoholic drink. They will be able to claim online and therefore do not have to submit

receipts (but must retain receipts for four years and may be subject to later audit).

In the past the rates of civilian and military claims have been tied. Unless there is a rapid announcement we will have the curious situation where a soldier travelling on duty will be restricted to claiming £4.25 (for an over five-hour daily rate of subsistence) while his civilian counterpart may claim any reasonable costs (a pub-type lunch costs £10 to £15). Can we look forward to a re-levelling of the playing field? – **Graeme Hutchison, Fife.**

## My far-flung family warrants a warrant

I AM writing to you for information on travel warrant entitlement. I am serving at BATUS in Canada until August 2004. My son is also in the Army and serving in Northern Ireland. Our problem is that the Army only seems to be able to provide my son with a warrant to visit the UK.

This means that if he comes to stay with us, either he or we have to foot the bill for return flights. I can't believe the Army has no provision in place to help him visit his family. – **Name and address supplied.**

### ▲ PS4(A) responds:

THE Army rightly assists parents with children who are under 18 years old or in full-time education, as it recognises the unique difficulties faced by parents in fulfilling parental responsibilities due to the mobile nature of Army life. However, your son is now an adult in full-time employment and the Army has no obligation to assist with a family reunion.

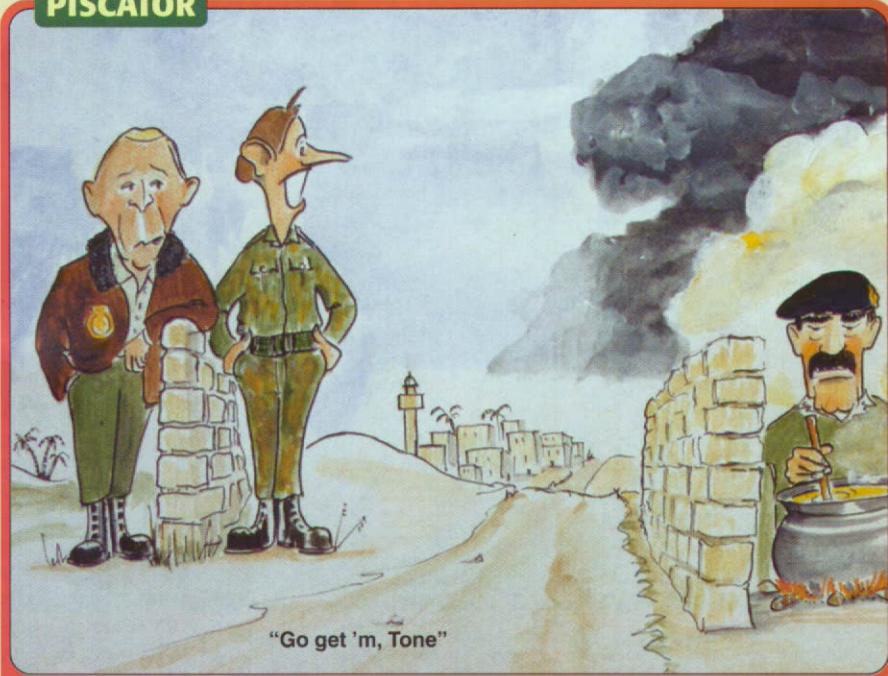
Army allowances are predicated on the fact that the Army is predominantly recruited and based in the UK. That said, some assistance to soldiers with serving parents is provided in recognition of their unique circumstances. The Figleaf scheme allows funded travel to join parents serving in countries other than the UK. Sadly, this does not extend to Canada but is limited to North-West Europe, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Italy and Norway. Nevertheless, your son may apply for indulgence travel, which could reduce the costs.

## Have your say, briefly

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of your agenda . . . but please keep them as short as possible. The more space you take up to get your point across, the less room there is for other letters, and we are anxious to use as many as we can fit in.

E-mails should include your name and location at the bottom (not necessarily for publication). Anonymous contributions will be binned. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to amend for length, clarity or style.

## PISCATOR



The Army Benevolent Fund is your national charity. For more information on how you can help it through fundraising or sponsored events, please contact the Army Benevolent Fund, 41 Queen's Gate, London, SW7 5HR, call 020 7591 2042 or visit our website at [www.armybenfund.org](http://www.armybenfund.org)



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# Family forced to move before we were ready

MY family is in a surplus married quarter in my home town, where they have lived for two years, while I chose to "live in". Now the Defence Housing Executive has informed us we must move out because the quarter is required for a new unit moving into the barracks.

Our health authority is treating my son, who has special needs, after a considerable time on the waiting list. If we moved he would have to start again.

Several families on the estate have also

been given three months' notice to leave. Parts of the estate have been handed to Annington Homes, who have modernised quarters and put them up for sale. This has pushed us into buying a house in the area, which is not something that we wanted to do at this stage of my career.

Why are those with genuine reasons to stay in one place not able to do so? If so many houses had not been handed over to Anningtons there would be no need. – **Cpl A J Wellings, ATR Warminster.**

*arrangement, and those concerned are made aware of it from the start.*

Where sympathetic circumstances exist, the DHE makes every effort to extend occupancy for as long as is practical. But changing circumstances, including impending unit moves, eventually mean that the MQs are need for entitled families, and the non-entitled family is required to move. MoD accommodation is provided for mobility.

#### ▲ DHE responds:

**BECAUSE** of their mobility obligations, Servicemen and women are normally entitled to publicly-funded accommodation only at their place of duty. In certain medical, welfare or educational circumstances, they may be entitled to retain quarters at a previous duty station. Those who choose to waive their entitlement may be eligible to occupy surplus SFA elsewhere. But this is a temporary

PS...

## Rate of recovery

WHY are single soldiers discriminated against during the recovery of an over-payment? They receive 25 per cent of net monthly income while a married soldier receives 75 per cent. I refer to the answer on the subject in Feedback (March).

I am single, own property and have bills and other assorted overheads. If I were to receive only a quarter of my net monthly pay this would cover only my mortgage repayments.

How would I fuel my car, feed myself and pay bills without incurring bank charges? Being aware of the ramifications – I have been overpaid, through no fault of my own, for the past four months – I am existing on a limited budget in anticipation of the recovery.

The Army should realise that not all single soldiers live-in and are fully catered for. – Sgt K Ellams, Ilford, Essex.

## Hit by acting rank

IN the December and February issues, newly-promoted sergeants wrote to complain about mess bills. I was promoted to local sergeant, which means I get paid as a full corporal, but was expected to buy mess dress (£400) and pay for the Christmas "do" (£100) even though I was on a course 100 miles away.

I explained this to the RSM but was expected to drive there and back.

My bill has more than trebled – £15 per month to £50 – from the corporals' mess. Although I am more than happy to be in the warrant officers' and sergeant's mess, as a married man with two children I think that the idea of local rank is a con. Other members have paid into the mess throughout the year so why should I be treated differently?

The point I am trying to make is that local rank is ideal for a soldier going on a course to get qualified in that rank, but for a soldier who has completed a senior qualifying course (in my case platoon sergeants' battle course) it should not be the case. – Name and address supplied.

## Police Federation

AS a serving police officer and member of the Police Federation I was interested to read Cpl Fox's letter (Police show the way, March) and I feel the need to correct a slight inaccuracy.

While the Federation represent all officers, it also asks for a voluntary subscription.

Without the vast majority of police officers subscribing, the Federation would not be able to carry out the good work that it does. There are also some benefits, such as legal representation and advice that would not be available to an officer who chose not to subscribe. Having been a member for more than 23 years I would say that a similar set up within the Armed Forces would be an ideal arrangement. – Maj Chris Sharwood-Smith, Hertfordshire ACF.



## In my opinion I'm already a householder

I AM a 33-year-old staff sergeant serving in the South of England. I am divorced, have a contact order to see my daughter and live in a surplus married quarter 20 miles from my duty station, not because it's my entitlement but because it is available. I own a house at my previous unit.

My daughter was a factor in my application for an MQ.

Having owned and lived in my own house for five years before my current post, I was reluctant to give up the independence I had enjoyed.

When my unit relocated to the south from North Yorkshire last year the upheaval was lessened when we were told we were entitled to removals and disturbance allowance.

I am moving again but, because there are no surplus MQs available at my new duty station, I am in the process of selling my house in order to buy one to live in at the new location.

Rightly or wrongly, I am not prepared to put the contents of a three-bedroom house into storage and to pay for the privilege. I am also unwilling to give up the comfort and flexibility I have enjoyed for the past few years to move into a mess.

I have been told I am not entitled to removals or disturbance allowance because I am not a homeowner or householder at my current unit so technically I am in single accommodation. I would argue that I am a householder as I live in a house and pay rent, CILOCT (the charge in lieu of community tax) and utility bills.

– Name and address supplied.

### ▲ PS10(A) responds:

The writer has put forward a clear and well-written case, although without the full facts it is difficult to give an absolute answer on his entitlements. Much of what is missing concerns the fact that he says that he intends to sell the house that he currently owns but does not live in.

The reasons why he does not live in this house may have much bearing on any entitlement, as will its situation in regard to the location of his current and previous unit.

Moves from single public accommodation, which would include surplus MQs, to single public accommodation do not normally carry any entitlement to removals expenses or disturbance allowance. The author indicates that he intends to sell his home at his former duty station and purchase a new property when he moves to his next unit.

Under these circumstances, he might be eligible to claim for removals expenses, disturbance allowance and a refund of legal fees for house sale and/or purchase. If he believes he has a reasonable case for adjudication, he should submit this through his chain of command.

## Shaving allowance would even score

FOR those of us who have been in the forces long enough to remember when women joined the WRAC and not the corps or arms they do today, I'm sure they will also remember different pay scales in place at the time. I think we would all agree that any, and all, extra payments or allowances the women got were well deserved.

It was no surprise then, when the European Commission for Equality (or whatever its name was) said rates of pay for male and female serving personnel had to be the same. The women had their wages changed from scale base, as it was then, to the current pay band.

I think I can safely say that everyone was happy and all the little extra payments the women had previously received (eg hosiery grant and underwear allowance) were stopped – or should I say suspended?

Recently my sister-in-law showed me

her pay statement, which included a hosiery allowance. She couldn't say that she had noticed it before. Does this mean that female soldiers are now being paid more than their male counterparts?

We all get issued the same kit – barrack dress trousers are available for women to replace the skirts and number two dress

trousers are also available for women so there can be no embarrassing moments during rifle drill (ground arms). Why then, are women still getting paid a hosiery allowance?

Surely male service personnel should get paid a shaving allowance to compensate?

If a disgruntled Serviceman took this matter seriously enough to go to the European Commission to plead discrimination, would he have a valid case? Or was the payment received by my sister-in-law a mistake?

– Sgt S Smith, BFPO 538

### ▲ PS10(A) responds:

Sgt Smith makes an entertaining point, although slightly misinformed. Hosiery allowance is not "an extra little allowance" used to make up the salaries of females, either before or after the review of female terms and conditions of service, and neither was it suspended as a result of any legislation or review.

It was not paid for two years as a result of programming difficulties and subsequently reimbursed to eligible personnel once these were overcome. The grant is paid annually and is designed to reimburse non-commissioned female personnel for the purchase of hosiery that they may be required to wear in both barrack and No 2 dress uniforms. All allowances are being reviewed at present to ensure equity, where appropriate.

Sgt Smith should rest assured that should he be required to wear hosiery as part of his Service uniform, we will ensure that he receives adequate reimbursement also.

## Is my child not a factor in LOA?

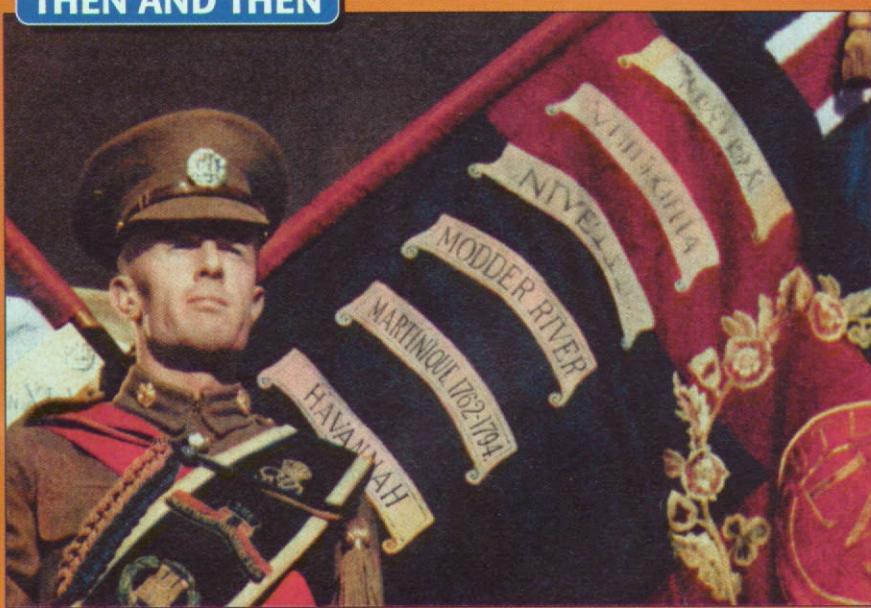
WHY does a married junior sergeant with no children and 13 years' recognisable service receive more Local Overseas Allowance in Cyprus than a married senior corporal with one child and the same amount of service? And why does

the sergeant also get a greater MFO allowance when posted to and from Cyprus? Doesn't the extra baggage needed for a child count for anything? – Corporal (name and address supplied), Cyprus.

calculating rates of LOA, length of service is not relevant for these calculations.

What is important is the amount of net disposable income available and, as pay rises because of promotion to a higher rank, so too will net disposable income rise. It is this increase in net disposable income, in areas where day-to-day costs are more expensive than in the UK, that will give rise to higher rates of LOA.

## THEN AND THEN



## 25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, May 1977: Cormac, the 14-month-old Irish wolfhound mascot of the Irish Guards, was unimpressed by a chocolate treat offered by the Queen Mother when she visited the Guards Depot on St Patrick's Day. Although he refused the chocolate, Cormac – on his first official outing – allowed the Queen Mother to pin a shamrock to his collar.

## 50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, May 1952: The last Colour, pictured, carried into battle belongs to the 1st Battalion, The Northamptonshire Regiment, now stationed in Trieste. It was presented to the 2nd Battalion in 1860 and was carried at Laings Nek in the South African War in 1881. Lt Alan R Hill won the VC for rescuing on his horse the mortally wounded officer bearing the Colour.

# I'm in quandary over two-year sun posting

I AM a single soldier currently employed as a recruiter. As there is no military accommodation nearby I am in a private hiring and pay food and accommodation charges as normal.

I also own my own flat in my home town, bought as an investment several years ago. I am to be posted to Cyprus in June and am undecided about what to do with the flat. The local council class it as my residence even though I have never actually lived there and I pay a single person's council tax.

I thought about selling it as I will be on a two-year tour. When asked about the possibility of claiming back any legal expenses if I sold or let the flat I was informed that as I was not in residence I was not entitled to anything. How can the council class me as a resident, but the Army claim I am not?

If I sell the flat I will have to pay all costs, but if I keep it I will pay council tax for two years on a flat I cannot visit. I am in a Catch 22 situation – the council claims my military accommodation is temporary, but I do not regard 18 years'

service as a temporary career. What is the point of paying CILOCT (the charge in lieu of council tax) if local councils do not acknowledge it? – **Sgt K Cameron, Galashiels.**

## Boarding allowance is for specific reason

WHY does the Army pay a percentage of children's private education if they are boarding but nothing if the child goes home at the end of a school day?

The benefits of letting children go to a public school, subsidised by the Army, could improve retention. If their children were getting a good education and family life it would be an incentive for soldiers to stay in the Armed Forces. – **Bdr Hawke, 29 Cdo Regt, South Armagh.**

▲ *Boarding School Allowance is intended to ensure that the education of Service children is not disturbed as a result of a posting. Additional warrants are also available to enable the child to return home.* – **Editor**

## PS...

## Pilots' bonus

WITH reference to Mrs Segrave's letter ("Wife angered by timing of retention bonus for military pilots", April), I must put the record straight. A very small number of AAC aviators are getting the bonus.

The £50,000 she mentions becomes £30,000 after tax and you only get it if you sign an agreement that you will not leave for five years (£6,000 a year for each of those years is not a huge amount for the Government to pay to retain the most experienced aviators). SNCO aviators end up with £18,000... a lot less over five years.

Aircrew retention is a problem not only for those of us in blue berets, it also affects our less talented brothers in other Services. We, and they, need to retain experience and not lose it to the North Sea or the airlines. After pilot training, aviators learn their trade in the squadrons, where they are taught to be military pilots in one of the most dangerous environments you can work in. – **WO2 G A Smyth, RHQ 3 AAC, Wattisham.**

## Pension headroom

I AM responding to a comment in your April 2002 issue by PS10(A) in reply to a letter about pensions conditions.

PS10(A) says "the individual has already achieved the maximum allowed within Treasury criteria" but this is fundamentally inaccurate. This has been the consistent MoD line for many years, but we now know from the MoD's own consultation document on the long-running pension review that the full pension package accounts for 62.5 per cent of pay, whereas Inland Revenue rules allow 66.67.

It would appear therefore that there is, and has been for some time, headroom within the Armed Forces Pension Scheme for members to purchase additional benefits. There seems to be a widespread ignorance of this throughout the Armed Forces, and even, it seems, within PS10(A). An important opportunity is being denied to Service people by such erroneous reporting of the facts. – **Maj Gen J C M Gordon, Forces Pension Society.**

## Tour statistics

IN reference to your article on tour intervals in the "Under Big Ben" column (April), it is all well and good talking about statistics and how the Infantry is suffering with the re-occurrence of operational tours every 18 months.

If these statisticians actually looked deeper instead of scratching the surface they will probably find the truth. Most corps personnel, whether RLC, REME or AGC, who are posted every two or three years will generally have an operational tour with less than 12 months between tours. I am a perfect example.

I'm in my fourth year of service as a staff sergeant and about to start my third operational tour within this period. Am I the only one? – **J O'Carroll, Preston.**

# Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

## Maj Jon Brown, RLC

The set-up here is better than anywhere else and includes an excellent gym, cinema, a bowling alley and internet access. What I do think could be improved is the R&R package. People who serve here for six months should be allowed to R&R home to the UK for two weeks. That does not happen. Anywhere else in the world when you go on a tour – and this is an operational tour – and are away for six months, you get R&R home.



## LCpl Angie Sowerby, 9 Supply Regt, RLC

Compared with elsewhere the facilities are good. I use the swimming pool every day. Big gripe is that there are only eight phones and there are always queues. I often phone my Mum at 11pm. She waits up because it is 2am for her. We only get 20-minute phone cards; in Bosnia it's 30 minutes.



## LCpl Taff Davies, MTW, REME

The very good gym gets crowded, so could be expanded. Accommodation is not brilliant because we have no control over the heating. On a welfare note, it seems unfair that on this six-month operational tour I am away from my wife and children with no R&R to see them. That is a long time.



## LCpl Colin Carruthers, 4 GS Regt, RLC

There's an excellent gym and good bars but there could be more internet suites for peak times in the evening and at weekends. We only have one TV channel so I'd like to see more and I know the boys would be keen to see Sky Sports.



## Maj Adam Reavill, RA

The facilities are excellent but that is a relative term. And that means the facilities back home are not necessarily as good as they should be particularly on the sporting side of things. The gym here is just about the best I have seen in the British Army but we should expect that standard back in the UK as well. An improved TV service with Sky piped into people's rooms would be popular.

## Cfn Damon Herring, MTW, REME

I didn't expect the site to be so big. It is good here and there is plenty to do and facilities generally are a lot better than many of the places I've been to in the UK. The cinema is good and well looked-after and there is a good social life. I think a four-month tour here is enough, six months is too long. I'd happily come back for four months, but not six.



## Cpl Tracy Wilson, MTW, AGC (SPS)

I have no complaints and the choices in the cookhouse are very good. The cinema shows the latest releases and there are always functions on. The gym is so good it is a victim of its own success and should be bigger.



## Cfn Andrew McNicholas, MTW, REME

Facilities and accommodation is good and I'm a member of the car club. But 20 minutes of phone calls a week if you are trying to keep a relationship going back home is not enough. I think we should have more TV channels because, although BFBS is fine, we need more choice.

## Cpl Craig Graham, SCAF RLC

The accommodation is among the best I've had on tours and beats living in a CoRIMec. I have one major area of concern. They have taken away LOA (Local Overseas Allowance) and substituted a phone card a week. I don't think that is enough. I know we have the internet but there is no substitute for hearing a person's voice. Because of the time difference, the phones are always busy during peak times so the number of phones should be increased.



Interviews: Ray Routledge Pictures: Mike Weston

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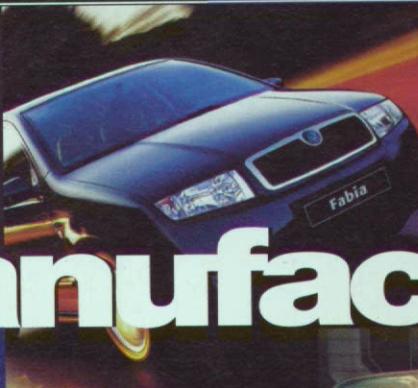
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