

SOLDIER

**HOW THE
ARMY WILL
MARK THE
MILLENNIUM**

**Win tickets
to the Dome
and Tattoo 2000**

**Award-winning
photographers**

**Northern Ireland's
'Brigade of Guards'**

**2 RGJ patrols
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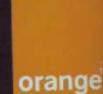
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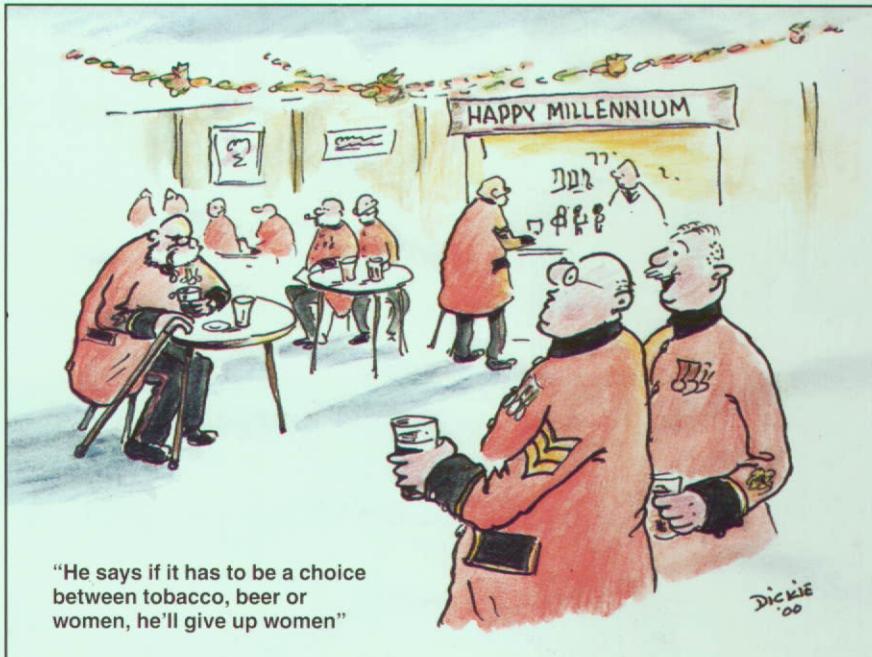
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Win

- Two tickets to the Millennium Dome – Page 26
- Two tickets to the Royal Military Tattoo 2000 – Page 27
- Three signed copies of Nigel Benn's autobiography – Page 35
- A Combat Survival Kit – Page 22
- A Traser map reader – Page 23



A happy millennium New Year to all our readers and advertisers

In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine



29 Cover story

Last light: Kevin Capon (HQ Land) entered this evocative image in the Army Photographer of the Year competition. It shows Pipe Major Bdr David Johnson of 19 Regiment RA – the Highland Gunners – playing a lament at sunset on Cyprus's Green Line buffer zone during a tour of duty with the United Nations. Although it was unplaced in the competition, we chose the photograph as a front cover to reflect the setting of the sun on one century and the dawn of another

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SOLDIER to soldier

Pageantry for the people

IT is being billed as the greatest military spectacle ever seen in Britain, which, given the massive pre-Second World War productions at Aldershot's Rushmoor Arena, is an ambitious boast.

Nevertheless, the £6.5 million, one-off Royal Military Tattoo 2000 on Horse Guards in July is set to be a tri-Service pageant fit to set before the Queen (patron of the event).

To cap it all, a grand finale will première a specially-written anthem promoting our Services as "A Force for Good in the World".

It is, however, only the jewel in the crown of the millennium-celebrating projects in which the British Army will take part. On Page 27 we tell you how to apply for RMT 2000 tickets (and how to win two) and list just a few of the events with which the military will be involved.

FORCE FOR GOOD

Let's hope sponsorships and ticket sales will swell the coffers of Service charities such as the Army Benevolent Fund . . . our own force for good.

The Services have made a joint millennium resolution that the Royal Tournament, which ended last year, will be succeeded in the future by regional shows.

This move to make military pageantry more accessible to the people is to be applauded at a time when the Services, for all sorts of reasons – not least recruiting – need to raise their profiles.

One thing is certain: the Army's chance to shine will not be confined to military theatre. As Gen Sir Michael Walker, the CGS-designate, says of the Army's men and women in Vox pop (Page 70): "... they will remain second-to-none on the world stage and they will serve with the same distinction as their forebears in previous centuries".

A deadly serious business

A teaspoon can hold enough plague to kill a million people. No wonder rogue states want chemical and biological weapons. We visited Porton Down, in the front line of the fight against poisons and pestilence

Report: Graham Bound
Pictures: Steve Dock

PORTON Down carries, as they say, a lot of baggage. The high-walled complex of slightly tired looking 1940s buildings tucked away in rural Wiltshire is a Cold War icon. Early *Avengers* episodes, steeped in the mystique of espionage, were filmed on sets made to look like it. And experiments conducted there during the 1950s and 60s remain controversial today.

It comes as a surprise, therefore, to drive through the gates of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency, Porton Down and find that the place appears remarkably... well, normal.

Let there be no mistake: behind the high fences and within the secure laboratories are some of the most deadly substances known to man, and they are protected by armed guards, high fences, and all-seeing cameras. But the overwhelming impression conveyed is workaday: apparently unremarkable men and women getting on with a remarkable job.

Some of man's primeval enemies reside in flasks and airtight chambers here. Although the development and production of British chemical weapons ceased in 1956, and the country is now a fully signed-up member of the Chemical Weapons Convention, small quantities of agents are held for research. They range from "good old-fashioned

In 600 BC the Assyrians used ergot, a deadly fungus, to pollute their enemies' water supply

English troops spread smallpox using contaminated blankets during fighting from 1754 to 1757



Death chamber: In what will become a deadly chemical atmosphere, "Porton man" is clothed in the successor to the Mk 4 NBC suit

mustard gas" (as one technician nonchalantly described the First World War's terror weapon) to botulinum toxin, a gramme of which can kill thousands.

"We cannot let our guard down or cease experimenting," said Dr Rick Titball, Porton's Head of Microbiology. "An increasing number of countries are developing the weapons and the threat from terrorism is growing."

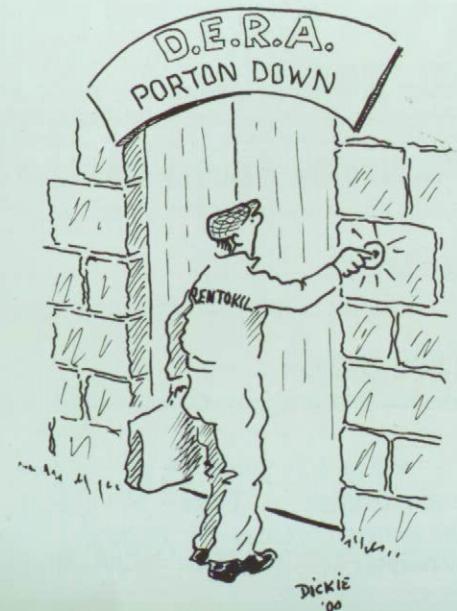
Soberingly, Rick Titball explained that until recently Porton Down's work was limited to military defence, but the threat is now much wider. "A significant part of our work is directed at protecting the UK and its citizens," he said.

Weapons fall into three main categories. All need to be countered in different ways, but their common denominator is terror.

Viruses are man's oldest enemy and the most simple form of life on earth: among them are smallpox and lassa fever.

Bacteria, such as anthrax and the strain which caused the plague (of Black Death fame), are much more complex, and can be cultivated outside the body. They, too, kill with horrible efficiency.

Unlike viruses and bacteria, chemical toxins are not alive and self-replicating.



During the First World War 125,000 tons of chemical weapons, such as mustard gas and phosgene, were used. Approximately 90,000 men were killed

But they can be manufactured in conventional chemical plants.

Porton Down can only keep up with the villains through constant research and development. Staff are heavily involved in munitions disposal, monitoring the Chemical Weapons Convention and developing detection equipment.

As far as the Army is concerned, the scientists' most important work is in the development of protective clothing, breathing equipment, detectors, medicines and vaccines.

"We do not depend totally on any one area of research and development,"

said the establishment's director, Paul Taylor. "But put them together and we have some of the best systems in the world for protecting soldiers."

The "best systems" include vaccines purchased from commercial manufacturers and approved for use only after the



companies have obtained government safety licences. Despite rumours, unproven vaccines are never tested on soldiers.

It is, however, a different story with drugs such as antibiotics and anti-convulsants. Again, only medicines licensed for routine civilian use are adopted by the Army. But Porton's physicians must assess side-effects that could rule out operational use. Drowsiness caused by some anti-nausea drugs is, for example, of little concern to most civilians, but it would not be acceptable to tank drivers and radio operators.

Volunteers, civilian and uniformed, are given the licensed drugs under carefully controlled conditions and their reactions are monitored.

Questions raised by Gulf War veterans who suffer from a bewildering variety of illnesses hang over Porton Down. Could the vaccines and drugs administered to soldiers facing the threat of Iraqi chemical and biological attack have caused their health problems?

"I don't believe so, but the jury is still out over the veterans," says Paul Taylor. Clearly he is not prepared to speculate on the cause of the complaints. But, as a precaution, Porton Down's procedures have been changed to assess accurately the risks of long-term damage from drugs and vaccines.

"Our priority was to keep people alive on the battlefield," said Paul Taylor. "Historically, there was not much emphasis on any possible long-term effects. That has now changed."



Porton Man walks where mortals fear to tread . . .

PORTON Down's Mk4 NBC suit, is cheap, lightweight and the envy of many countries. But the scientists acknowledge that their clothing must always be a compromise between practicality and protection.

"Our systems are air-permeable and some toxins will get through, but not enough to cause damage. The skin is itself a surprisingly good defensive layer," said a scientist.

A successor to the Mk 4 NBC suit is being designed and tested on "Porton Man", a soldier-like mannequin who spends long days in a sealed chamber.

At the start of a typical test session Porton Man sits patiently as the chamber is pumped full of

Between 1980 and 1984, Iraq used poison gas against the Iranian Army. Later, Saddam Hussein attacked the Kurds with gas



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People, places, events

Soldier joins Europe's élite

SOLDIER has been placed in the top ten corporate magazines in Europe.

It was the first time the magazine had entered the annual competition organised by the Federation of European Industrial Editors' Associations. Judges voted *Soldier* ninth

equal of 79 European magazines and sixth equal of 25 United Kingdom entries. Competitors included journals published by BP Amoco, Compaq Computers, and Unilever.

- Readership survey – Page 8
- A bargain at £2 – Page 8



Good on yer, mates: Australian troops applaud the Gurkhas as they parade through the centre of Dili before withdrawing from East Timor. The soldiers were accompanied by their Pipes and Drums and led by Commander British Forces, Col Mark Lillingston-Price, Chief-of-Staff Maj Eddie Parks RM and Maj Tim Warrington, OC A Coy Gp, 2 RGR

A job well done by East Timor Gurkhas

ALL 290 British Army personnel who helped restore order in East Timor were home by Christmas.

They included men of A Company group, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, who were in the vanguard of the Australian-led force which arrived in still-blazing capital of Dili as departing Indonesian soldiers and militia trashed the island.

The Gurkhas, who escorted the first-aid convoys to communities east of the capital, led the advance to the border with West Timor and were the first International Force East Timor (Interfet) troops to deploy to Atauro Island,

returned to their garrison in Brunei. Before flying out, they handed over responsibility for security in the sensitive Ambeno enclave to the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Rifles.

Maj Gen Peter Cosgrove, Australian commander of the international force, paid tribute to the work of the British elements. They had been among the first to arrive when the risks from militias were at their highest, he said.

Although there are no plans for the UK to contribute troops to the follow-on UN force – UNTAET – a small number of British military observers will be made available.

IN BRIEF

- On his first visit to British Forces Germany, Armed Forces Minister John Spellar joined 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery on the firing ranges at Hohne, Germany for Exercise Sheldrake Sword. Mr Spellar was welcomed by Maj Gen Reddy Watt, GOC 1 (UK) Armd Div, and sampled boil-in-the-bag rations served up by Gnr Natalie Meheut, the first female AS90 gunner.

- Pristina-based soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets won the Multi-National Brigade (Centre) march-and-shoot competition, with a second 2 RGJ team finishing seventh out of 20 international military entries.

RGJ in Pristina's Bronx – Pages 14-15.

- Tony Hadley sang his old Spandau Ballet

GOC Northern Ireland salutes courage of RUC

TROOPS serving in Northern Ireland have welcomed the award of the George Cross to the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Commenting on the award, Lt Gen Sir Hew Pike, GOC Northern Ireland, said: "All Service men and women in Northern Ireland, and those many thousands who have served here over the past 30 years, will today join me, I know, in saluting the courage and self-sacrifice of the RUC, and in congratulating them on their distinctive and thoroughly deserved honour – the George Cross.

"It has been a privilege for the Armed Forces to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their police comrades against terrorism, and we shall continue to do so for as long as our support is required."

R Irish awarded Sword of Peace

It's ours: Lt Col Farren Drury, right, CO 8th (Co Armagh and Co Tyrone) Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment, and WO1 (RSM) Paddy Shields, with the Wilkinson Sword of Peace awarded in recognition of the battalion's exceptional contribution towards establishing good and friendly relations within its local community.

Lt Col Drury said that 1998, the year covered by the prestigious award, had been one of unprecedented change in Northern Ireland. His battalion had had to balance a firm commitment to the peace process with a need to protect and reassure all sides of the community.

He added that throughout the period, his soldiers had striven to promote a greater understanding and tolerance of different religions and cultures and had held many sporting, musical, cultural and charity fund-raising activities – raising more than £30,000 for charities in the area.



hits to troops in Bosnia during a two-week tour with Combined Services Entertainment. And football legends Jimmy Greaves and Tommy Docherty put on a series of shows at British bases in Kosovo in the run-up to Christmas.

- HQ Land Command has received an Investors in People award. It was accepted by the Chief-of-Staff, Maj Gen Philip Trousdale.

SOLDIER READERSHIP SURVEY

You've given us a massive thumbs-up!

YOUR message is loud and clear: *Soldier* is hitting the target with you, the readers.

Initial results from questionnaires sent out with the September 1999 issue have given us a massive vote of confidence.

Thousands of responses received at our Aldershot offices show that the overwhelming majority of you agree that *Soldier* is:

- **THE** magazine of choice for the professional soldier;
- **GOOD** at getting across useful, current information about the Army and helping readers keep in touch.

The independently-evaluated survey told us that 40 per cent of you are aged between 19 and 34. It also confirmed your loyalty, with 55 per cent of you having read *Soldier* for more than ten years.

PASS IT ON

Almost 80 per cent of you read all or most of each issue and it is clear that few of you then throw it away – on the contrary, a massive 89 per cent either keep it or pass it on.

Sixty-four per cent of copies of the September issue were seen by between two and ten people, while a surprisingly large number, 11 per cent, circulated among 11 or more.

Survey data was assessed by the Central Office of Information and NOP Numbers Ltd.

● The readership survey draw will be made by a celebrity in London on January 9. Name of the £100 prizewinner and of the two runners-up, who will receive *Soldier* Army tankards, will be announced in the February issue, with further survey details.

Why it makes even more sense to subscribe to *Soldier*

ALTHOUGH the price of *Soldier* in newsagents goes up this month to £2, the first increase in real terms for three years, the cost of buying the magazine by subscription is unchanged – and more of a bargain than ever.

When you take postage costs into account, this means a substantial saving for our large civilian readership. The UK one-year and two-year subscriptions remain at £23 and £40 respectively, while overseas rates are pegged at £32.20 (one-year) and £60 (two). The BFPO rate is also unchanged at £13.80.

Since January 1997 *Soldier* has been either 80p a fortnight or £1.60 a month (the frequency changed in October 1997).

To take out a cut-price subscription – and take advantage of our popular free binder offer into the bargain – turn to Page 49.

RGJ caught in Kosovo hatred

TROOPS serving with B Company of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets on Operation Agricola saw ethnic hatred at its most savage when an elderly Serb man was beaten and shot dead in Pristina at the height of Albania's National Day celebrations.

His wife and daughter were also badly hurt by a mob of 400 jeering Kosovo Albanians.

When the soldiers were alerted to the trouble by company medic LCpl Darren Fortey, who was on guard duty, a team of four led by LCpl Bob More and two Royal Ulster Constabulary members of the international police force, went out to check on a burning car 250m from their post and reported that casualties were involved.

The blazing vehicle prevented the soldiers from getting an ambulance to the casualties as LCpl Simon Brooks, a trained medic, attempted to resuscitate the wounded Serb.

As the B Company soldiers treated the casualties they were surrounded by hostile Albanians chanting and mocking their efforts to save the Serb family.

Lt Col Nick Carter, commanding officer of 2 RGJ, said the way the three junior NCOs and others had reacted to the situation had been very gratifying. "They acted very responsibly in their approach. The three Serbs were return-



Maj Gen Chris Callow presents a Kosovo Medal to Pte Sarah Roe, above and inset, who deployed with 22 Field Hospital RAMC on Op Agricola when she was just 17 years and 11 months old. She worked in the accident and emergency unit. More medals – Page 11.



ing to live in Pristina and knew nothing of what was going on."

● **RGJ in Pristina's Bronx – Pages 14-15**

AN eight-man squad from 1 General Support Regiment RLC finished third overall in a march-and-shoot event at Zlatare Range involving 20 teams from international forces in Kosovo.

Plug pulled on Forces Weekly Echo

FOLLOWING the closure of its short-lived United Kingdom edition, Combined Service Publications announced that the Christmas issue of *Forces Weekly Echo* aimed at British Forces serving in Germany would be the last. A buyer was

being sought for the commercial weekly newspaper, which was unable to compete with the flourishing *Sixth Sense*, the Army's internal weekly newspaper published exclusively for troops based in Germany.

IN BRIEF

- Majors Gary Donaldson and Paul Willcock made a parting gift to Colchester-based 19 Regiment RA of a ten-month-old Highland heifer called Ruby. She will become the regimental mascot.

- SSVC dispatched a £16,000 Christmas present of 400 radios to British troops in

Kosovo. The radios will be passed on by soldiers to their replacements.

- A disused bar at Larkhill has been turned into a cybercafé for soldiers based in the area. **Oasis @ The Gun Club** will be open 24 hours a day. Grants from the Army Millennium Welfare Fund and the Mission to



Making a splash: The Army raft team smashes its way through the adrenalin-inducing "God's House" rapid on the fast-flowing Karnali river in Nepal

Pictures: Kevin Capon

Kayakers take on Nepal's Big Three

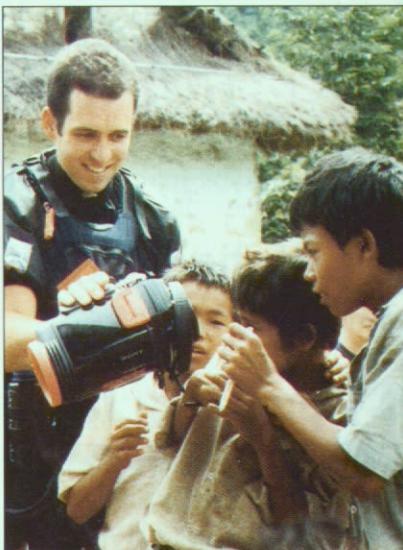
A TEAM of 33 has completed the most ambitious kayaking expedition ever attempted by the British Army.

Led by Maj Stuart Williams, Int Corps, the paddlers, who included five female and seven Territorial Army soldiers, spent six weeks making their way across Nepal, descending the country's three largest and most challenging white water rivers, the Sun Kosi, Karnali and Tamur.

They travelled more than 1,500km by road and made do with basic facilities in the most remote regions of the mountain kingdom.

Despite a dangerous high water season brought on by a late monsoon, the expedition took on a series of technically difficult rapids, including the notorious "Hakapur" on the Sun Kosi, "God's House" on the Karnali and "Ash's Ashram" on the Tamur. To their credit, the paddlers completed the expedition without serious injury or any loss of equipment.

Their progress was delayed at one point so members could assist and eva-



Hi tech: Sgt Richard Painting shows off a bit of kit to youngsters in Hakapur village

uate a Danish woman washed downstream in a rafting incident on the Trisuli (reported in *Soldier*, Dec).

Military Garrisons helped fund the project.

● **Soldiers To Be**, the controversial BBC TV documentary series on Army recruits and their training, resumes on BBC 1 on January 9, 10, 17, 24 and 31, and February 7.

● **British Army Careers** on Merseyside,

in partnership with Knowsley Community College, won one of 14 special National Training Awards. Members of Williams Rehabilitation Company, a specialist unit within the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick, scooped a general award in the annual competition, sponsored by the Department for Education and Training.

Candid camera



Very public honour: Lt Gen Sir Mike Jackson receives his Distinguished Service Order from the Queen in the first royal investiture at Buckingham Palace to be televised. Remote-controlled cameras filmed the occasion under Palace plans to create a more modern and open monarchy. Gen Jackson was awarded the DSO for services on operations in Kosovo last year. Among the 120 people to receive their honours "on camera" was actress Julie Walters.

Prince of swords



Picture: Chris Fletcher

Honoured cadet: Crown Prince Hamzah, son of the late King Hussain of Jordan and Queen Noor, receives the Overseas Sword of Honour from Lt Gen Sir Rupert Smith, Deputy Supreme Commander Europe, during the Sovereign's Parade at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst last month.

Two killed in Bosnia crash

TWO soldiers who died when their armoured vehicle fell off a bridge in Mrkonjic Grad, western Bosnia, were named as LCpl William Vanstone, 27, of 1 D and D, and Pte Richard Lloyd, 18, of 1 RRW. Three other soldiers were injured in the accident.

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People, places, events

Be in the know for Operation Kenya

IF a young lady sidles up and asks you what language soldiers learn while on exercise in Kenya, whisper "Swahili" in her ear. She might be very grateful, especially if she goes on to win a week with the Army in sunny Africa.

Operation Kenya is a campaign being launched by Recruiting Group on January 9 to encourage young people to find out about the Army by talking to soldiers and career officers.

Winners of a competition will get a chance to spend a week with the 1st Battalion, The

King's Regiment in Kenya. But first they have to answer some cunning questions, the answers to which will be known only to soldiers (and thousands of visitors to the British Army's website at www.army.mod.uk).

Just in case you are a little unsure of the facts, here is *Soldier's* exclusive guide to questions and answers.

Q. What language do soldiers learn on exercise in Kenya: French, Afrikaans, Swahili, Zulu? A. Swahili.

Q. Which of the following qualifications

does the Army offer: none, S/NVQs, BTEC, Postgraduate degree? A. All of them.

Q. How many countries did the Army operate in last year: 18, 28, 45, more than 80? A. More than 80.

Q. Which of the following countries did not host a British Army exercise last year: Belize, Cuba, Canada, Norway. A. Cuba.

Q. Which piece of Army equipment enables you to see in the dark: MIRA, SA80, Rarden, Bowman? A. MIRA.

Now you know . . .

Double rations: When (from left) Pte Stuart Campbell, LCpl Andrew Rutherford, LCpl Brian Cornes, Pte Spencer Sutton and Sgt Anthony Hobbins heard their unit, the 1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, was being rushed to the Balkans, they asked to be released from their reinforcing role in Bosnia.

They managed to hitch a helicopter lift to Macedonia and arrived in time to join 1 Para for its spearhead mission into Kosovo. Which is why, when their comrades in 1 Para



Picture: Graeme Main

received Kosovo Medals from Lt Gen Sir Mike Jackson at their base in Aldershot, the famous five also got Bosnia Medals.

MoD critical systems said to be free of millennium bug

ALL critical computer systems in the Ministry of Defence have been declared safe from the millennium bug. The remaining non-critical systems, described as no more than "a handful", were on course to be Y2K-compliant before the end of December.

As a precaution, the MoD's millennium team will maintain round-the-clock watches from New Year's Eve until the end of the first week in January and mechanisms will be in place to advise ministers and senior commanders if failures occur. Normal procedures will be followed if civilian authorities request assistance with crises, whether or not Y2K-related.

A spokesperson for the Y2K co-ordinating team insisted that, despite recent press reports, the Army is not putting spe-

cial teams in place to help civilian bodies cope with severe traffic congestion, very bad weather or computer systems breakdown.

"Most local authorities are saying that everything is in hand, and they do not expect to request assistance," said the official. "We are not doing anything out of the ordinary, but, as always, we are ready to provide assistance when requested and as resources allow."

Armed Forces Minister John Spellar congratulated staff who had worked to make critical systems safe from the millennium threat. "The Y2K bug remains our highest priority apart from meeting immediate operational commitments," he said. He pointed out that "minor and local problems" could not be ruled out.

IN BRIEF

● One of the Army's foremost mountaineers, **Cpl Mark Sekula**, D and D, is joining an international military assault on Mount Aconcagua, the highest peak in the western hemisphere. The only Army representative, he will prepare at the Argentine School of Military Mountain Troops and in the Andes.

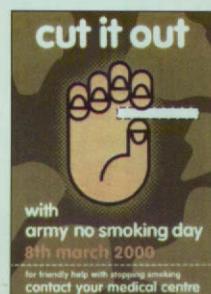
● Soldiers from 150 Transport Regiment RLC transported a Grand Slam bomb, the largest conventional Second World War bomb

ever made, on loan from the RAF Museum at Hendon, to the Barnes Wallis Collection in the Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington, York. The 14ft-long weapon was capable of embedding itself 100ft underground before detonating.

● Sgt Peter Atkinson of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force won the **Butcher of the Year** title sponsored by the MoD and British Meat. The tri-Service competition, held at RAF Halton, is in its second year.

● Maj Gen John Reith handed over command of Nato's **Allied Mobile Force (Land)** to Maj Gen Walter Homes, Canadian Army, at a ceremony in Heidelberg on December 10.

● Defence Secretary **Geoffrey Hoon** and French counterpart Alain Richard signed an agreement which allows their Armed Forces to use each other's strategic air, sea and land transport assets. "Sharing fuel and food gives us greater staying power," said Mr Hoon.



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People, places, events

Port specialists smash Jumbo record

On the pull: Members of 27 Port and Maritime Regiment's tug-of-war team based at Marchwood Military Port have received Record Breakers certificates following their successful attempt last summer to pull a Jumbo jet over a distance of 100m.

A 60-strong squad managed it at Gatwick, tugging the 233-tonne 747 across the line in 59.13 seconds to smash the previous record, set in Australia 11 years ago using an aircraft 28 tonnes lighter than the one towed by the loggers at Gatwick.



The team pulled the Jumbo 200m before being told to stop.

They also raised cash for Romsey Hospital's £1 million Millennium Appeal.



Legion launches appeal to build Thiepval centre

AN APPEAL for £300,000 towards the cost of building a £1 million high-tech visitors' centre at Thiepval, site of the largest war memorial to British soldiers missing in action from any war, has been launched by the Royal British Legion's War Graves Pilgrimages department.

At the moment the enormous Lutyens-designed monument, on the sides of which are recorded the names of 73,000 men lost on the Somme, stands in complete isolation. There are no nearby facilities and nothing to explain why the structure is there, despite the fact that many of the 250,000 visitors to the site each year are schoolchildren.

A pledge from the French Department of the Somme to provide at least £300,000 and a matching grant from Brussels depend on the UK also raising £300,000. Separate donations of £10,000 have already been promised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and BP.

Now Piers Storie-Pugh, head of the Pilgrimages Department, is hoping that benefactors, including the regiments and corps represented at Thiepval (virtually a roll-call of the British Army at the time), will raise money for the project. For more information, contact him at The Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX (01622 716729).

Soldiers lead peacekeepers into Sierra Leone

MAJ Richard Maundrell, Gren Gds, led an eight-man team to Freetown, Sierra Leone at the beginning of last month to pave the way for the arrival of 6,000 UN peacekeeping troops in the West African country ravaged by years of bitter civil war.

Maj Maundrell, who is in charge of management plans and resources at 16 Air Assault Brigade headquarters at

Colchester, was joined by WO2 Billy Seaforth from 10 Transport Regiment RLC and specialists from 29 Regiment RLC for the two-month tour, which was due to keep them in Freetown over the turn of the millennium.

"To get 6,000 troops into quite a small country will be a huge task, but I am looking forward to it," said Maj Maundrell before his departure.

IN BRIEF

• Sgt Phil Payne RAMC, a member of the British Army (Germany) cricket touring team, helped to pacify a woman who went berserk on the team's flight to Australia. When the woman began screaming and throwing drinks Sgt Payne volunteered to inject her with a sedative from the aircraft's emergency kit. Crew used handcuffs and seatbelts to tie her to a seat until she was removed at Singapore.

• Sgt Gary Hammond, REME, right, has been awarded £3,000 from the MoD's GEMS scheme for bright ideas. Now attached to the Defence Export Services Organisation's Royal Engineers Equipment Support Team based at Chatham, Kent, he came up with a money-saving method of repairing an occasional



fault in the transmission system of the AS90 self-propelled gun.

• Volunteers are wanted by 4/7 Battery, part of the 5th Regiment RA based at Catterick. The battery specialises in covert surveillance and target acquisition patrols. For details, contact Sgt W Picken on Catterick Mil 5639 or 5640.

Family on ops

Hello, Dad: Spr Craig Broomhall, above right, was reunited with his father, Sgt Keith Broomhall, below right, at the 32 Headquarters Squadron RE base in Pristina, Kosovo. Craig, usually to be found in Ripon, North Yorkshire, is serving with 38 Engineer Regiment while his dad is a member of Support Company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets. Keith is on his fourth tour to the Balkans, having previously been there with 1 Cheshire and 2 LI.



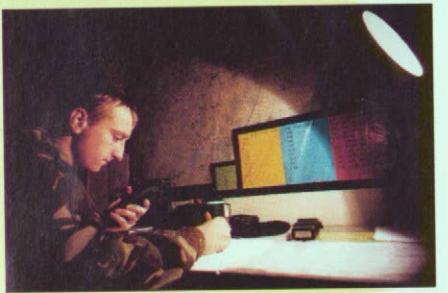
Irish in tune



Sounds good: Sgt Gordon Watts, 1 R Irish, teaches children in Kosovo to play the flaglet tin whistle. The battalion's folk group, the Wolfhounds, played for local people and gave 550 tin whistles bought in England to Pristina schoolchildren. The Bugles, Pipes and Drums of 1 R Irish, which has returned to Catterick, performed in concert and played for off-duty troops. Picture: Sgt Dave Miles RLC

Welcome to the Bronx, Pristina-style

Green Jackets keep the lid on an inner-city nightmare of crime, hate and deprivation



On stag: Rfn Richard Stokes operates the 999 emergency service radio manned around the clock at a safe house in Pristina



Rough neighbourhood: Rfn Marin Wharby peers suspiciously into the boot of a burnt-out vehicle during a foot patrol around the notorious Dardanija flats. Litter and excrement cover the area and could conceal much more deadly security threats



Reassuring: Rfn Jason Summers holds the hand of a Serbian woman intimidated by death threats. She had been too afraid to leave her flat for three months

Report: Dennis Barnes
Pictures: Kevin Capon

LIFE and death are cheap in New York's Bronx, and equally easy to find. As inner cities go, they don't come tougher.

Now it has a serious rival. A desolate area of high-rise flats and dead ground in Pristina is doing its best – or should it be worst – to take over that unwanted mantle.

This Balkan Bronx, known locally as the Dardanija flats district, is an urban battlefield of organised crime, deprivation and ethnic hatred. Within its squalid boundaries soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets are attempting to bring law and order to the streets.

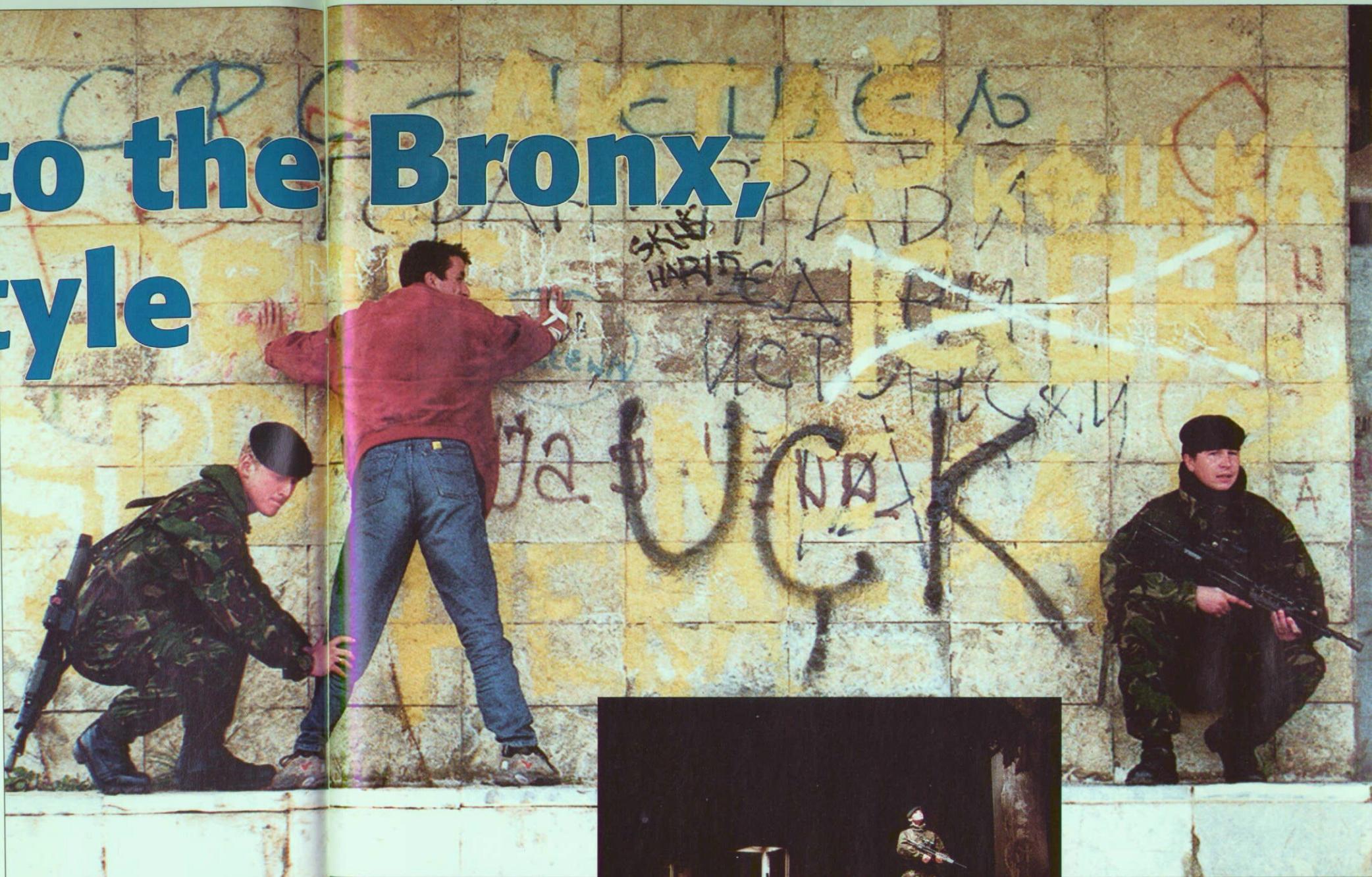
The Paderborn-based troops are part of KFOR, the multi-national Nato force attempting to hold this traumatised country together as it gradually returns to something approaching normality.

INFLUX

Dardanija's flats were constructed in the 1960s to accommodate the growing population of an expanding city. Its circle of nine- and ten-storey concrete and glass tower blocks are typical of countless such developments throughout Europe. Now it has to cope with an influx of many thousands of Albanians whose villages were systematically destroyed by Serbia's military machine.

Pristina's – and with it Dardanija's – population is escalating rapidly. There is little work and families squat in conditions that may be described euphemistically as squalid. Despite international efforts to prepare the city for the penetrating Balkan winter, a climate of revenge and apprehension ferments in this new "Bronx". The relatively few Serbs who chose to remain are loathed by Kosovo Albanians, while all ethnic groups appear to despise gypsies. Organised crime flourishes.

This is the stark reality that faces the men of the Green Jackets. "Murders,



Walled-in: Rfn Steve Jephson, left, carries out a body-search while Rfn Kevin Dallison keeps guard. The graffiti-covered wall in the heart of Dardanija was a focus of dissent when Serbians began to "ethnically cleanse" Albanian inhabitants of the flats

intimidation, beatings and car theft are all around us," said Rfn Martin Wharby. "We are in the middle of it, trying to make a difference."

He and his colleagues are being increasingly successful. Lt Col Nick Carter, CO 2 RGJ, has begun a string of initiatives to speed the return of normal life. "We cannot protect people from inside an ivory tower. We have to be down there living with them, so that's where we are," he explained. "Two hundred Green Jackets actually live in houses and flats within the city, so we are providing security from within."

They patrol the warrens and underpasses of this filthy city, joking with children and making friends of the old and infirm.

"The mafia hoods don't truck with us.

Everyone gives us respect," said 2nd Lt James Gayner.

His troops are hard but compassionate. Rfn Ricardo Rodriguez joked: "We recruit from some of the toughest inner city areas of the UK: Liverpool, Birmingham . . . Winchester. Our guys are streetwise before they join the Army. They know the tricks that the bullies and the thugs pull and are usually a step ahead of them."

Tough or tender, the ability of these soldiers to adapt is amazing. We watched patrolling Green Jackets confront and "face down" an Albanian thug armed with a machine-gun, and minutes later comfort and reassure Vestna Trstenik, an 80-year-old Serbian widow under a death threat from Albanian refugees.

They run a successful 24-hour community helpline from a flat in which the RGJ operations room has been set up. "Information can be passed and a quick-



Tunnel vision: Rfn Ricardo Rodriguez patrols an evil-smelling underpass into the Dardanija "Bronx". The Serbian Army hid tanks in this tunnel to avoid Nato missile attacks during last year's bombardment

action response summoned," said Rfn Richard Stokes. "It is the Pristina version of the 999 call. Interpreters pass information to the soldiers who then deal with emergencies."

PROTECT

By living in the community, the British soldiers have got to know the territory and the inhabitants. They can keep a check on individuals subjected to intimidation and reassurance and protect the vulnerable.

Rfn Gareth Lawrence said: "Imagine

Liverpool without a postal service and no street names. We can't tie suspects to addresses so we are introducing a simple form of postcodes linked to our military areas. It will be the basis of a long-term return to normality." It is a simple idea, but it means criminals can be traced.

Many cars have no number plates because they have been stolen or removed when the owners were "ethnically cleansed".

Now cars can be linked to homes, and homes can be transformed into electoral registers and the foundations of a democratic process.

Democracy is, however, still some way down the road from the Dardanija flats. Until it arrives, British soldiers will continue to provide the impartial arbitration that just about keeps the lid on the nightmare of Pristina's Bronx.

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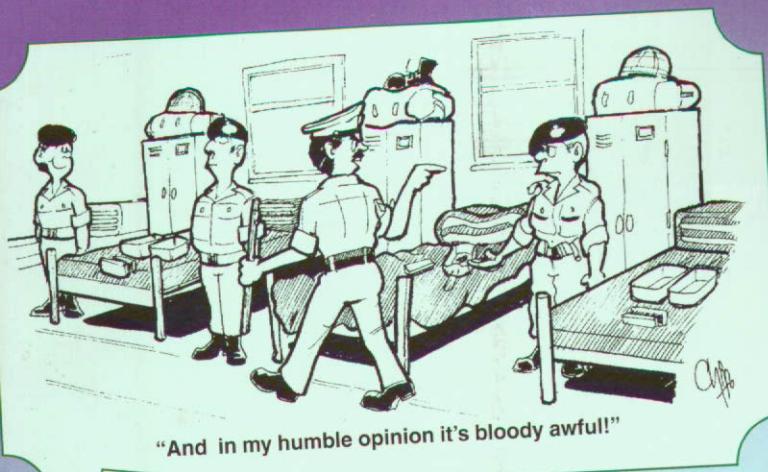
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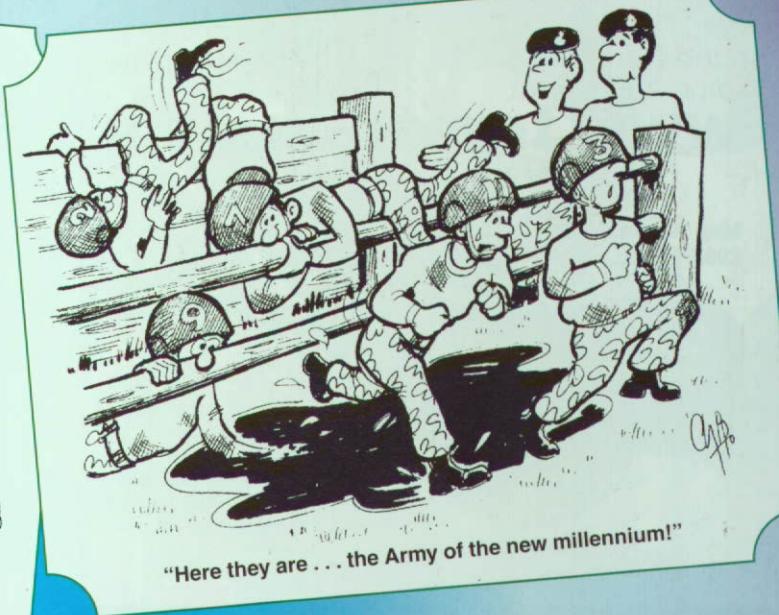
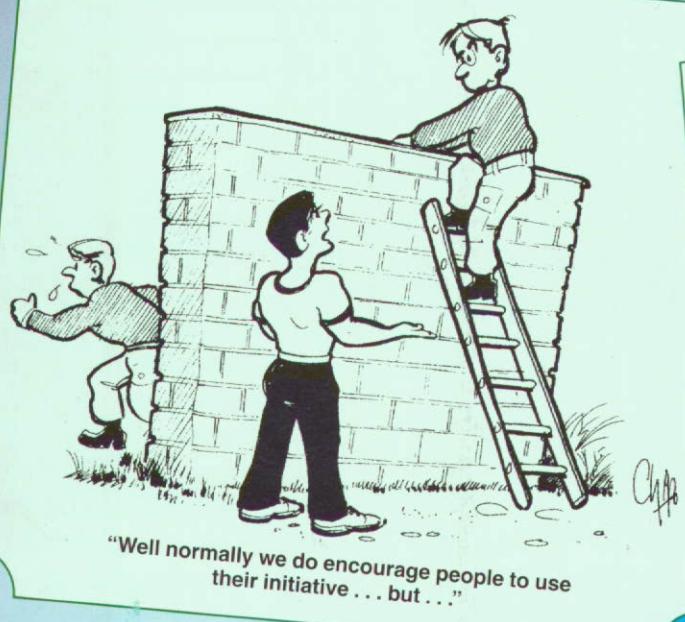
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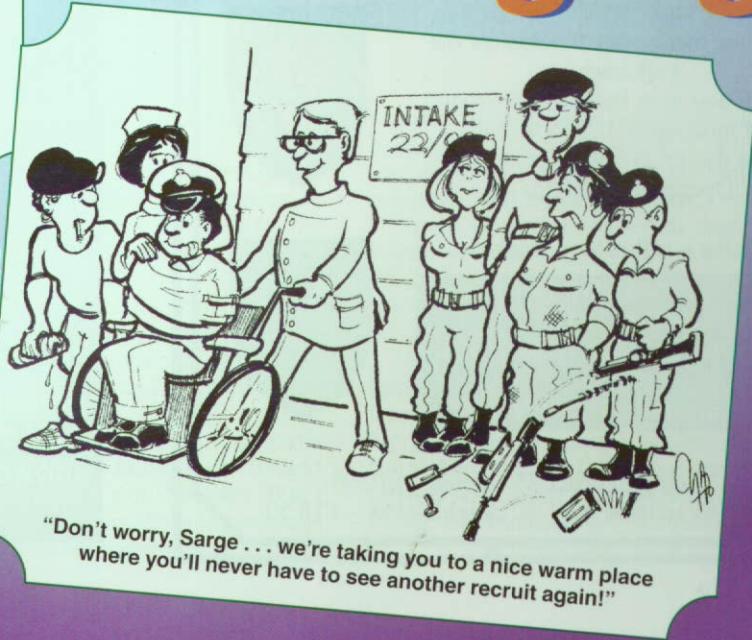
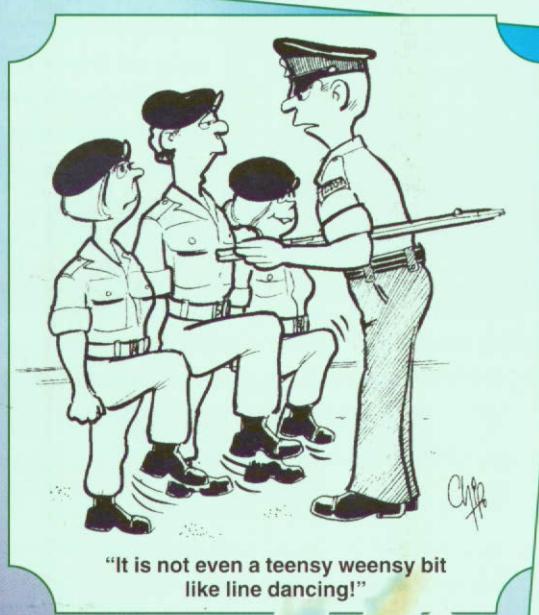
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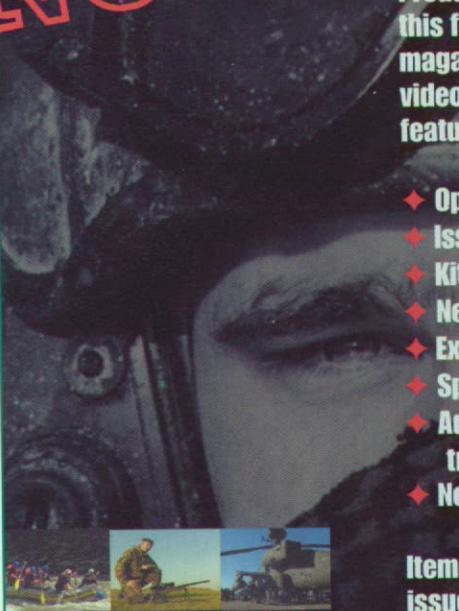
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ARMY

Salisbury Plain

Items in the winter issue include a look at the new Long-Range Large-Calibre Rifle, a few parting words from Lord Robertson and 16 Air Asslt Bde's first ever exercise on Salisbury Plain

◆ WIN A MOUNTAIN BIKE

CC1 is currently running a competition for viewers with a mountain bike as first prize. Watch the video to win the prize.

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Remember CC1 is *your* programme. Watch it and if you don't like it then get on the web and let the production team know your views. Visit the CC1 web page on www.army.mod.uk

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They are also looking for budding TV presenters from the Regular Army or TA who fancy their chances at a screen test. Who knows, you could soon see yourself in a lead role on TV!



'Brigade' of Guards

stands together

Reports: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

FOR Northern Ireland's 3 Brigade read 3 "Guards" Brigade. Three regiments of Guards - the Grenadiers, Coldstream and Scots - are serving under a single brigade command for the first time in the Province, and, it is thought, for the first time anywhere since the 1950s.

There to support the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the 1st Battalions of the three regiments are currently based in Dungannon, where the Grenadier Guards provide the East Tyrone roulement battalion; Bessbrook, where the Coldstream Guards are the Armagh roulement battalion; and

Ballykinler, where the Scots Guards are on a two-year tour.

There was almost a full hand from the Brigade of Guards when a detachment of Welsh Guardsmen provided cover for the Scots Guards during periods of leave and recreational activities.

The significance of the Guards' presence was highlighted by a visit from Maj Gen Evelyn Webb-Carter, Major General Household Division and GOC London District.

He told *Soldier*: "It is a strange environment for soldiers in Northern Ireland at the moment and not that easy. But I was pleased to see how all three battalions of what we call, tongue-in-cheek, the 3rd

Streetwise: From left are LCpl Russell Parke, Gdsm Dave Rideout, Gdsm Jimmy Gaita and LCpl Daniel Hardy of Queen's Coy, Gren Gds

For the first time, three battalions of the Household Division are serving in Northern Ireland at the same time

Guards Brigade were going about the business of supporting the RUC while at the same time keeping all the soldiers motivated and usefully occupied.

"It was marvellous to see the three battalions so clearly enjoying each other's proximity and shared tasks. The three battalions have not been together in the same brigade since the 1950s in Germany."

Most people think of the Guards in terms of ceremonial duties and parades. But the work of the Scots Guards in Northern Ireland could not be further from their role in London, where they provide the Queen's Guard at St James's Palace and Buckingham Palace, as well as

● Turn to next page

Fiji rugby star joins Scots

No one in their right mind would think of tangling with Gdsm Alifereti Vakacokovanua, 1 SG. He is big... and he looks as broad as he is tall.



Beneath that huge frame you soon discover that this amiable giant from Fiji is one of life's gentlemen. He – and 14 other Pacific islanders – caused a bit of a stir when they joined the British Army after performing at the 1998 Edinburgh Tattoo. He was one of four to sign up with the Scots Guards.

Gdsm Vakacokovanua, who brought with him several years' experience of the Fijian Army, had another talent up his sleeve. He played international rugby for Fiji, winning caps in 1987, an achievement that proved of considerable interest to the regimental rugby team.

What does he think of it so far? "It's a lot colder than in Fiji," he said.

Grenadiers on superhighway

Their Northern Ireland tour has not put a stop to the education programme of soldiers from 1 Gren Gds. In fact, many see the time away as an opportunity.

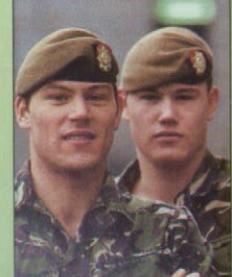
Sgt Kevin Pollitt, 1 Gren Gds, working in the education centre, explained: "We found that soldiers in Northern Ireland have time on their hands and many volunteered for courses. We tackled this using distance-learning and it has proved very successful."

"We have 85 people doing A and GCSE level courses and a couple working on Open University degrees."

Many soldiers already have their own Internet addresses. "We have provided the facility for them to talk to their families at home for the cost of less than a normal phone call," said Sgt Pollitt. "Because so many people want to use the e-mail it has the knock-on effect of teaching all of them keyboard skills."

Brothers-in-arms

As children, Mark, left, and Chris Coulson from Burwash, East Sussex were inseparable. Now they have a career together as both are serving with the Royal Signals.



Both now lance corporals, they joined up and passed out at the same time, were based in Windsor before their present deployment, and are now attached to the Coldstream Guards in Northern Ireland.

Most people would be sick of the sight of each other after all that, but the brothers are still inseparable and enjoying their time on the tour.

Guards 'family' stands side-by-side

From Page 19

a presence at the Tower of London and Windsor Castle.

In Northern Ireland they undertake patrols and have assisted The Royal Irish Regiment in Portadown, particularly during the Drumcree marches.

From his base at Ballykinler on the coast of the Irish Sea and in the shadows of the Mourne Mountains, patrol leader Lt Will Lawrie SG said: "We have not had any violence and relations with local people have been good. We've even extended invitations to social functions inside the camp."

BESSBROOK

Forty or so kilometres away as the crow – or helicopter – flies across the mountains lies the small town of Bessbrook, just outside Newry. For six months it has been the home of 1 Coldm Gds, providing cover in the once-troubled area of south Armagh. Adjutant Maj the Hon Richard Margesson said the battalion's

area of responsibility took in 550 sq km and 50 border crossings, all of which were now open. The Coldstream's area includes potential flashpoints such as Crossmaglen, Forkhill and Newtonhamilton.

"Our mission, like that of other soldiers in Northern Ireland, is to support the RUC in the defeat of violence." Maj Margesson said his soldiers were upbeat and professional about their job.

BAROUKI

At the Barouki Sangar in Crossmaglen, a mile or so from the Irish border and just about the Province's most southerly point, LCpl Christopher Hall was keeping a watchful eye.

He in turn has been backed up by soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, in guarding the Crossmaglen base and providing patrols to assist the RUC.

To the north-west, Maj Richard Winstanley, 1 Gren Gds, was based at Dungannon, almost on the shores of Loch Neagh. He said: "We have a large battalion area, with companies in a number of locations."

Inkerman Company and the Corps of Drums, under Capt Martin David, are based at Aughnacloy, just a few hundred metres from the border with the Irish Republic. Deployed so close to the border, the soldiers have adopted something of a siege mentality, but are ready to move out on patrol at short notice.

FIRE BRIGADE

The Queen's Company in Armagh has had a slightly different role. It is not under the command of the battalion, but reports directly to the 3 Brigade HQ. "It has made for an interesting time," said company commander Maj George Norton. "We are a fire brigade waiting for a fire."

Despite the deployment, rest and recreation and education have not taken a back seat. "We



Pipes on tour: Sgt Paul Selwood and the Pipes and Drums Platoon of 1 Scots Guards in Ballykinler prepare for their year 2000 overseas tour which includes concerts as far afield as Thailand and Australia



On guard: Gdsm Mark Cunningham pauses outside Barouki Sangar in Crossmaglen

have been able to get almost every man in the company away for something or other," said Maj Norton.

Whether they are parading down the Mall or patrolling the countryside of south Armagh, the Guards always walk tall.

The photographs and stories on these pages provide a snapshot of life in Northern Ireland for the three Guards' battalions.

Joining the family business

If Fred Hughes is a familiar name to soldiers in the Coldstream Guards, it's hardly surprising. The present Fred Hughes, right, a sergeant with the 1st Battalion, is the third generation to serve in the regiment and all have the same name.

His father, who survived a vehicle explosion in Aden, joined in 1964, while granddad Fred Hughes, was recruited in 1941.

Serving alongside the present Sgt Hughes is another guardsman in the family business. LCpl Lee Westerman's father, Colin, joined the regiment in 1961. "He didn't frog-march me to the recruiting office but I think he's secretly very proud that I followed him," said Lee, left.



Allison leads the way

Lt Allison Waddie made a little piece of history in Northern Ireland when she became the first woman to lead a patrol of the Coldstream Guards in south Armagh. Normally serving with 53 Battery, 22 Regiment, Lt Waddie was on attachment to 2 Coy, Coldm Gds and spent time in Bessbrook.

Her normal duties with the Coldm Gds involved watchkeeping in the Ops Room.

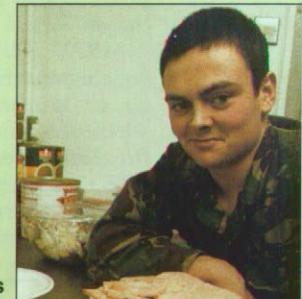


Good food guide

Although he's been in the Army for only three months, Gdsm Matthew Small, 1 Coldm Gds, has already learned that an Army marches on its stomach.

The young man from Keighley in West Yorkshire has been designated chief-cook by his new mates.

"I've had to learn to cook for up to a dozen men but they must like it because they eat it," he said. With his new-found skills, has he considered becoming an Army chef? "No way," he said.



Illustrious partner

A soldier all at sea? That's where LCpl Daniel Hardy, Queen's Coy Gren Gds, based in Armagh, found himself as one of three soldiers joining HMS Illustrious in the Mediterranean.

"It all came about after Exercise Trumpet Dance last year when we had Royal Navy attachments with us," he said.

Along with two other guardsmen, he was invited to taste life on board the warship and leapt at the chance, joining the vessel in Barcelona.

"The trip gave me the opportunity to see how another part of the service lives and works. But I could not handle being at sea all the time. Six days was enough for me."



Do-it-all battlefield taxi gets go-ahead

Reports: Graham Bound

Pictures: Steve Dock

PRODUCTION of the Army's new Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle (MRAV) has received the green light. The Ministry of Defence has signed a £70 million contract with ARTEC, a consortium of German, French and British manufacturers, including Alvis, to develop a family of wheeled vehicles which will replace FV430 and CVR(T) utility vehicles and the Saxon personnel carrier.

However, the first MRAVs will not be in service until 2006, when the consortium begins delivering an initial British requirement of 300 personnel carriers and mobile command posts.

30 YEARS

The "battlefield taxis", as they are known, should remain in use for 30 years, with an estimated 1,000 vehicles being introduced over this period. The total procurement cost will be more than £1 billion.

MRAV will be heavily armoured and capable of carrying a turret, but the vehicle is designed for operations in areas where there is a reduced threat of direct fire. Emphasis is on speed and versatility.

With a range of more than 1,000km, and able to travel at 103kph flat out, the eight-wheel-drive MRAV will cross



Way ahead: A computer-generated picture of a Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle in motion

metre-high obstacles and climb gradient of 60 per cent.

A modular approach to design and construction means that MRAV will almost certainly appear in a large variety of guises during its lifespan. Apart from the APC (capable of carrying eight fully-equipped soldiers) and command posts, the chassis

can be adapted for ambulance work, battle-damage repair, radio-relaying, and radar artillery observation. Armed variants will carry mortar and cannon.

Armour and efficient sealing will provide protection from artillery fragments, small-to-medium calibre rounds, mines, air-dropped bomblets and NBC attack.

Win a pocket survival kit

YOU never know when you might be lost in the jungle, marooned in the desert or afloat in a lifeboat... so the best thing to do is stay in with a good video and a few cans of something wet and pleasant. But if you really must go looking for adventure, it might be a good idea to take a small survival kit.

Outdoor equipment manufacturer BCB International has produced just such a kit. Packed tightly into a tobacco box-like container, its Combat Survival Kit includes such essentials as a compass, night light, fire lighter, sewing kit, snare wire, water purifying tablets, a fishing kit and a tiny booklet of advice on how to get home alive.

For details about where to buy a BCB combat survival kit, call 01222 464463. Or you can win one!

Soldier and BCB International have one Combat Survival Kit (pictured here) to give away. Just answer the following question correctly.



How many pieces of equipment are there in the BCB Combat Survival Kit?

Send your reply to Soldier on a postcard or the back of an envelope, endorsed "Survival competition", to reach us by January 31. The first correct answer chosen at random will win. Usual competition rules apply.



Self-raising: Two containers unfold and expand into a roomy, modern bakery. Inset: LCpl Tony Singleton unloads a tray-full of freshly-baked rolls



Picture: Steve Dolk

Our daily bread – and lots of it

PROVIDING several brigades of soldiers with their daily bread is the ambitious, but apparently attainable, target for new mobile bakeries now being field-tested prior to introduction with the Royal Logistic Corps later this year.

Based on two semi-folding mobile buildings, and a containerised 200kva generator, each bakery can be delivered to its third-line operating area by three non-dedicated DROPS trucks. Once on site, a 12-strong team working in two shifts can provide up to 5,000 loaves a day, enough to supply 16,500 troops.

As well as conventional military deployments, it is envisaged that the bakeries may be mobilised to feed

refugees during humanitarian crises.

Just four of the mobile bakeries have been ordered from manufacturers Marshalls of Cambridge: 9 Supply Regiment RLC, based in the UK, and 6 Supply Regiment in Germany, will each receive two.

The new bakeries are much roomier than the 30-year-old systems that the RLC operators say are now beyond economical repair. They are also more automated, leading to radically increased production.

But although the modern systems are able to produce 200 loaves an hour, compared with the old bakeries' 150, there has been one significant trade-off. Because the old models were perma-

nently mounted on vehicles, they could be on-site and up and running very quickly.

The modern units have to be unloaded from DROPS trucks and interconnected before the first batch of dough can be mixed. Nevertheless, they can be running within three hours of arrival and the first warm bread can be issued to rations troops within five hours.

Sgt Roy Griffin, 9 Supply Regiment, a bakery shift commander who has been involved with the trial, says bakeries are about more than simple nourishment. "Give the guys fresh bread and it puts smiles on their faces."

Look forward to more smiles.

Map reading in the dark

MAP-reading at night usually involves the use of a torch – and a brief flash of even the most guarded light can be a fatal mistake for those on active service. Now, however, there is a new pocket-sized device that uses an internal powerless light source to softly illuminate the contours, rivers and obstacles.

Placed over a map, the revolutionary Traser map-reader uses a luminous green-tinted light source to illuminate a square of map without allowing any light to seep out. A transparent calibrated base-plate and a magnifying lens help map-reading.

Traser's low-level light is chemically generated by tritium gas (no batteries are needed), and, with a life span of more than years,



requires no maintenance. A hardened polymer case and strong nylon pouch adequately protect the device.

For information about stockists, call 07000 872737. Website: www.traser-uk.com

Win a Traser map reader!

We have one Traser map reader (pictured left) to give away. To enter the draw, just answer the following question correctly.

What is the chemical that generates the Traser's light?

Send your reply to **Soldier** on a postcard or the back of an envelope, endorsed "Traser competition", to reach us by January 31. The first correct answer chosen at random will win. Usual competition rules apply.

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Compensation: new deal soon

PROPOSALS for a new compensation package for members of the Armed Forces and their dependants are to be published in a consultation document early this year.

This will follow the first comprehensive look at Services compensation arrangements since the War Pensions Scheme was introduced more than 50 years ago.

Armed Forces Minister John Spellar said: "The review has examined from first principles the way in which Service men and women and their dependants are compensated when they suffer illness, injury or death due to service.

"We are determined that we should provide our Service men and women with a compensation package which will give them the reassurance that they will be provided for when facing the challenges and risks associated with Service life."

• Meanwhile the wide-ranging review of Armed Forces pensions, announced in September 1998, is due to report this summer.

RAMC recruiting: Mr Spellar said in a written answer that although Royal Army Medical Corps recruitment into training was good, it was more difficult to attract already qualified medical personnel.

A tri-Service campaign in February and March 1999 aimed at the direct recruitment of qualified people resulted in one doctor and four nurses entering the Army, with a further six nurses in the recruiting process.

Responses have been "promising", Mr Spellar said, from a major recruiting campaign for the Territorial Army Medical Services laun-



ched in September. On September 1, the strength of the Defence Medical Services was 6,101, against an expected figure of 8,500 – a shortfall of 28 per cent.

Smart Procurement: The MoD remains on track to save £2 billion through its Smart Procurement Initiative, a streamlined system of procuring and supporting defence equipment. Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon

And I quote...

Fd Marshal Lord Bramall: "The Armed Forces are one of the finest jewels in the crown. I know of no national institution which has retained its reputation or which commands the respect and admiration of the public as well as the Armed Forces have. They have proved their worth and they have done their duty over and over again in the past 30 years."

• The ban on homosexuals serving in the Armed Forces is to be lifted in January with the publication of a new code of conduct covering behaviour standards required of all personnel, whether heterosexual or homosexual. – *The Times*

• The task of running peacekeeping operations in Kosovo is likely to be given next year to Eurocorps, the much-derided Franco-German-Spanish-Belgian-Luxembourg unit originally created as a European rival to Nato. – *Daily Telegraph*

• The Ministry of Defence has scrapped pork sausages from this year's Christmas dinner served to personnel in the Middle East after the Foreign Office warned against offending Muslims. – *Daily Telegraph*

• Royal Regiment of Wales soldiers posted to Bosnia were unable to take their

said integrated project teams, with full industry participation, would be fully operational by April this year.

Fijian recruits: As a result of a British Army recruiting team visit to Fiji, 200 successful applicants are being called forward to the United Kingdom to undergo the final stage of the selection process before starting training. A further 78 applications have been deferred.

Kilt-off: Colchester Lib-Dem MP Bob Russell asked in a written question what plans the MoD had "to appoint a new Inspector of Kilts". Defence Minister Peter Kilfoyle replied: "The Ministry of Defence has no such appointment and there are no plans to create one."

Full ration: A total of 1.2 million 24-hour operational ration packs were issued in 1997-98 and 1.6 million the following year. In 1999-00, the figure is expected to be 1.9 million and 1.2 million in 2000-01.

Up-and-coming: Latest in-service dates for the following equipment is: Bowman, 2002 but under review (original date 1995); Barmine replacement, 2010; Area Weapons Effect Simulator, 2003 (1999); Future Short and Very Short Range Air Defence, 2020 (2015); Combined Arms Tactical Trainer, 2001 (2000); Future Engineer Tank, 2006 (2001); Lightweight Mobile Artillery Weapons System, 2007; Next Generation Light Anti-Tank Weapon, 2006; Formation Battle Management System, 2002; Theatre-Wide Communications Network, 2002.

veterans has shown evidence of brain damage. – *The Times*

• Thousands of acres of Britain's finest moors, heaths, meadows and mountains currently reserved for military use could be opened to walkers under new Government proposals. – *Daily Telegraph*

• A campaign to open up for public use hundreds of thousands of acres of land under military use has been launched by *The Independent on Sunday*. Nearly 590,000 acres of countryside, including some of the most beautiful landscapes in Britain, are closed to civilians.

• Thousands of British troops deployed in Kosovo face a cold Christmas in tents because huts ordered from a British contractor have not been completed in time. – *Daily Mail*



mascot goat, Taffy, with them but stumbled on a local Muslim farmer who was happy to part with one of his herd to take its place. Naturally, the RRW soldiers named the Bosnian stand-in "Taffski". – *The Times*

• New research in the United States into illnesses suffered by American Gulf War

No place like Dome

Report: Graham Bound
Pictures: Mike Weston and
The Millennium Experience

MOST women in the Territorial Army would consider achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel and commanding an RLC Postal and Courier Group to be achievement enough. But Deborah Oliver likes to be unique. So she became the first and, so far only, Director of Public Relations at the Millennium Dome.

As the clock ticked towards the biggest date for 1,000 years, Deborah had the satisfaction of seeing her most demanding project reach fruition. It had, she admits, been touch-and-go for a while: politicians squabbled about the money being spent, and almost everyone bickered about what should be under that great fabric roof.

Pundits speculated that the dome was doomed. But Deborah was never a doubter. "There was clarity of mission," she told *Soldier*, a few days before the opening. "People rose to the challenge and pulled together. It was just like a military operation, and the Dome is ready on time."

As the Millennium Dome prepared to welcome the public, TA soldier Lt Col Deborah Oliver had good reason to be pleased



At home with the dome: Lt Col Deborah Oliver, TA soldier and Millennium Experience promoter, helped take Britain's most famous building from concept to reality

The officer, who joined the RLC's TA postal team 20 years ago when she was employed by the Post Office, said she would be allowing herself a big smile of pride on New Year's Eve as 800 reporters and camera crews were launching the biggest live broadcast in history.

Thanks to the co-ordinating efforts of the 29-strong press and PR team – augmented to 80 for the opening night – an estimated four billion people in 122 countries around the globe would be sharing the thrill of London's glittering occasion.

Deborah anticipated a grandstand seat and was looking forward to sharing the big night under the Dome with her parents. But one could understand if she secretly wanted a quiet New Year's Eve, looking out over the illuminated Thames and the glow of the Dome from her Docklands flat. "No chance," she laughed,

adding a well-practised phrase: "A woman's place is in the Dome."

Fact is, she is still excited by the novelty of her job and the knowledge that the challenges do not end when the sun comes up on New Year's Day. The Millennium Experience continues until December 31, 2000 and throughout the year she and her team must keep the turnstiles spinning.

More than a million people have already bought tickets, and weekends in January are sold out. Early sales augur well for the rest of the year. "We're confident that when we can actually show people what a fantastic place this is, the rest of the tickets will sell very quickly," said the up-beat PR director.

It took an army of workers, battling against some formidable opposition to complete the Millennium Dome on schedule. The military metaphors may seem odd, but Deborah Oliver feels comfortable with them. She tends to think Army-style anyway. "The TA gave me a lot of very useful experience in teamwork," she said. "And it taught me how to focus on objectives. We've made it, and it's largely thanks to those skills."

Wizard tattoo will wow 'em

IT will be a tattoo – but not as we know it. Against the magical backdrop of Horse Guards, hi-tech wizardry will conjure up what is being billed as the greatest military spectacle ever seen in Britain, writes Chris Horrocks.

"Unique" and "dramatic" are two other words being frequently used to describe the plans for the tri-Service Royal Military Tattoo 2000 from July 10-15.

The one-off successor to the Royal Tournament – other events will follow in London and the regions – will be the jewel in a crown of defence-oriented millennium events in which the public will be allowed access for the first time to the Horse Guards building itself.

Launching the ticket sales for "RMT 2000", Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon said: "The tattoo will reflect the unique role of the Services. It will be the central element of the Armed Forces' contribution to the nation's millennium celebrations.

"It will bring together personnel of all three Services in an event more dramatic than any military event previously seen in this country."

In a fast-moving two-hour show, hundreds of Service men and women will take spectators through a proud military history and project them into the future, combining traditional pageantry with state-of-the-art technology.

An audience of up to 13,000 on each of the six nights will thrill to aircraft fly-pasts, parachutists and bands including those of the Queen's Division and the Brigade of Gurkhas as well as the Massed Pipes and Drums of the Scottish Division supported by a choir.

For the first time, The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery will perform the musical drive on the relatively open space of Horse Guards Parade.

Costing £6.5 million to stage – offset by sponsorship and ticket sales – the tattoo is intended to aid Service charities. Admission will cost between £20 and £50, with special family deals.

Seats for a preview evening on Sunday July 9 can be bought by Service men and women, their families and veterans. They will cost £6 and £10 but will not be available until March 1.

Box office: 0870 241 0301; information line: 09068 122 953 (all calls 60p); website: www.rmt2000.mod.uk; e-mail: enquiries@rmt2000.mod.uk

● Other millennium events:
Horse Guards, Whitehall: open free all July weekends, 10 am to 4 pm. Wellington's offices on show (020 7414 2360).

National Army Museum: Free shows and exhibitions (020 7730 0717 ext 2210).

Royal Hospital, Chelsea: Son et Lumière 2000: Men in Scarlet, September 12-16; Garden of Peace, from May 22 (020 7881 5308/5309).

Tower of London: Special events throughout the year (020 7709 0765).

Tri-Service participation in the National Skills Championship and Festival at the NEC in July and support for the Millennium Youth Games in Southampton in August.

Win a free day at the Millennium Experience

Soldier and the Millennium Experience have a pair of adult tickets, worth £40, to give away. They could be yours if you answer this question correctly:
On what date does the Millennium Experience end?

Send your answers, on a post card or an envelope, to *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. The first correct entry selected at random on January 31, will win. Only one entry per reader is permitted and *Soldier* staff and their families may not enter. The Editor's decision is final.



Courtesy of the organisers, *Soldier* has two adult tickets to the tattoo performance on Saturday, July 15 to award as prizes in a simple competition. Here is the question:

Who will perform the Musical Drive on Horse Guards Parade for the first time?

For rules, procedure and closing date, see the Millennium Experience competition on these pages.



Picture: Steve Docks

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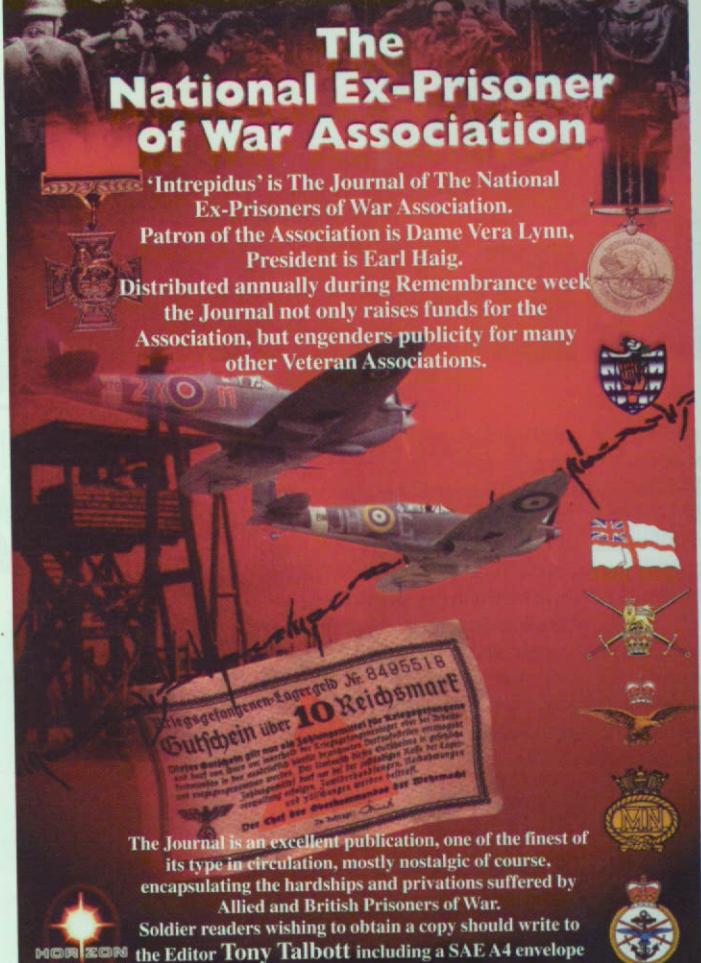
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Army Photographic Competition

Judges 'fixed it' for Jim

TA officer scoops top award after a year with the Regulars

Report: John Elliott

YOU could say that Capt Jim Gallagher had planned his portfolio with meticulous precision. It would be nowhere near the truth, of course, but it would provide an easier explanation of how he came to be judged the Army's Professional Photographer of the Year.

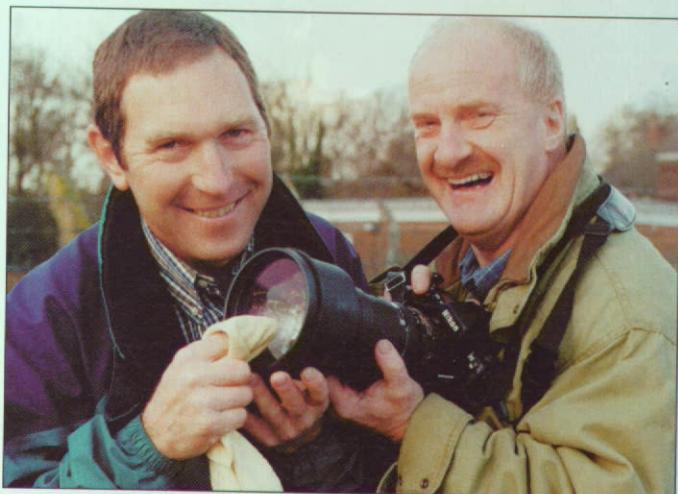
The fact is that two days before the deadline Jim was uncertain about his eligibility. As a Territorial Army officer on a Fixed Term Regular Service contract with the Media Ops Group at HQ Land Command, he reckoned he was covered for just about every category – Regular, TA or MoD civilian.

On the advice of HQ Land picture editor Terry Champion, newly arrived in post from *Soldier*, he wisely opted for the

main event. Jim's assignments during his year as a photographer with HQ Land had taken him to Jamaica, the Falkland Islands, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo, so he had plenty of material to choose from.

Sent to the Balkans to cover Nato's historic thrust into Kosovo, he crossed the border from Macedonia with units of The King's Royal Hussars, the Irish Guards and The Royal Gurkha Rifles, an event he describes as "the highlight of my career".

Now working as a civilian darkroom technician at Wilton, Jim says the image from his portfolio that meant most to him



Picture: Terry Champion

Best of rivals: Army Photographer of the Year Capt Jim Gallagher, right, has his lens cleaned by colleague Kevin Capon, the runner-up

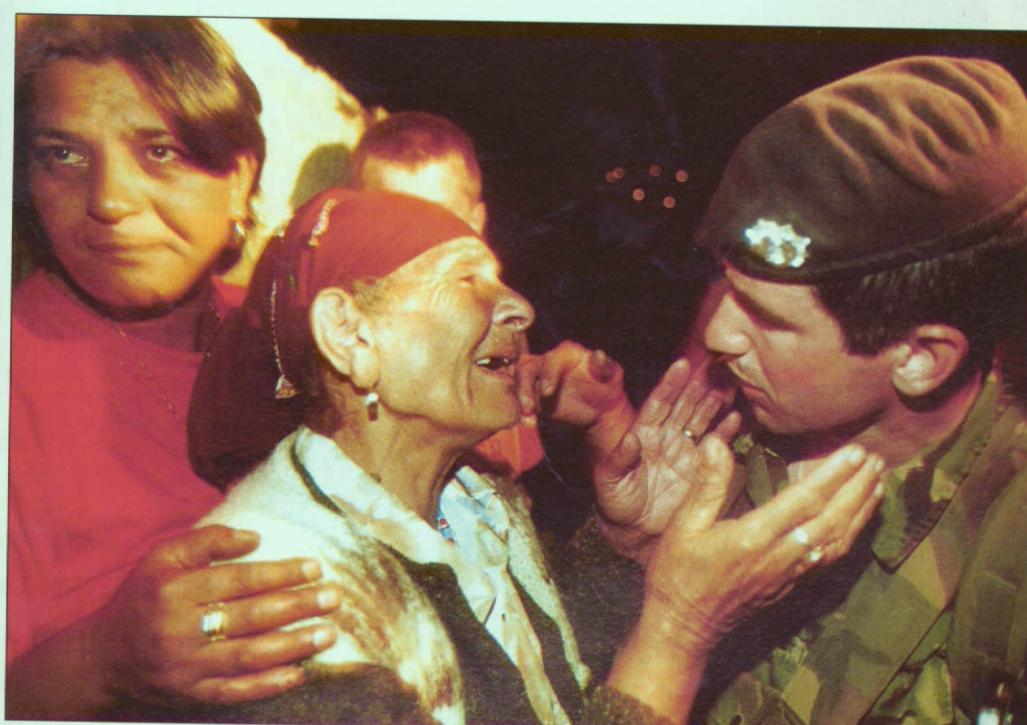
was of a coffin on the back of a British Army Land Rover at Skopje airport, Macedonia. He snapped it during a rehearsal for the repatriation of the two Gurkha soldiers killed by an explosion in Kosovo. As he knelt to take the picture he delayed his shot to include an approaching American Serviceman – the first he had seen in theatre.

In 1984 when Jim, then a sergeant serving as an RAOC photographer in Viersen, Germany, last entered the competition, he won five out of seven main categories. This time he also won three runners-up prizes.

Close colleague, friendly rival and fellow HQ Land photographer Kevin Capon, last year's clear winner, finished runner-up in three categories (including Photographer of the Year) and won the award for the best overall photograph (Jim was the runner-up!).

The competition is going from strength to strength, and more than 250 images were submitted by 50 photographers.

Their work was judged by a panel made up of Brig Sebastian Roberts, Director of Corporate Communications (Army); Martin Keane, Chief Picture Editor of the Press Association; professional photographer Sue Kaye; and Bill Gallacher of Saatchi & Saatchi.



Compassion: Capt Jim Gallagher's portfolio photograph of Sgt Shaun Lewis, himself an Army photographer, comforting a gypsy woman whose home in Pristina had been torched by Kosovo Albanians

Army Photographic Competition

ROLL OF HONOUR

Army Professional Photographer of the Year (sponsored by Method Publishing Company): Capt Jim Gallagher, Media Ops, HQ Land, £500 photographic vouchers; runner-up, Kevin Capon, Media Ops, HQ Land, £250 vouchers.	31
Amateur Photographer of the Year (SSVC and Fuji Photo Film (UK) Ltd): Maj Roy Bevan, Merseyside ACF, £500 plus camera; runner-up, WO2 Simon Cook, 256 City of London Fd Hosp, £250 plus film; highly commended, Capt Sam Potter, 4 R Irish, £125.	OPTIMA 400-2
Monochrome (National Army Museum): LCpl Jim Hennessey, JSOP Course, RAF Cosford, £100; runner-up, Sgt Shane Wilkinson, AIS Northern Ireland, £50; highly commended, Kevin Capon, £25.	32
Colour (Kodak): Sgt Shane Wilkinson, £175; runner-up, Capt Jim Gallagher, £50; highly commended, Sgt Shane Wilkinson, £25.	2542
Sport-adventurous training (Grosvenor TV): Cpl Alastair Allen, Media Ops, HQ BFC, £100; runner-up, Kevin Capon, £50; highly commended, Cpl Bobby Nelson, HQNI, £25.	33
Digital image (Image Data Systems): William Cummings, c/o 3 RHA, £150; runner-up, Cpl Alastair Allen, £75; highly commended, Cpl Chris Redford, CSS CPC, HQNI, £25.	OPTIMA 400-2
Own choice (Nikon UK Ltd): LCpl Simon Green, formerly at RAF Cosford, digital camera; runner-up (<i>Soldier</i>), Mrs Kate Shaw, DSCD Bicester, £75; highly commended (<i>Soldier</i>), Capt Ash Alexander-Cooper, APC 27, Middle Wallop, £25.	34
PR image (Consolidated Communications): WO2 Dave Brown, Media Ops, HQ Land, £175; runner-up, Capt Jim Gallagher, £75; highly commended, Cpl Steve Taylor, 2 Para, £25.	OPTIMA 400-2
Best overall (Saatchi & Saatchi): Kevin Capon, £600; runner-up, Capt Jim Gallagher, £400.	OPTIMA 400-2



In flight: Cpl Alastair Allen, an Army photographer in Cyprus, used his Nikon FM2 for this atmospheric shot, judged the best sports picture



Sniper: The barrel of the gun leads the eye towards the concealed face of the marksman in this best monochrome study, left, by LCpl James Hennessey

Heads down: Kevin Capon's best overall image, right, was shot as British troops standing by in Macedonia during the Nato bombing campaign prepared to move into Kosovo



Thumbs up: Lt Philip Searle of the Green Howards prepares to move forward during live-firing at Krivolac Ranges, Macedonia, a moment which won the best PR image category, left, for WO2 Dave Brown

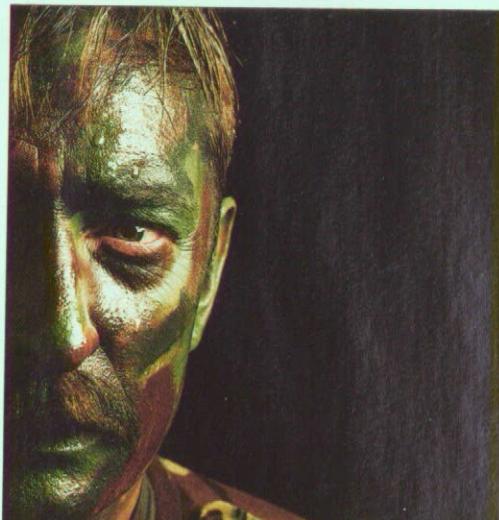
Own choice: LCpl Simon Green's picture, right, is of a member of the permanent staff at the Services' photographic school at RAF Cosford. The eyes in the black-and-white negative were hand-tinted



Reserves at Altcar: This study by Maj Roy Bevan ACF, of Territorial Army soldiers of the QLR on a training area exercise on Merseyside, helped him win the title of Amateur Photographer of the Year



Cost of freedom: From Capt Jim Gallagher's winning portfolio



Best colour: Sgt Shane Wilkinson's shot of WO1 Charlie Skinner, RMP. His red eyes were caused by cam cream running into them

Eagle Troop: The picture below, composed for N Battery, Eagle Troop, 3 RHA, won best digital entry for William Cummings



Who dares

Falling down on the job

Words: Anthony Stone
Pictures: LCpl Mark Scobie
and Steve Dock

BY the time we were two-and-a-half miles above Salisbury Plain it was too late to have second thoughts. LCpl Andy Goodall tapped me on the shoulder and showed me the altimeter. My time was at hand.

It was a beautifully clear day and 12,000ft below I could see the fields of Wiltshire laid out like a patchwork quilt. My mouth was dry and I had a feeling in the pit of my stomach that reminded me of the dentist's waiting room and the sound of the drill next door.

I knew that one way or another the next eight-and-a-half minutes would be with me forever.

Unless something extremely untoward happened to the harness, this was going to be a tandem jump. I was going along for the ride with LCpl Goodall, 2 Para, doing the work.

It took more than 20 minutes for the Red Devils' twin-engined Islander to climb to the right height. Conditions were perfect, so there was not even the outside chance of rain stopping play. Just time for some final checks and last-minute advice.

"Turn around a minute, I thought I saw something fall off the back of your parachute. Well, it's probably not important anyway." This was just another day at the office for the Red Devils and the jokes came thick and fast. Funnily enough, laughter was the last thing on my mind.

All of a sudden things started happening very quickly. The door was pulled back and the wind rushed in, swirling around the eight skydivers and making conversation impossible.

The first two Red Devils jumped into the void with the nonchalance of three-year-olds leaping into a sandpit.

LCpl Mark Scobie, the Red Devils' team cameraman, was next out and I remembered his instructions to look up and smile. That was probably the maddest thing I heard all day.

An hour earlier on the nice firm ground

If you ever get the urge to jump out of a plane at 12,000ft and fall towards earth at 120mph, the Red Devils will be glad to help you



That sinking feeling: Two miles over Wiltshire and travelling at 120mph, LCpl Andy Goodall, top, and passenger Anthony Stone

of Netheravon airfield, LCpl Goodall had given me the training brief. "The most important thing I want you to remember is to arch," he said. "When you fall through the sky imagine you are like a sheet of paper. If it remains flat it will move all over the place. But arch and you will cut through the sky. It'll be mega."

"There are two reasons for this. One is



Take-off: The Red Devils' Islander begins the long haul up to 12,000ft

that it makes a stable platform and the other most important reason is it looks good for the camera."

Sixty minutes later as I was thinking about these words of wisdom, Andy Goodall gave me another tap on the shoulder and we moved into the doorway. It might be stating the obvious, but, when you are teetering on the edge at 12,000ft, it does seem an incredibly long way down.

I was concentrating on my instructions. My feet were crossed and touching the underside of the aircraft. My back was arched, head back and arms folded across my chest.

I knew what was about to happen but my brain could not quite take it in. There was no going back. We were perched on the edge of the abyss for only a few seconds before Andy launched us into the void.

Immediately we went into a somersault I wasn't expecting and my heart floored the adrenalin pump. For the first few seconds we were zooming at about 220mph before a drogue 'chute shot out of the back of Andy's pack and slowed us to a mere 120mph so the photographer could catch up.

For the next 45 seconds my brain underwent sensory overload. It was wonderful. Everything went into slow time as if in a dream. In this weightless world, the laws of physics seem to have been turned upside down and it felt as if I could fly.

To obtain photographic evidence, LCpl Scobie dropped in from left field to run

off some pictures, shot using a helmet-mounted camera and a mouth-operated shutter.

A tap on the shoulder was the signal to go back to the number one position: arms folded across the chest. When Andy pulled the ripcord it felt as if we were shooting upwards like a champagne cork. Of course we weren't, we were just slowing down.

With the canopy deployed I prepared to sit back and enjoy the view. The sky was virtually cloudless and you could see for miles; Portsmouth loomed like a supertanker in the distance.

"Are you alright?" Andy asked. "Shall we try a bit of gliding?"

With a demonic laugh befitting a Red Devil, he pulled down on a control rope on one side of the parachute and sent us into a tight corkscrew. The G forces sent the blood rushing to my toes. Imagine the most sickening fairground ride you have ever been on, times ten. Then Andy tried a glide anticlockwise.

This was the only part of the descent when I wondered if I should have taken some extra bits of kit. Namely brown trousers and bicycle clips.

Wiltshire had been there all along but very much in the background. Suddenly it was looming fast and I wondered how big a hole we would make on impact.

Because modern canopies are so aerodynamic, daredevils can land at 40mph and "surf the turf" for 50 metres. Of course, if you get it wrong you can get splattered.

But my concerns



Happy landings: The jumpers prepare to touch down

Devils who pay their own way

THE Red Devils were formed in 1964 as The Parachute Regiment's freefall team and became the official Army parachute team experts in 1971. Since then they have performed all over the world and are renowned for their spectacular displays.

As the Red Devils receive no central funding they rely on money raised through shows and by offering civilians parachuting courses.

Team members are all serving soldiers in The Parachute Regiment and are attached to the Red Devils for three years, although this period can be extended.

LCpl Andy Goodall remembered what it was like the first time he did a freefall. "I was apprehensive, but it was controlled. Obviously it is not natural being two-and-a-half miles up and leaping into nothing."

"It is very different from a military parachute jump when you might be standing up for 20 minutes before you jump and you are carrying a lot of kit. Quite honestly, all you want to do is get out of the aeroplane. Sports jumping on the other hand is relaxing and competitive."

Sky diving has come a long way since it started 40 years ago when people could not get close to one another in the air let alone link up. They used to pass a baton between divers to prove they had made contact.

If you are a serving soldier and have toyed with the idea of doing a jump, take this opportunity to do it with the best.

"I would not do it if it was dangerous," said LCpl Goodall. "There is an element of danger because you are falling towards the ground at 120mph and relying on a piece of material to slow you down. Gone are the days when sky diving was dangerous."

If you are a serving soldier you can experience the high of freefall from 12,000ft at a special rate. Military personnel can enjoy the thrill of a tandem jump with the Red Devils for just £90. The display team is available for military and civilian displays of any size. The only requirement is a landing strip the size of a football pitch. Your contact is Sgt Maj Roy Charters on 01980 678211.

were groundless. Andy made some late corrections and we landed perfectly, like a party balloon.

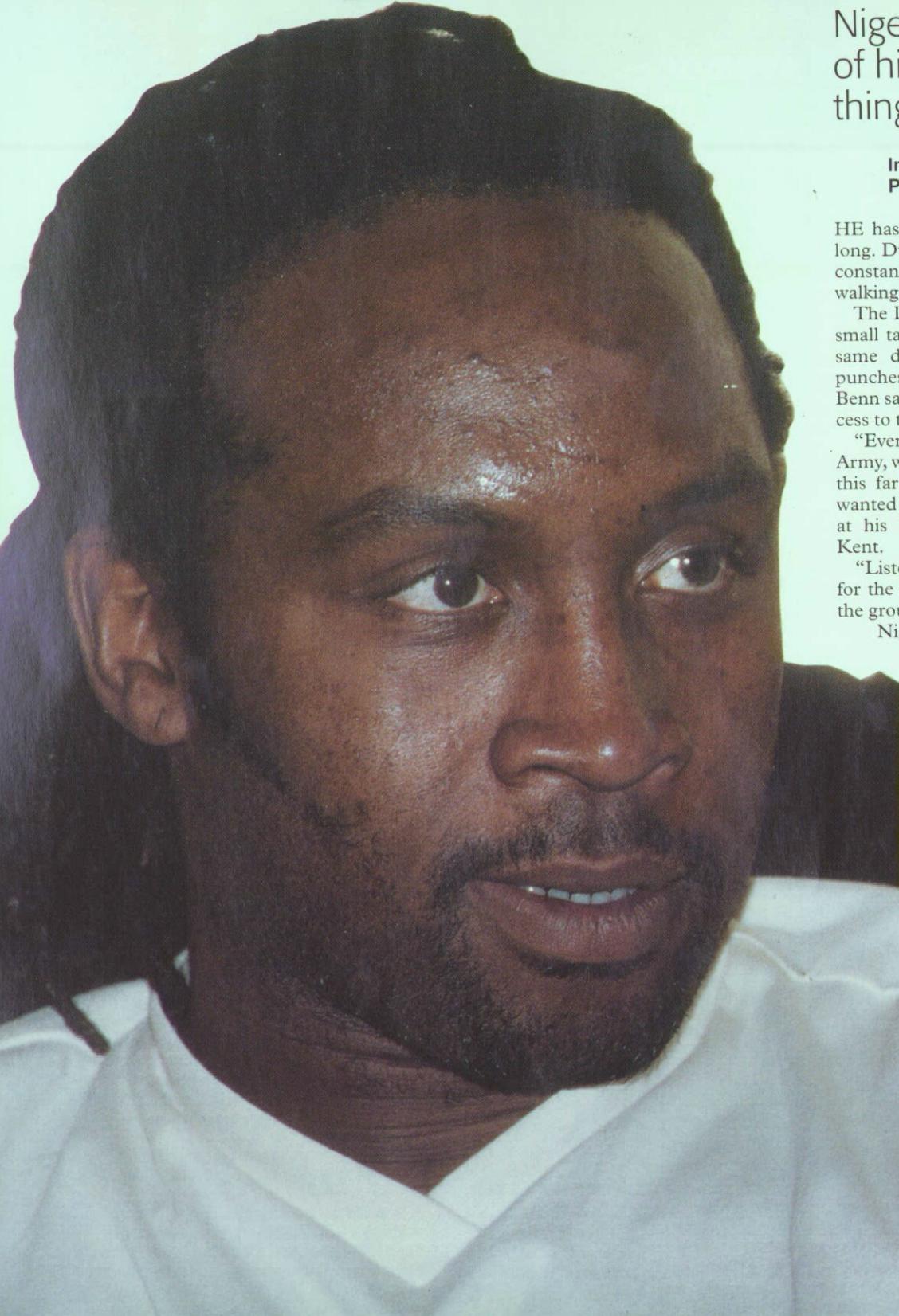
Mark Scobie had already touched down and was all set to video our landing.

With my head still in the clouds and my heart pounding faster than an internet connection, LCpl Scobie asked how it had been for me.

My brain screamed out to reply with a popular phrase of three syllables, but realising the video was rolling, I settled for something not quite so descriptive.

"Unbelievable," I said. "Totally awesome."

Way of the warrior



Nigel Benn was the most explosive British fighter of his generation. But without the Army, he says, things would have turned out very differently

Interview: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Steve Dock

HE has too much energy to sit still for long. During the interview Nigel Benn is constantly on the move, standing up, walking about, prowling like a big cat.

The Dark Destroyer does not go in for small talk. He makes his points with the same deadly accuracy with which his punches once hit their mark. So when Benn says that he owes his enormous success to the Army you sit up and listen.

"Everything I have now is down to the Army, without it I would never have come this far. I wanted to join up because I wanted to be somebody," he said speaking at his luxurious home in Beckenham, Kent.

"Listen, I am not kidding, if it was not for the Army I'd be inside [prison] or in the ground."

Nigel was born in Ilford, Essex, to parents who were hard-working emigrants from Barbados, and he was the sixth of seven sons. He left school at 16 not knowing quite what to do, but already he had a conviction for grievous bodily harm and threatening behaviour. It was his brother John, already serving with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in Germany, who helped steer him in the right direction.

TURNING POINT

His mother begged John to persuade Nigel to join up. "Thank God I did," he said. "The decision to do so was a major turning-point in my life."

If there is one thing that really riles Benn it is racism. He can't stand to have them around him, be they white or black. When he joined up on May 11, 1983, he faced some problems. But in typical Benn style he met difficulties head-on.

"On the first day I got some abuse – call it racism or what-

ever. That was in basic training and I don't take racism from anyone. But you could be ginger and freckled and get it, you could be Indian and get it or you could be black and get it. You just had to stand up for yourself."

"In basic training you got all that crap. But that was just to find out if you were a man or a mouse. If you couldn't handle it then the Army didn't want you."

NO ONE DARED

"Faced with that you've got to have balls. If you are going to crack because they are calling you names, they don't really want you anyway. They want someone who can say, 'yeah, I can handle that'. But, after my eight weeks' basic training was over, nobody dared give me abuse."

"I've seen skinny, white guys getting stuck and I have seen black guys getting it. But it's not because they are black. It is because they don't stand up for themselves."

Even though his sergeant major during basic training gave him a certain amount of grief, Benn admired him. "I loved that man. I respected him, he was always immaculately dressed. He wanted real men in the Army, he didn't want no wuzzies."

Benn served for four years and 265 days, and was posted to Germany before a tour of Northern Ireland and a spell as a regimental policeman. The Army gave Benn many things, but one of the most important was the time and space to figure out the future. "I had the opportunity to think about what I was going to do with my life."

"I still have lots of good mates in the battalion. I don't know why my brother picked a Geordie regiment, but I enjoyed serving with them more than any other bunch of lads. They were great."

"They were like one big family, like

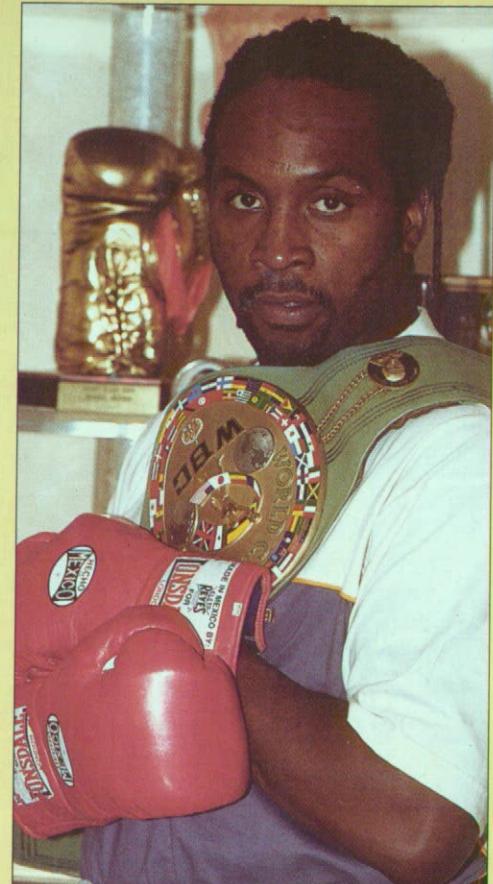
How I emptied the nick

THE cushiest number I ever had in the Army was when I became a regimental policeman. The camp nick was always full. When I was there it was empty. I'd give them a hard time and enjoy it. A squaddie's idea of a good night out was 15 pints of beer and a good scrap, but they knew if they went to jail with me in charge, they'd get mauled.

Some of the men would go really wild. We had a Geordie battalion and some of them lived for drink. One drop of Newcastle Brown and they'd be anybody's. It took me a while to understand their accent but I really got on with those guys, much better than with the Cockneys.

I happily confess to the fact I enjoyed bashing blokes about if they got in trouble. It was a great power kick and also the only way to win their respect and keep the jails empty. I'd make them mark time with a heavy artillery Wombat shell. I told one soldier who was particularly lairy to stand against a wall while holding the shell in both hands and then gradually squat down, kicking out his legs in turn.

– extract from *Dark Destroyer* by Nigel Benn, published by Blake at £14.99. To order your copy phone 0171 381 0666.



your brothers. They might be white, but they were still my brothers."

The Army taught him to box and he proved unbeatable. Not all his contests showcased his devastating power, however. A Soldier

report on the Army individual championships at Aldershot in 1983 said: "Not so entertaining was the middleweight final, where dancing Fusilier Nigel Benn overcame

SI Frank Turmel (APTC). Turmel had little answer to frenetic, whirling attacks from Benn and resorted to holding so often that the match at times resembled a tea dance."

When Benn turned pro, his first 22 fights ended with him knocking out his opponent – half of them inside the first round. And, of course, he

fought Chris Eubank, a man he says he despises more than anyone on earth. Their brutal confrontations were among the most widely anticipated in British boxing history.

The Dark Destroyer's dazzling career bought him the WBO middleweight and WBC super-middleweight belt, worldwide fame and wealth.

His boxing power was awesome. "Whupping ass is my God-given talent," he said. "They put Steve Davis on this earth to pot balls, Maradona to score goals and Nigel Benn to whup ass. That's the way it is."

TEARAWAY

Life has turned out well for the young tearaway. After he quit boxing in 1996 he became a professional DJ and is much in demand. He lives with his wife Carolyne and children Dominic, Sadé, Renée, Conor and India.

"Joining up was the best thing I ever did, otherwise I would have been six foot under or locked up. I chose the right path. I went in a boy and came out a man. I am very proud to say I have been in the Army."

Mighty midgets

Kent's famous narrow gauge steam railway may be little, but it does a man's job – as soldiers of the TA's 275 Railway Squadron found when they ran it on a week-long exercise

Report: Graham Bound
Pictures: Steve Dock

PUFFING across Romney Marsh, leaving smears of smoke in the broad coastal sky and with steam whistles competing to be heard above the cries of gulls, the tiny trains of the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway provide a service out of all proportion to their size.

Each day, the steam and diesel engines pull carriages packed with children to and from their schools, while parents use the service for shopping trips and tourists relish the sheer fun of the ride.

The RH&DR is a thoroughly professional operation and it was this sense of reality in a small package which caught the attention of the soldiers of 275 Railway Squadron RLC (V), a Territorial Army unit within 165 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, when they were looking for a location for their annual exercise.

"At first we thought it sounded a bit like Dad's Army," said Sgt Austin Snelson, as he stood on the platform at Hythe and surveyed the miniature rail operation which was temporarily his. "But the more we looked at the idea, the more we realised that this railway could be very relevant indeed."

Like many of his colleagues, Sgt Snelson drives giant diesel locos in civilian life and he knows the business. "It's run as a main-line operation with normal concern for passenger management, signals and schedules, so all our planning procedures can be applied to it as well as they would be to a conventional operation. But because it's small we can move a lot more trains in the time available. It's ideal for an exercise."

According to the Balkan-sounding scenario, refugees were to be "repatriated" from Dungeness to Hythe. Just as they would in a real deployment, the soldiers

began with recce patrols to assess the railway's assets. A quarter of a mile of elderly track was replaced before the troops took over signal boxes and engines. They were supervised by civilian staff, but for the second half of the two-week camp the railway became an Army operation.

Old-timers living in the area may have felt a spooky sense of *déjà vu*. During the Second World War several of the trains were armoured and fitted with machine-guns and anti-tank weapons. The spiky little trains patrolled the coast and one crew even shot down a Luftwaffe bomber.

More than 50 years on, the only threat was from mischievous schoolchildren. Although tourist traffic had ceased for the winter, the "school run" had to go on.

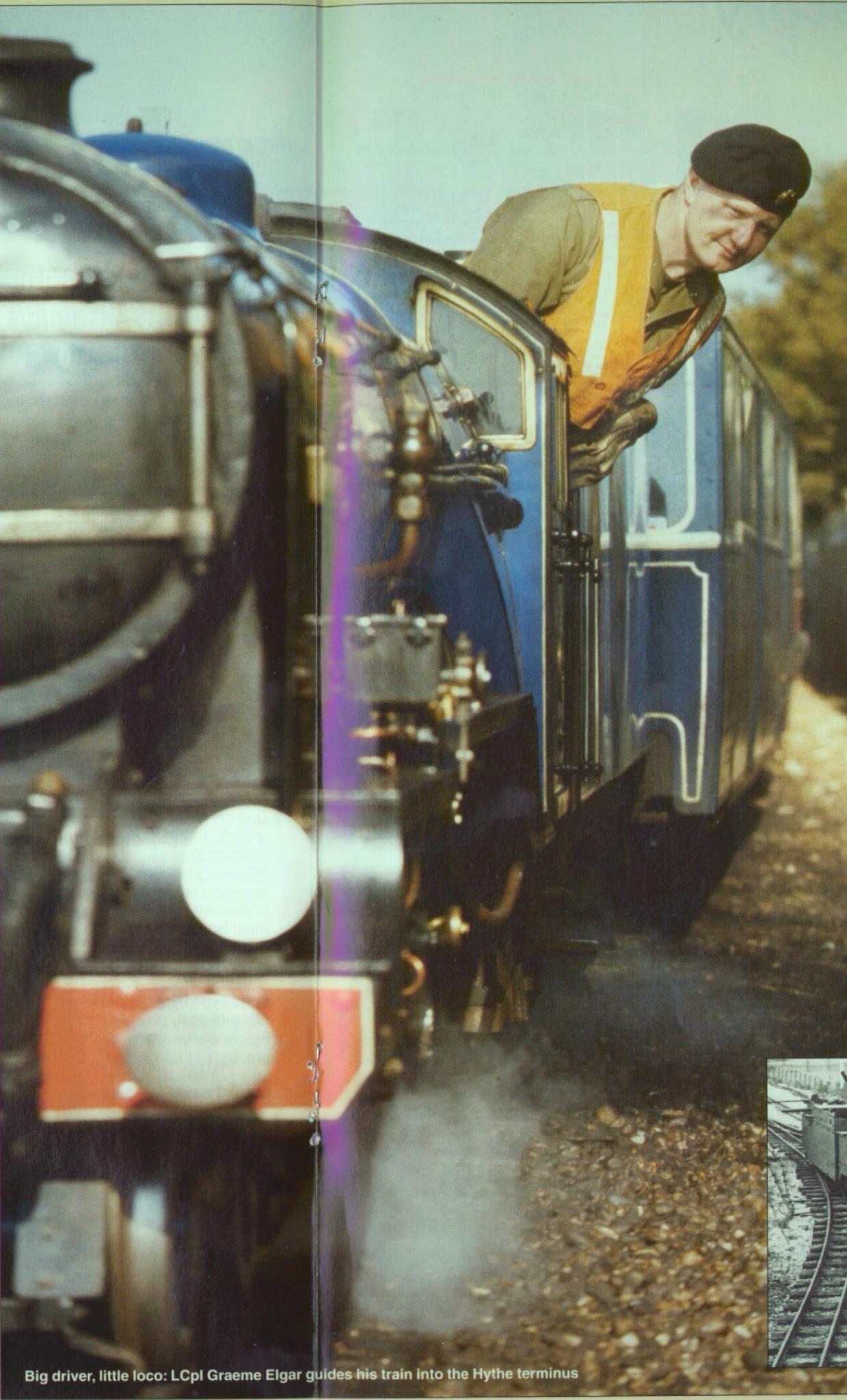
SPOT INSPECTIONS

They had been warned that the pupils might be "a bit of a handful", but, said Austin Snelson, "they didn't give us any bother". Perhaps that was because the troops organised spot inspections of their passengers. Shoes had not been so well polished around the marshes since the Army was last in the area.

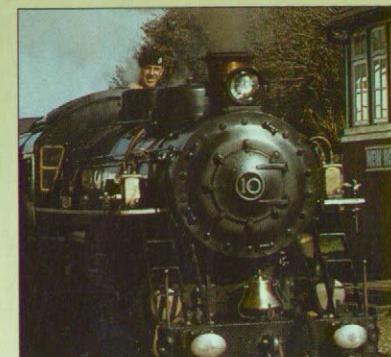
LCpl Iain "Bertie" Bassett, who normally drives huge diesels on the Gatwick-London line, was having the time of his life at the controls of the *Sir Winston Churchill*. Steam locos were new to him, and he had fallen for their fickle, almost human characters. He nodded his head at the petulant loco behind him and confided: "Yesterday she was running smoothly; today she's difficult. She's just in bad mood."

Looking at the coal-blackened faces protruding from the engines it was difficult to identify the drivers as soldiers. Only their cap badges shining through the grime gave them away. That and their smiles.

• First female TA driver - Page 62



Big driver, little loco: LCpl Graeme Elgar guides his train into the Hythe terminus



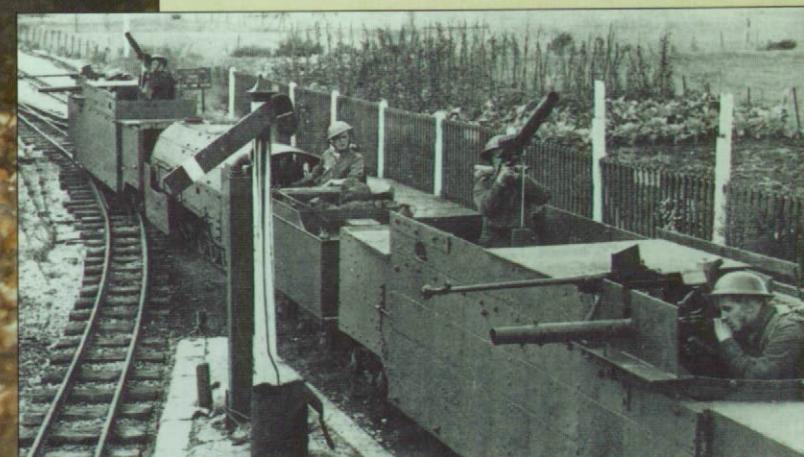
Letting off steam: LCpl Mark Horner takes his engine, left, past a signal box on the Dungeness to Hythe railway line



Lunch on the line: LCpl Bertie Bassett, left, leans from the cab of the *Sir Winston Churchill* at Hythe



They bagged a bomber: During the Second World War, the RH&DR ran trains fitted with armour and guns, below. One crew shot down a German bomber



The thin black line

A new exhibition gives long-overdue credit to Britain's African, Indian and Caribbean soldiers

AN exhibition of old photographs celebrating the part played by hundreds of thousands of black and Asian soldiers in the First and Second World Wars has toured London's boroughs before extending its audience on a nation-wide journey, writes John Elliott.

Sponsored by the Army, which has launched a major recruiting campaign among ethnic minorities, the exhibition was opened in Lambeth Town Hall at a reception attended by the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Roger Wheeler, Ministers of State, local politicians, celebrities and community leaders.

It later moved to Hackney, Southwark and the National Army Museum in Chelsea.

The collection will come as a surprise to many. Although large numbers volunteered to go to war for Britain, black and brown-skinned warriors are curiously under-represented in photographs of conflict. Researchers found the captions inadequate, or simply offensive.

IMAGES

Here are images of African infantrymen in Burma in 1944, of Indian cavalry and infantry on the Western Front during the Great War, of Asian women in the uniform of the Auxiliary Corps and of Sikhs in action at Gallipoli.

"Many people," said Gen Wheeler, "just don't know how great the contribution of people from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia has been. This exhibition will help to set the record straight and serve to acknowledge how much we respect and appreciate their efforts."

Pictures taken by *Soldier* photographers appear in the display, which covers a period of history during which attitudes have undergone a massive change. It was once British – never mind Army – policy that African and Caribbean troops be led by British officers and senior NCOs. Indian troops were not allowed Indian officers until 1928.

Three images show black soldiers serving in Northern Ireland in more recent times, although the organisers unearthed very few pictures of Asians in uniform.

By contrast, the modern Army is represented by African, Caribbean and Asian soldiers, both male and female, and as officer and NCO.

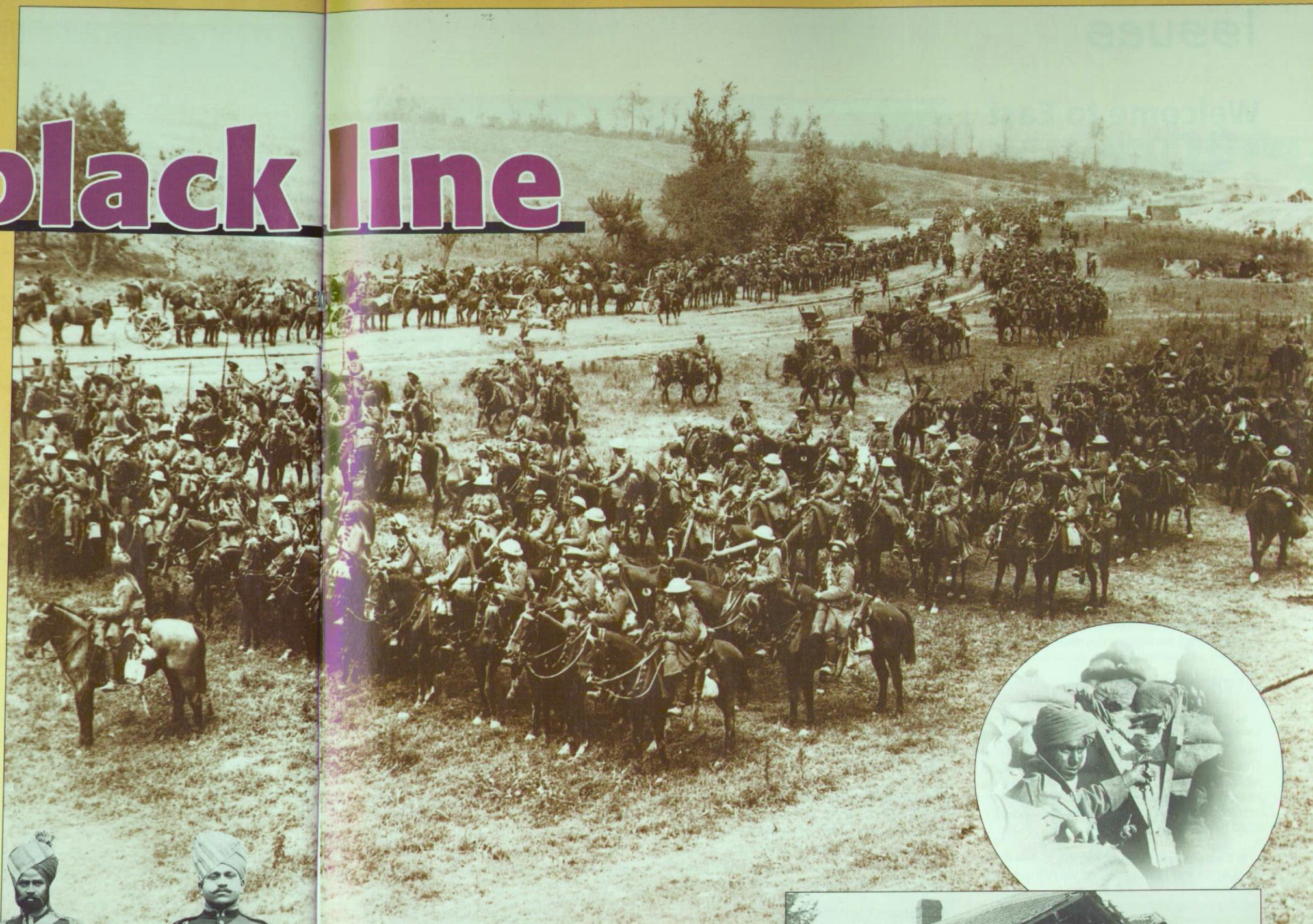
Anyone who is interested in hiring (free to Army and community groups) the exhibition or adding to it should contact Linda Bellos on 0171 932 0072.



Women at war: Fd Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck inspects members of the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India) in 1947



Colourful: King's Indian orderly officers, 1903



Waiting in vain for a breakthrough: Indian cavalrymen of the 18th Lancers in Sausage Valley, Mametz on the Western Front, July 1916. Inset – At war: Indian soldiers of the 14th Sikh Regiment catapulting bombs from their trench at Gallipoli in 1915

At the front: Troops of the Garhwal Rifles, right, in France, 1915



Africa corps: Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander South-East Asia, talks to a senior NCO of the Kenya Battalion of the King's African Rifles who distinguished himself fighting in the Kabaw Valley, Burma 1944. All these pictures are in the show



Issues

Welcome to East



Sikh him there: Sgt Balbir Nagra, right, pictured hosting Brig John McColl at Leicestershire's annual Vaisakhi parade last year, launched a special welcome from the county's Territorial Army soldiers, serving with the East of England Regiment, to 20,000 Sikhs taking part in the city's Nagar Keertan procession.

Picture: Gareth Griffiths

In brief

● Patients and visitors to the military unit at Frimley Park Hospital in Surrey will in future have to pay car parking charges, the Hospital Trust has announced. Individuals are being advised to pay up and claim on return to their units if entitled. MDHU Frimley Park staff do not hold funds and cannot authorise non-payment of car parking fees.

● Five soldiers from across the region have completed the University of Northumbria's Prospects BTEC/EDEXCEL course, aimed at helping ex-Servicemen and women find work after leaving the Armed Forces. For details of a new Prospects Plus course aimed at senior NCOs and above, ring 0191 227 5074.

● The Defence Communication Services Agency has negotiated an extra 18 per cent average saving on the cost of BT's civil calls made from MoD sites in the UK. The discount is on top of the existing 16 to 19 per cent PSTN corporate discount with BT which DCSA has funded, saving more than £1.5 million a year.

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 0171 591 2000

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722

436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 436565

Army Families Federation 01980 615525

British Limbless Ex-Service

Men's Association 0181 590 1124

Confidential support lines:

UK 0800 731 4880

Germany 0800 1827 395

Cyprus 080 91065

Bosnia 0800 731 4880

Special needs

If you would like to share a problem, write to Cari c/o Soldier, or BFBS, BFPO 786

Dear Cari

I read your response to the parents of a three-year-old with special needs who were moving to Germany. We provide information and impartial advice to Service families on all aspects of their children's education.

Parents of children with special needs should register their child with Service Children's Education (UK) so that we can provide the necessary help and support.

If a child is registered with us, once notified of a posting to Germany, Cyprus or other areas where there are Service schools, this office liaises with the relevant professionals to make sure that the child's educational needs can be met.

There are some children who have special needs so complex or severe that they cannot be met by Service Children's Schools. If families arrive in these locations and the child's special educational needs cannot be satisfied, it may result in repatriation. — Mrs Jane Robinson, SCE (UK).

Cari replies: Thank you for that. The last point is very important. I know that great effort is made by every agency concerned to help parents who have a child with special needs, but parents can help themselves by making themselves known

IF you don't feel like joining in the New Year jollity, don't put yourself under pressure by feeling guilty. If you feel low or lonely and want a sympathetic, confidential, listening service call the Confidential Support Line.

Run by SSAFA Forces Help, it provides trained listeners who will give you as much time as you need as often as you need. All the helpline numbers are listed

Cari comments

to the agencies before they arrive at a new location. The address for 11Q, SCE(UK) is Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Pewsey, Wilt SP9 6BE.

Dear Cari

I heard your discussion about the UK's meningitis immunisation programme on your BFBS Counterpoint programme and thought you would be interested to learn that BFG Health Service will offer dependant children in BFG the new meningitis C vaccine before the end of this school term.

The newly-developed vaccine is being made available for the first time for young people aged 15 to 17 as part of the Government's new programme. By the New Year it is intended that the scheme be extended to babies coming up for their routine primary vaccines at around 2, 3, 4 and 13 months. — Maj David Ross, Senior Registrar, Public Health Medicine (BFG Health Service).



Cari Roberts

Cari replies: Thanks for the information. Reading through it I see that, because the Department of Health decided to use supplies of vaccine as they became available rather than stockpile and then issue them, there may be a few supply difficulties, and I would guess that this will apply to BFG and other health centres around the world.

If readers want to keep in touch with how things are going I suggest they contact their medical centres.

Those who need vaccination should, in any case, be called forward automatically.

below. If you are connected to the Internet you might like to try e-mailing the Samaritans at jo@samaritans.org. If you know someone on their own and you suspect they would like company, please offer to include them in your celebrations, but don't be offended if they say no. Some people may wish to spend the time on their own or in quiet reflection. Have a peaceful New Year.

Others 01980 630854

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) 0181 543 6333

Family Escort Service UK 0171 463 9249; Germany JHQ Mil 2272 or 02161 472272

Gulf Families Association 0121 711 3028

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

Joint Service Housing Advice

Office 01722 436575

National Gulf Veterans and

Families Association 01482 833812

RBL's Legionline 0345 725 725

Samaritans 0345 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980

618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 0171 403 8783

SSAFA Forces Help housing

advisory service 01722 436400

Veterans' Advice Unit 08456 020302

War Pensions Agency 01253 858 858

WRVS 01235 442954

● To include a number, contact the Editor.

We're in it together

Husband and wife selected to go on same commissioning course

ANYTHING you can do, dear: married couple WO2s Phil and Alayne Ashman, both serving in the Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support), have been selected together for Late Entry commissions.

Phil is attached to 9 Regiment AAC at Dishforth while Alayne is serving with 1 R Irish at nearby Catterick. But life in the Ashman household is about to get a little more complicated following her battalion's imminent move to a new home in Howe Barracks at Canterbury.

When Alayne heads south with the couple's two children, James (8) and Lucy (5), her husband will stay put in North Yorkshire.

Phil and Alayne are not without experience of juggling busy professional lives and family commitments. Their first posting after their wedding was to

Osnabrück, Germany. Alayne has completed two recent operational tours – to Northern Ireland in 1998 and to Kosovo with 1 R Irish from June to September. Phil kept things going on the home front.

After the couple complete their six-week AGC detachment commanders' course at the AG Corps Depot, Worthy Down – from where they will emerge as captains – they have their fingers crossed that the Army will post them to units in roughly the same area.

Both are "chuffed to bits" about their selection and are being sent on the same commissioning course to make their domestic life a bit easier.

Phil is a Combined Services squash player and Alayne has become an enthusiastic amateur. "If you can't beat them . . .", she says.

Picture: Mike Weston



Officers' career structure to be on service rather than age

A REVISED career structure for officers based on length of service rather than age is to be introduced for those commissioning from April onwards. It will offer greater commonality between officer and soldier career structures.

The new system follows on from the "stepping stone" approach to commissions announced last year, with officers progressing from a Short Service Commission to, on selection, an Intermediate Regular Commission and, ultimately, a Regular Commission.

Most officers who obtain a Regular Commission will be able to complete, from commissioning, a 34-year career, at which point they retire. This gives closer alignment to the soldier structure where, on completion of 22 years and commissioning into the Late Entry structure, they can serve for up to 37 years between the ages of 18 and 55.

Since 1962 the average age of commissioning from RMA Sandhurst has risen from 20 to almost 24, while the earliest age for promotion to major has reduced from 34 to 30. Only six per cent of the

current output from Sandhurst are aged between 19 and 21 and the new career structure will cater for the majority who now commission at 23 and 24.

The result has been a "career compression", with all the military education and training required for promotion to major being crammed into a six-year time frame. In a letter to the chain of command, the Adjutant General, Gen Sir Alex Harley, pointed out that the present system causes turbulence on top of operational commitments and a detrimental effect of too little time at regimental duty and service with soldiers.

YEAR'S NOTICE

Other changes to be introduced from April 1 will mean that officers commissioned after this date will be required to give a year's notice to take Premature Voluntary Retirement (PVR), again giving closer alignment with the rules for soldiers.

Promotion to lieutenant colonel and to captain will be unchanged at two years and five years of reckonable service

respectively, while promotion to major will now be in a zone between 11 and 14 years rather than age 30-34. Those who commission late, and the truly exceptional, will have the opportunity for more rapid promotion to major if their performance merits it.

Due to the scale of the changes, and the fact that all promotion and conversion of commission planning has been calculated on an age-based structure, the new terms of service cannot be applied retrospectively to the current serving population.

"However," said Gen Harley, "I will be asking the Military Secretary to be as flexible as possible in allowing extensions beyond the current retirement age of 55 where the interests of both the individual and the Army can be met."

A Defence Council Instruction (DCI) giving full details of the new structure and setting out transitional arrangements is scheduled to be published next month. Commissioning Regulations and Army General and Administrative Instructions (AGAIs) will also be amended to reflect the changes.

Darin's big leap

LCPL Darin Richardson (RLC att 25 Engineer Regiment), who was given three months to live two years ago, hopes to raise £1,000 after completing a tandem parachute jump.

He made his leap from 10,000ft with Sgt John Page, chief instructor at the Northern Ireland Services Parachute Centre at Ballykelly.

Darin is collecting money for children with cancer and the Headley Court rehabilitation centre, which helped in his recovery. Despite being paralysed down his left side as a result of a cancerous brain tumour, the brave RLC soldier has learned to walk again and is back at work at Massereene Barracks in Antrim.

◆◆◆
Staff at the Defence NBC Centre at Winterbourne Gunner collected £214 which they handed over to Col Mark Cook, founder of the Hope and Homes for Children charity.

◆◆◆
A sponsored rowing machine marathon by soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, The Infantry Training Centre, Catterick pulled in £2,000 to buy equipment for the special care baby unit at Friarage Hospital, Northallerton.

◆◆◆
Charity aid collected by British Forces Germany with the help of JHQ Rheindahlen was delivered to Kosovo on board the "Train for Life". Backed by sponsors across the British railway industry, the train travelled 2,500 miles through 12 countries to Pristina, from where it was operated by 79 Railway Squadron RLC. Three Army wives, BB Campbell, Annabel Bellamy and Mary Lesinski, co-ordinated the JHQ effort.

◆◆◆
Soldiers serving with 1 (UK) Logistic Regiment RLC in Macedonia provided the final push for an aid project which began on the other side of the world. They delivered two containers of shoes, clothing, blankets and hospital beds to the impoverished National Special Institute for People with Severe and Profound Physical and Mental Disabilities in Demir Kapija, Macedonia.

The items were collected by the Hong Kong-based Crossroads International charity, which persuades the island's hotels, hospitals and institutions to part with high-quality items for redistribution to deserving causes. Two more containers are now on their way for children with learning disabilities and RLC volunteers are standing by to help with delivery.

◆◆◆
Also on their way to the Balkans were two containers of equipment filled by schools in York. The project was inspired by 50 soldiers serving with 24 Armoured Field Ambulance, who witnessed the plight of children in Kosovo and asked Strensall-based 34 Field Hospital to organise the collection of pens, pencils, books, desks and chairs.

◆◆◆
Stationery and other equipment for schools in Bosnia was also collected by Wattisham-based 663 Squadron, part of 3 Regiment AAC, for distribution in the region during its five-month deployment in the Balkans which began last month.



Picture: AUS Northern Ireland

On the dot: Jill Brown, alias Dot Cotton from East Enders, was suitably impressed by the £30,000 raised by 8 R Irish to buy a minibus for the Oaklands Respite Centre in Armagh. She visited the town with other celebrities for a charity cricket match and posed for this photograph with members of the Irish

Eagles, the Royal Irish Regiment parachute display team, who dropped in to hand over the keys to the vehicle.

Meanwhile, CSgt Robin Ferry of 8 R Irish ran the 577-mile Ulster Way to raise funds for Oaklands Respite Centre, a cross-community charity for disadvantaged children in Armagh and Tyrone.

DRAGOONS SHED BLOOD FOR NICOLA

FIFTY volunteers from The Royal Dragoon Guards at Tidworth lined up for a blood donor session to register themselves on the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust Register. The session was organised by Capt David Mound and regimental medical officer Maj Julian Woodhouse to support a campaign to find a bone marrow donor for Nicola Coates, a leukaemia victim from York who has been struck down by the disease for the third time. The RDG's home headquarters is in York.

Soldiers with the Force Logistic Squadron RLC in Kosovo were planning to spend Christmas Eve and Christmas morning riding gymnasium bikes a distance of 1,400 miles to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. Donations to the squadron via Op Agricola, BFPO 559 would be welcomed.

◆◆◆
Children from the small village of Nove Ruje, south of Pristina in Kosovo, enjoyed a sports day organised by the 12 Regiment RA JRRF Air Defence Group. More than 120 children and 50 adults turned out for an afternoon of games, with the added incentive of free drinks, chocolate and cakes.

◆◆◆
Service personnel with the British Loan

On the run: The British Loan Service Team in the Oman. From left are WO2 Graham Wood, LI; WO1 (FoS) Tony Woolaston, R Signals; Maj Richard Sanders, R Signals; Sqn Ldr Jim Robinson, RAF; WO2 Phil Sorrell, RM; Capt (now Maj) Simon Lloyd-Davis, PWRR; and WO2 Russ Hillis, RLC

Service Team in Dhofar in the Sultanate of Oman took to their heels to raise more than £6,000 for the children's ward of the Sultan Qaboos Hospital and the British School, Salalah. They completed a relay of 135km in temperatures which climbed to 30C. WO2 Tommy McCafferty had to drop out when his wife Jackie went into labour during the event.

◆◆◆
Maj Colin Coull of City of London and North East Sector Army Cadet Force joined 160 other cyclists on the road (and ferry) for a 400km ride from London to Paris and raised £1,400 for the Royal British Legion in the process.

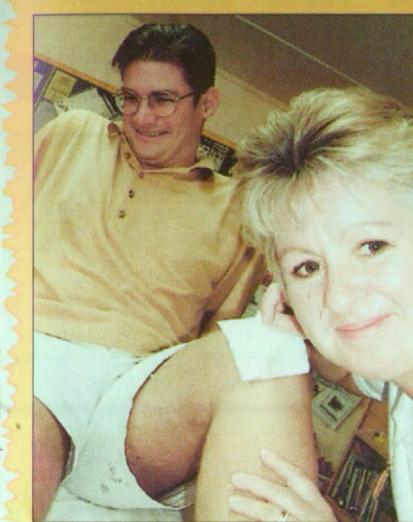
◆◆◆
Twenty-seven students and six members of staff from the Army School of Education at



Worthy Down Camp, Winchester, completed the 104-mile South Downs Way from Beachy Head back to Worthy Down to raise £600 for Naomi House, a local children's hospice. Running in pairs through the night, the teams completed the Way in 17 hours 20 minutes.

◆◆◆
Larkhill gunners ran a non-stop marathon relay to raise money for SSAFA Forces Help and Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

◆◆◆
Pte Ricky Foster and Ppr George Ross, both serving with 1 KOSB, were joined by Petty Officer Kevin Cave, Royal Navy, and ex-WO2 George Ross, formerly of the KOSB, in a 1,999-mile cycle ride around Scotland to raise funds for Erskine Hospital. On the way



Picture: Cpl Alastair Allen

Ouch! Sgt Jim Duff grimaces as Nicky Visage from the Top to Toe beauty salon rips off a wax strip on his leg. He was one of seven courageous males from the J4 Equipment Support Branch, HQ British Forces Cyprus, to go through the pain of having their legs waxed for charity.

They raised more than £500 for the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. Jim lost his first child to the condition seven years ago. Others who subjected themselves to the hair-raising experience were Lt Col Terry Perks, WO1 Roy Rogers, Maj Phil McMahon, SSgt Graham Mundy, Pte Robert Miller and Flt Sgt Steve Sullivan RAF.

Kings rise to challenge

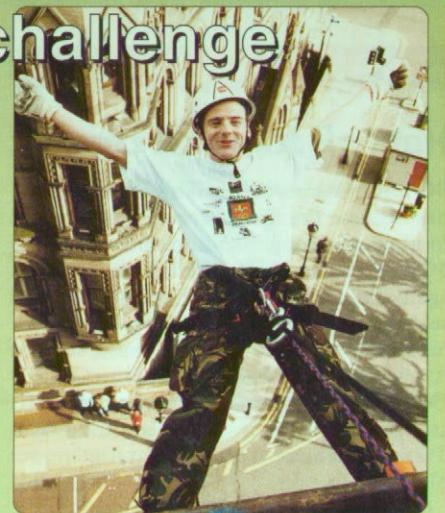
Look, Mum, no hands: Kgs Barry McCabe leaps off Manchester Town Hall in one of the events which made up the King's Challenge, an ambitious series of fund-raising events run by the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment to raise its profile in its recruiting areas and to help local charities.

Kingsmen also abseiled from Liverpool's Town Hall, completed the Krypton Factor assault course, ran the 187-mile coast-to-coast route from St Bees Head to Robin Hood's Bay, climbed England's highest mountains, cycled from Land's End to John o'Groats, canoed from Castlefield to Wootton, and sailed the Irish Sea challenge.

In all, they raised an estimated £25,000.

The battalion also undertook community projects in Liverpool, Mosley and Oldham.

Among the charities which benefited were the Liverpool Hospital Linda



Picture: Paul Sweeney Creative Photography, Manchester

McCartney Forget Me Not appeal, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Camp And Trek for Children, Christies Against Cancer, the Royal Oldham Hospital Scanner Appeal and the Prince's Trust.



Supply line: Watched by members of 123 Combat Supply Squadron RLC (V), team leader SSgt Chris Oakley presents a cheque for £741 to Cancer Research area fundraiser Susan Ross. The TA soldiers from Telford ran 238 miles in relays over a period of 24 hours to raise money for the charity.

they laid more than 200 wreaths at war memorials. Their marathon trip began in Orkney and was completed in Edinburgh.

◆◆◆
The Cyprus Association of Cancer Patients and Friends received a boost when the Band of The King's Own Scottish Borderers paraded in Limassol to raise awareness for the charity. Pipe Major Ewen Stuart described the day as a huge success and said the band had been happy to help.

◆◆◆
A Joint Services Mountain Rescue Centre reunion at the TA Centre in Inverness raised £230 for mountain rescue teams.

◆◆◆
Gunners of 19 Regiment RA helped 50 people to abseil from Chelmsford Cathedral and collected about £1,400 for Sight Savers International, a charity which helps the visually-impaired in developing countries. The regiment also raised £800 for Colchester's St Helena Hospice during its charity inter-battery half-marathon.

◆◆◆
The RLC Band and 1 KOSB Pipes and Drums played at an event to publicise the National Cyprus Radio marathon, run to raise funds for children with special needs. The

event, staged outside the gates of Berengaria married quarters estate, was also enjoyed by villagers from nearby Polemidia.

◆◆◆
Charlie Company, 1 KOSB took part in a 9km run to Limassol Castle in aid of the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, which specialises in muscular dystrophy.

◆◆◆
Para technicians from 10 Airborne Work shop marked the disbandment of the Airborne Logistic Battalion with a 300-mile trek from Aldershot to Arnhem to raise funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital and airborne charities.

◆◆◆
Sgt Maj Mark Robinson, serving with X Coy, 6 RRF (V), at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, raised £2,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund during a sponsored greyhound meeting.

◆◆◆
Children have benefited by £65,000 over the past six years, thanks to the efforts of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers. Last summer there was more, with "It's a Knockout"-style events in towns throughout Wales as part of Exercise Welch Wanderer 6. Welsh charities and Children in Need will be the beneficiaries.



Sport

Edited by Anthony Stone

SHORTS

Hats off for most caps

SGT John Greechan of The Highlanders has become the most-capped Infantry footballer of his generation. He won his 40th when captaining the Infantry against the Royal Armoured Corps and sealed the achievement with two goals in his side's 7-1 victory. Since joining the Army, Greechan has served in the Gulf, Germany, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Belize. He is now based at the Army Training Regiment Glencorse as a platoon sergeant.

Greechan, who first played for the Infantry in 1990, has captained the team for the past four seasons. He was named last year's Player of the Season. He also captains the ATR Glencorse team.

Marksmen zero in

SHOOTERS got a bang out of the three-day Army individual and Army Clay Target Shooting Association (ACTSA) championships held at the Southern Counties Shooting Ground near Yeovil. Stuart Crane of Club Clay Shooting, a major sponsor of the Army team, presented the prizes.

Overall high gun and winner of a week's caravan holiday donated by Freedom Caravans of Stafford was SSgt Tony Masters (RA), who won the sporting class and was runner-up in the Olympic skeet and English skeet. The ACTSA champion was Cpl Roy Friend (REME).

Eight teams competed in the first inter-unit clay target competition, a 100-bird sporting event, with 5 Regiment RA running out winners, with 3 R Irish second and 36 Engineer Regiment third.

Chance to strike-out

THE Army tenpin bowling championships will take place on February 25-27 at the Merrion Centre, Leeds. The event is open to all serving personnel, veterans and their dependants. Entry forms available from Cpl Passfield on Blandford Mil 2316.

Charity treks

BIBIC – The British Institute of Brain Injured Children – has launched a series of charity challenge treks planned for this year. The national charity's millennium series of fund-raising events includes Kilimanjaro, the High Atlas Trail and Everest Base Camp, and is due to take place between June and October. To obtain further details contact Cecil Weir at BIBIC on 01278 684060 or e-mail nixweir@aol.com



RUGBY LEAGUE

Ground force

Dream start in Silk Cut Challenge Cup

Army 54, Dewsbury Celtic 7

THE Army, playing at home in the new rugby stadium in Aldershot, served notice on any second round hopefuls in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup that they mean business, writes **Steve Tranter**.

Playing some outstanding running rugby, this talented Army side took Dewsbury Celtic to the cleaners in what proved to be a very one-sided affair.

Dewsbury, the Yorkshire Cup finalists, started well enough with a drop goal after just three minutes and six minutes later went further ahead with a converted try. They were not to score again.

The Army squandered possession early on, but after 15 minutes good work from scrum-half Sgt Andy Sanger (RE) put LCpl Ritchie Yeomans (REME) through. Having shed their early nerves, the home side, began to dominate through the pack.

Man of the match LCpl Sean Fanning

closed the gap with a penalty for holding down in the tackle. With the next score likely to be crucial, Cpl Darryl Cooper (RE) weaved his way through the Dewsbury defence and crashed over to give the Army the lead.

Debutant Cpl Andy Kershaw (APTC) followed up with a typical winger's try just before half time to give the Army 14-7 lead at the interval.

The soldiers went out full of confidence and with all guns blazing in the second half. Stand-off Fanning immediately punished the Yorkshire side when a brilliant delayed pass from Sanger allowed him to stroll over the line with the visitors' defence nowhere in sight.

Dewsbury heads visibly dropped and a hat-trick from winger LCpl Dean Ross (RE) and three more from Fanning left them facing a huge defeat. Cooper scored again to complete the rout of a thoroughly dispirited side.

It was fitting that after five years of fighting to get Rugby League established in the Army, this cup display matched all the hard work put in behind the scenes.



Bottoms up: Determined Army tackling and dynamic running poleaxed Dewsbury Celtic



HOCKEY



Strike force: A 47 Fd Regt RA attack threatens 7 Para RHA's goal during the major units final

All guns blazing

THE 4 Division major units' hockey final at Aldershot was an all-gunner affair, 7 Para RHA battling it out with 47 Fd Regt RA. Rekindling past glories and showing considerable ability, the Airborne Gunners won 6-1 in difficult conditions.

In the minor units' finals, AAC Arborfield beat AMS Frimley Park 1-0. Trophies were presented by Richard Hall,

marketing manager of Warrior, specialist financial services advisers, who sponsor the Army Cup competition.

At Blandford, the 5 Division finals were played in torrential rain, with 14 Sig Regt (EW) beating 3 Div HQ and Sig Regt 3-2 in the majors. In the minor final, Upavon Support Unit – last year's Army Cup runners-up – beat ATSA Malvern 7-0.

FOOTBALL

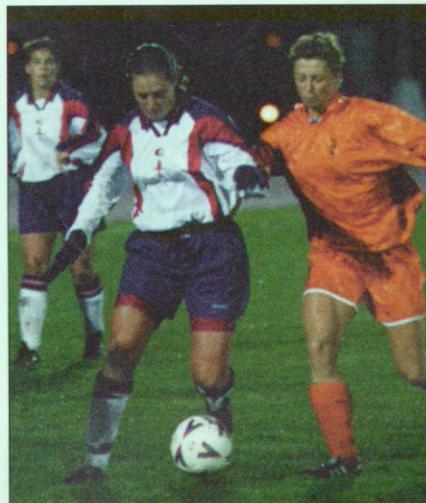
Dutch give master class

IN the first women's military international, the Netherlands Armed Forces travelled to Aldershot and comprehensively defeated an Army-dominated UK Armed Forces side by five goals to nil.

The visitors showed their skill with quick running and accurate passing to complete a convincing win which did not reflect the first-half commitment of the home team.

• The Army men's side continued their defence of the South West Counties Championship with a 2-2 draw against the Royal Navy at HMS *Temeraire*'s Burnaby Road stadium in Portsmouth.

Midway through the second half of a very physical game the Army found themselves reduced to nine men as the referee brandished six yellow and two red cards. Cpl Dave Hope scored with a header and Sgt Tosh Williams from the penalty spot.



Closing: Pte Alex Cottier, left, (17 Port and Maritime Regt RLC) sees off a Dutch threat

SHORTS

Success served up

THE Army dominated the Combined Services individual squash championships at HMS *Temeraire*, Portsmouth, winning the major individual titles. The men's open crown was taken by SSgt Gary Clarke (REME) and the women's by Lt Karen Wallace (RLC), while Pte Chris McQuilken (RLC) emerged as the top under 25 player. Veteran champion, for the umpteenth time, was Lt Col Robbie Robinson (RLC).

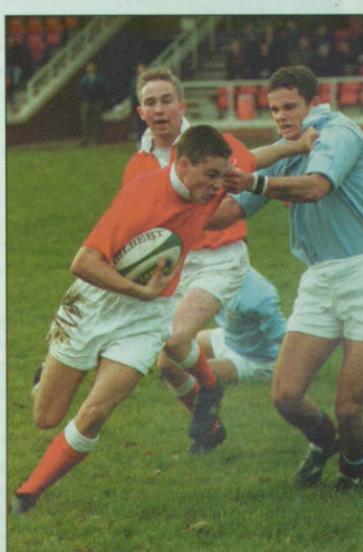
For probably the final occasion, the inter-corps championships were held at Sir John Moore Barracks and the Winchester Tennis and Squash Club, with the RLC A team running out as champions. The Army's new sporting complex at Aldershot is due to open later this year and it is planned to hold the next corps championships there.

Despite availability problems, more than 140 Servicemen and women took part, with 20 teams, 114 matches, 570 rubbers and 2,041 individual games involved over the three days.

The RLC team, in winning Division One for the sixth year running, scored one less point than last year.

Young guns blast RAF

THE Army's young pretenders drew first blood in the opening game of this year's Inter-Service U-21 Rugby Union championships against the Royal Air Force at Aldershot. In a keenly-fought match the Army ran out 23-18 winners after Fus Paul Edwards (1 RWF) had scored in the corner to secure a slender five-point victory.



Orienteers point to win

TEAMS from the Army, Territorial Army and Civil Service took part in the inter-unit night orienteering championships at the Bramley Training Area near Basingstoke. Results: Major unit, 7 Bn REME; minor unit, Upavon Station; TA men, 7 AAC(V); women's team, University of London OTC; Under 25 team, University of London OTC.

RALLYING

Keeping track of Jake's progress on rally circuits

JAKE Thake's rallying career started in Germany in 1986 with the British Army Motoring Association (BAMA). He realised he had an aptitude for the sport during his first low-key navigational rally.

With a colleague he bought an Alpha Sud 1.5 and "tarted it up" for the Westphalia-to-Munster tarmac championships. When the pair wrecked the car, it looked as though Thake's career had come to a

premature end. But, posted to Cyprus, he found the Joint Service team was looking for a driver, and happily got behind the wheel. Some success with the team brought him to the attention of a successful Cypriot driver, who employed him as navigator for three Rallies of Cyprus. In their last year, the team was recruited

by Lada and won the manufacturer's prize.

By this time, SSgt Thake had realised that he was a better navigator and co-driver than he was a lead driver. "I settled happily for being a good navigator," he said.

From Cyprus, he was posted back to the United Kingdom where he began an intensive freelancing phase liberally punctuated with prizes.

PEKING RALLY

In 1997 Thake was asked to manage the Army's Land Rover team, and in the same year stepped into his most exciting rallying job so far: supporting the six-week Peking-to-Paris classic car rally. Although, for once, not in the cab of a competing car, he described the rally as "life-changing".

Now Jake Thake has been invited to join the support team on the Round-the-World Classic Car Rally, which begins in London in May.

"There'll be everything from Rollers to Bugatis. The oldest will be from 1900 and the youngest from 1967," said the soldier whose enthusiasm for cars and driving seems to know no bounds. "I can't look on this as work: I just love it."



Booted and spurred: Sgt Mark Jake Thake is ready for the off

Flying on instruments

Army medic SSgt Mark "Jake" Thake had a driving ambition: to complete the Network Q RAC Rally of Great Britain. This year he did it – in style

Report: Graham Bound
Pictures: Mike Weston

SSgt Jake Thake's high-octane adventures in the woodlands and lanes of Wales and the West Midlands represent the apex of his rallying career to date.

After failing to complete the gruelling Rally of Great Britain on five previous occasions, the combat medical technician this year finally crossed finishing line in a car sponsored by Soldier.

Crewing for Martin Healer, the vehicle's owner and driver, Thake navigated the 297-bhp two-litre Escort Cosworth into 13th place in the amateur class and 43rd overall – a highly commendable achievement for an amateur team considering that only half of the 180 cars which roared across the start line in Cheltenham made it to the finishing line three days later.

WORKS TEAMS

Healer and Thake never kidded themselves that they could win the rally, even in their turbocharged super-saloon. Only the pros driving for works teams with almost unlimited budgets have a chance of being in the top three. Besides racing



Driving force: Martin Healer checks the Escorts' turbocharged 297 bhp engine

pulled in for a compulsory 20-minute service. But timing is everything in the RAC, and Thake got it wrong. He ordered Healer to start again ten minutes too early, and, fatally for their top-ten bid, those vital minutes were added to their overall time.

"It was our lowest point," said the navigator.

"I don't know if it was tiredness or pressure, but I got my sums wrong. It was the worst mistake I have made. Going across the finishing ramp was still great, but I'll never think of that RAC without remembering those lost minutes."

If the mistake had occurred any earlier it might have detracted from the sheer white-knuckle excitement of the race. For most of the three days, the two men could hardly believe their luck as they ripped through the off-road tracks and completed the road sections well within the margins. Not a tyre was punctured nor a panel bent, and the maintenance sessions went remarkably smoothly.

On the second day the Escort's clutch gave up the ghost, but the service crew replaced the smoking part with a new one in 24 minutes flat.

Skid row: The Soldier-sponsored Escort powers into a bend on the gruelling three-day endurance Rally of Great Britain



A rally team's good times are most people's nightmares. Jake Thake recalled one: "It was a special stage in Wales. The fog was horrendous and we were virtually flying on instruments."

"Fortunately we had recce'd the route, so as long as I knew where we were I could tell what was coming next. At times we were pulling 80 mph. Martin trusted me, put his foot down, and we were fine. We put in a storming time."

FINISHED BACKWARDS

In rallying, it is not so much how but if you get across the line, a maxim which Healer and Thake probably remembered at the end of one section.

"The finish was on a hairpin," recalled the navigator.

"We came around the bend spinning and ended up a few yards from the line facing the wrong way. Martin just jammed it into reverse, and we went across the line backwards."

● Follow in Jake Thake's muddy tyre tracks by contacting the British Army Motoring Association. The BAMA navigational series, which uses conventional Land Rovers, will give you a taste of the sport. Call Lt Col (Retd) Bob Birrell of BAMA on 01904 665243 for more information.

SHORTS

Take the charity plunge

THE Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust is looking for volunteers to make a sponsored parachute jump to help fight leukaemia. Call 01865 875757 or e-mail oxford@anthonynolan.com

Skinner storms home

AFTER two days of competition the new overall Army motor-cycling champion was WO2 (TCWO) Shaun Skinner (RLC). The event, at Wathgill Training Camp, North Yorkshire, attracted more than 140 riders using either standard service Harley Davidsons or the preferred Honda XR 250R military lightweight. Second place went to Cpl Jack Johns (RLC) and third to Cfn Steve Hunt. The prize for the machine winner was awarded to Sgt Paul Hodgkins (RLC).



Top spot: WO2 Skinner

Going up in the world

SPORTS climbing is on the up and the seventh Army championships will take place at the Welsh International Centre, in Trelewis, near Cardiff, on May 5. The event will consist of individual and team competitions as well as several fun events. Numbers are limited to 140 competitors and entry forms can be found in DCI (Army) 160/99 or by contacting WO2 Mike Smith on (9)4355 8306 or fax (9)4355 8303.

Strips for action

ARMY Careers Services for South-East Wales presented 25 rugby strips to the Pontypridd Schools rugby team at Ysgol Gyfyn Rhydfelin.

Army careers officer Lt Col Alan Phillips, who comes from

Beddau, said: "I am delighted to be

able to support

these aspiring

youngsters, who

come from an area

with a history of

supplying fine

young men and women to the Army."



Pontypridd pupils try out the new strips in the company of Cpl David Williams (left) and Cpl Julian Coleman

DIVING

Bigger splash is needed

This sport requires the grace of a ballerina and the discipline of a martial artist. Are you ready to jump at a new opportunity?

Words: Graham Bound
Pictures: Steve Dock

INTEREST in Army diving has taken a bit of a plunge recently. SSgt Amos Greenfield, who coaches the Army team and who has been jumping off high boards for more than ten years, accepts that his is a minority sport which is never likely to have a large following.

But, he says, his current ten-strong group of dedicated divers needs to double in size if the Army is going to maintain its dominant Inter-Services position.

This core of ten Army divers has, nevertheless, done well in competitions, and makes up the majority of the Combined Services team. "Interest has fizzled a bit recently," admits SSgt Greenfield. "We need some young blood to take over from the oldies, and in particular we want girls to enter the sport. Only four are active at the moment."

Despite this somewhat gloomy prognosis, the team has won the Inter-Services championships every year since 1989, and the Combined Services team, buoyed by the Army's input, has done well in competitions against the Civil Service and Combined British Police teams.

More victories are possible, says Amos Greenfield, but only if more talent is identified and encouraged.

The coach hopes that the opening of the new military swimming pool in Aldershot will help generate enthusiasm. It will

be the first Army pool to have a five-metre diving platform.

It could be argued that the basics of diving are as easy as falling off a log. After all, gravity is on your side, and you are going to hit the water one way or another. But competition divers are judged on their grace and the number of "tricks" that they can perform in the fleeting time between leaving the diving board (which can be as high as five metres) and entering the water. A good diver makes it all look very easy.

"The first step is to learn how to walk down the board and stand there without falling in," says the coach. "When they master that they can actually dive, but most people are worried about landing on the end of the board."

SMOOTH ENTRANCE

It can happen, but most put this possibility to the back of their minds and concentrate on taking off gracefully, performing "tricks" on the way down, and making a smooth entrance into the water – the characteristics which will bring them applause and points.

Most good divers come to the sport through gymnastics: good flexibility and timing are essential to both sports.

One newcomer who took this course to the high board is Cpl Lisa Dunne, who SSgt Greenfield describes as "a name to look out for in the future".

Dunne has been diving seriously for just ten months. "The thrill is tremendous," she says. "That's why I do it."

• If you are interested in diving, contact SSgt Greenfield on Aldershot Military (9)4222 4014, or see your unit's sergeant major instructor. Between them, they should be able to help you take the plunge into competition diving.



All tucked up: Sgt Phil Martin (APTC) springs into action



Don't look down:
Cpl Lisa
Dunne (ATR
Pirbright)
prepares to
make a dive

How observant are you?



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 698, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by January 31.

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

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

WIN £100!

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.

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the March 2000 issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

November competition (No 696): First correct entry drawn was from Miss V C Lemmon, of HQ 4 Div, Aldershot, who wins £100. Runners-up Mr G W Hazeldine, of Swindon and Mrs J E Zelnis, c/o Cpl G D Zelnis, JSSU Digby, Lincs, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: giraffe's window; giraffe's markings and leg; vet's collar, trousers and bag; pillbox lid; hippo's tooth; ripples in water; "M" in nameplate.



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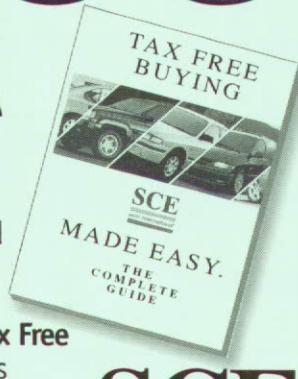
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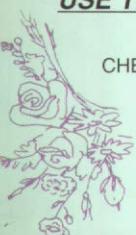
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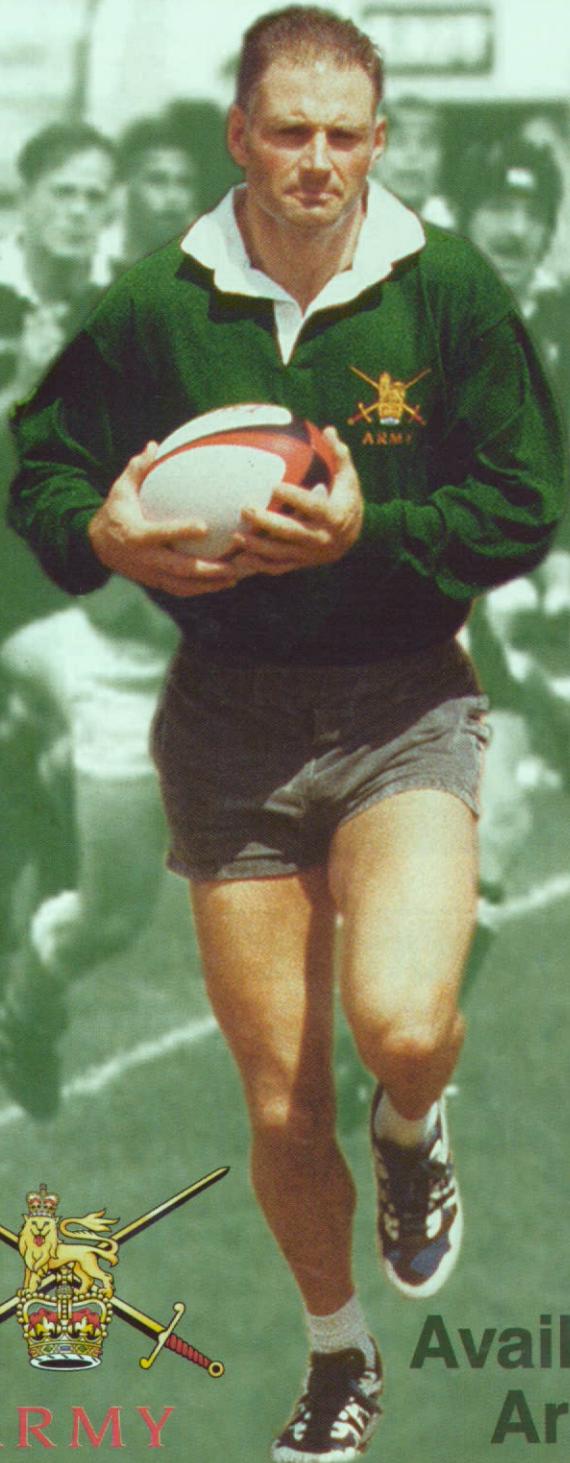
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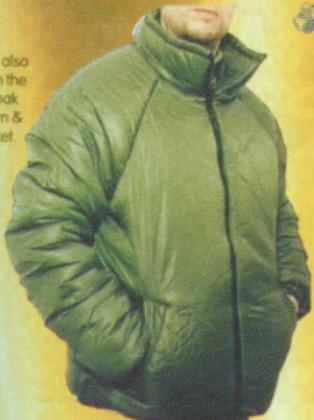


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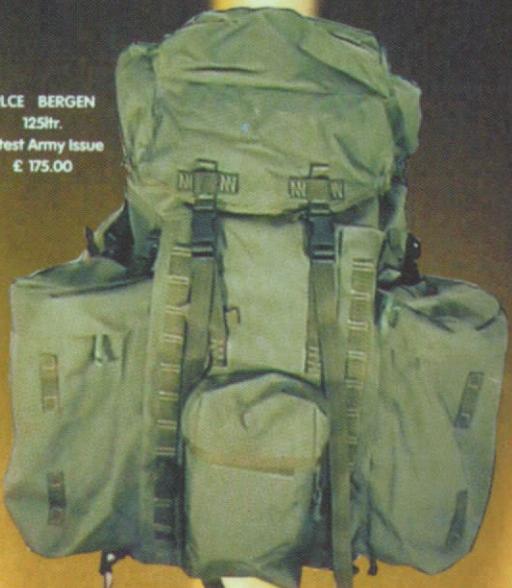
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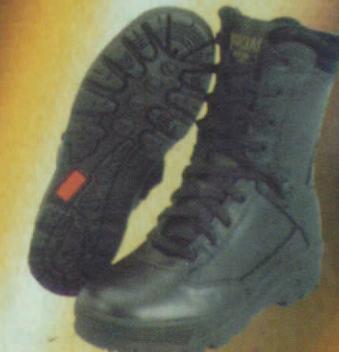


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REPLIES. To reply to a pen pal, write a letter and send it to *Soldier Magazine* at the address below. When replying to more than one pen pal please place all the letters in one envelope and send to *Soldier Magazine*. The box number must be **CLEARLY written in the TOP LEFT CORNER** of all your replies. Replies should consist only of a letter and photograph if requested. Replies received more than three months after the cover date and large, heavy, or poorly addressed envelopes will not be forwarded.

TO ADVERTISE FOR A PEN PAL. Please send for details enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: *Soldier Magazine, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU*.

Marcia, 5'6", 33-year-old, slim blonde with an outgoing personality and VGSOH. Interests include the cinema, socialising, walking and travelling. Would like to correspond with someone, 30-40, with similar interests. **P609**

Jennifer, 32, 5'2", blonde hair and blue eyes. A nursery nurse who enjoys spectator sports, squash, animals, the cinema and music. Seeking pen pals, 31+, at home or abroad. **P610**

Pauline, 29, 5'4", light brown hair and blue/green eyes. Enjoys going out the pub, eating out in restaurants and spending spare time with her two children. Would like to correspond with pen pals, 30-36. **P611**

Joanne, 5'5", 30-year-old blonde. Non-smoker who enjoys watching football, pubbing and clubbing, eating out and keeping fit. Would like to hear from pen pals, 25-35, preferable non-smokers. **P612**

Alison, 38, 5'4", brown hair and hazel eyes. Interests include running, walking, cycling, swimming, reading, 70s music, cooking, eating out, walking outdoors with her dog and having fun. Seeking pen pals, 35-35. **P613**

Ruth, 17, slim and friendly with long blonde hair and an outgoing personality. Hobbies include small animals, music, going out and the cinema. Would like to correspond with pen pals, 18-25. **P614**

Kelly, 25, 5'5", brown hair and blue eyes. Interests include aromatherapy, massage, travelling and generally having a good time. Would like pen pals, 20-35, to correspond and have a laugh with. **P615**

Sarah, 27-year-old, independent mother of two. Has GSOH and enjoys music, black-and-white photography, the cinema, eating out and nights in with wine and a video. Would like to hear from pen pals, 28-35. **P616**

Jayne, 29, green-eyed blonde who likes travelling, music, movies, nights out and staying in watching Conair. Would love something other than bills to fall through the door. Age sought, 27+. **P617**

Sue, 38, 5'8", blue-eyed brunette and professional beauty therapist with bubbly personality. Hobbies include DIY, gardening, walking, keeping fit, dining out and the theatre. Request tall, single, honest and non-smoking pen pal, 35-40. **P618**

Paul, 24, 5'9", brown hair, green eyes and GSOH. Likes clubbing, pubbing, going to the movies, music and generally having fun. Would like to hear from pen pals, 18-30, and will reply to all letters. **P619**

Sharon, 35, 5'4", green eyes, fair hair, divorced with one child. Enjoys quiet nights in, country walks, socialising, eating out and watching TV. Would like pen pals, 30+, to correspond with. **P620**

Are you single/divorced, with/without children and looking forward to new millennium/ friendship? Divorced mum, thirty-something, would like to hear from genuine, honest, 30-40-year-old males for fun, laughter and happiness in 2000. **P621**

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Sally, 5'3", green eyes, dark hair and works in a London estate agency. Likes having fun, pubs, good restaurants and holidays abroad. Would like to hear from pen pals, 30-40. **P623**

Tonya, 30-year-old Spanish grammar student. Likes swimming, tennis, eating out, writing, going to clubs and socialising. Would like to hear from pen pals, 25+. **P624**

Lisa, 5'7", 26-year-old green-eyed blonde. Single mum who enjoys life to the full and likes socialising, music, reading and writing. Waiting to hear from male pen pals, 25-35. **P625**

Lesia, 27, 5'5", blue eyes, dark hair. Enjoys listening to music, reading, going to the cinema, pubbing, clubbing and leading life to the full. Would like to have a laugh with pen friends, 23+. **P626**

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SOLDIER
THE BRITISH ARMY CALENDAR
2000
SEE PAGE 6
FOR DETAILS



ARMY

ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY RESULTS

NOVEMBER 20, 1999

11-way tie for first prize (21 goals, £1166.67 each): Cpl G Fletcher, 1 RTR, RAF Honington; Cpl M Healer, 1 RSME Regt, Chatham; SSgt D Lomax, 2 RTR, Fallingbostel; SSgt M Lowe, RDG, Tidworth; SSgt TJ Squire, 1 GS Regt RLC, Gütersloh; WO2 MM Stevenson, 1 Bn REME, Osnabrück; LCpl R Verdon, 7 Bn REME, Wattisham; Maj DB Walmsley-Cotham, ATSA Malvern; Cpl IR Williams, KRH, Münster.

Note: Only 9 prizes this week. Rule 9 applies.

NOVEMBER 27, 1999

Five-way tie for first prize (20 goals, £1,800 each): Lt Col JR Everard, HQ ARRC, Rheindahlen; Bdr W Morris, 7 Para RHA, Aldershot; Cpl HL Nolan, 30 Signal Regt, Bramcote; Bdr G O'Hare, ATR Lichfield; Sgt IM Turner, Army School of Catering, Aldershot.

24-way tie for sixth prize (19 goals, £62.50 each): Col SL Bennett, BVO, Ashchurch; WO2 DA Brookes, 21 Log Sp Regt RLC; Cpl SP Byrne, 1 GH, Osnabrück; Sgt CJ Cobbold, QDG, Catterick; Pte KJ Cockburn, 1 RGBW, Colchester; Maj SC Cowan, JARIC,

Brampton; Cpl JDL Cox, 27 Tpt Regt RLC, Aldershot; Sgt MK Cozens, 3 Para, Dover; Lt Col DR Ellis, RSC Glencorse; Sgt DJ Eyes, 14 Signal Regt (EW), Bawd; Cpl MD Hamilton, Lowland Band, Edinburgh; Lt BJ Kay, RMCS, Shropshire; Lt TC Legge, RMCS, Shropshire; Cpl GL Lukins, QDG, Catterick; WO2 CD Marsh, HQ Bulford Garrison; Sjt RJ McKee, 2 LI, Bulford; Capt M Moran, 3 Armd Fd Amb, Sennelager; LCpl IP Navin, HQ 43 (Wx) Bde, Bulford; Brig NR Parker, JCSC, Bracknell; Maj PJ Shields, 4 GS Regt RLC, Abingdon; Cpl GT Slade, 1 RGJ; Sgt JB Warburton, Defence Sch of Tpt, Leconfield; SSgt GR Welfoot, Cyprus JPU, Episkopi; LCpl M Whittaker, 21 Engr Regt, Osnabrück.

DECEMBER 4, 1999

First prize (22 goals, £4,100): Pte P Coupland, 1 WFR.

Four-way tie for second prize (21 goals, £1,350 each): WO2 GN Laing, Spec Ops Unit RMP, Rheindahlen; Sgt MF Veale, 2 CS Regt RLC, Gütersloh; Capt ST Waddington, 2 Bn REME, Fallingbostel; CSgt A Wickham, 8 R Irish.

15-way tie for sixth prize (20 goals,

£100 each): Maj GR Allard, HQ AMS TA, York; Sgt MJ Alsop, 5 Regt RA, Catterick; CSgt KMJ Anderson, 5 R Irish; LCpl NCF Baker, QRL, Osnabrück; Sgt DG Boyd, 4 R Irish; Maj NF Dysterre-Clark, Royal Brunei Armed Forces; SSgt GA Fletcher, 1 RSME Regt, Chatham; Spr S Livesey, 25 Engr Regt; Capt RJ Mills, 47 Regt RA, Thorney Island; Maj ER Morgan, MOD, London; Pte CM Mothersole, 2 LI, Bulford; WO2 PG Oliver, 1 PWRR, Tidworth; CSgt RA Rich, CATC, Warminster; Cpl S Rutherford, 17 Port & Maritime Regt RLC, Marchwood; Capt KA Watson, 1 RGJ.

DECEMBER 11, 1999

10-way tie for first prize (20 goals, £1,100 each): LCpl AJ Goodall, The Red Devils, Netheravon; Cpl MJ Irish, 22 Engr Regt, Perham Down; Pte MP Ison, 2 PWRR, Tidworth; Tpr PD Jones, 2 RTR, Fallingbostel; WO1 L Keily, 7 Signal Regt, Krefeld; Pte JT Leonard, 81 PC Sqn RLC, Abingdon; Lt Col NJW Moss, 5 Regt AAC, Aldergrove; Sgt KA Palmer, 32 Engr Regt, Hohne; Cpl CM Payne, HQ 16 Air Asslt Bde, Colchester; Sig GL Roscoe, 14 Signal Regt (EW), Bawd.

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Chris's rail 'experience' saves day

Sapper first: Heavy work on a temporary field accommodation site in Kosovo for Spr Kelly Marie Greene, left, the first female sapper to join a unit in the Field Army. Helping her dig round the pipe on the future site for the logistics complex on the outskirts of Pristina, the responsibility of 23 Amphibious Engineer Squadron, is Spr Pitchforth. Lt Gory Evans RE, her troop commander, was full of praise for Kelly Marie's enthusiasm and capacity for hard work. Picture: Maj Gen (Retd) Edward Fursdon

On track to be First Lady

Derby rail fan Pte Becky Shemeld, pictured, hopes to become the Territorial Army's first female train driver. As a train manager at Derby, she is responsible in her civvy job for the safety of thousands of commuters every day, making sure that all passengers are on board before trains leave Derby's station.

Now Becky (23) hopes to master the controls of her own 20-tonne diesel locomotive as a member of 275 Railway Squadron RLC (V).



QRL face up to challenge

The recent arrival of six new recruits to the Osnabrück-based Queen's Royal Lancers heralded a new era for the Challenger 1-equipped regiment. The six young tankies are the first to join the QRL following Challenger 2 training. The Lancers will be receiving the new tank in the near future and are currently completing a busy programme of courses and conversions to prepare them for the eagerly-awaited arrival of their muscular state-of-the-art "mounts".

DATES

APRIL
29: British Model Soldier Society annual show, New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, Holborn, London, 10.30-6.
JULY
10-15: Royal Military Tattoo 2000, Horse Guards Parade, in aid of principal Service charities.
SEPTEMBER
5-10: Middle Wallop International Air Show.
● To include public events, contact the Editor.



Chris's rail 'experience' saves day

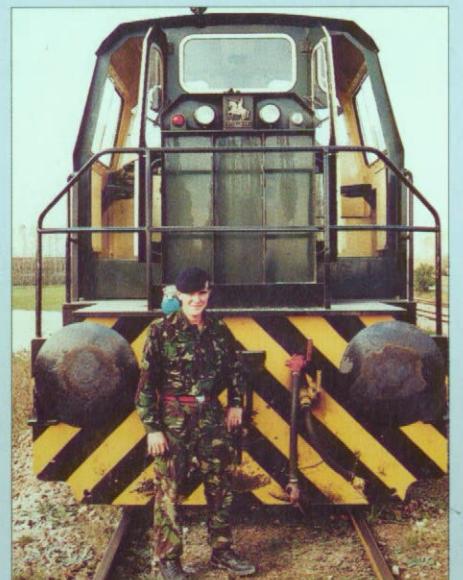
SAPPER Chris Horner's previously unknown skill as an engine driver solved a serious crisis which, in the early autumn, threatened implementation of the vital temporary field accommodation programme for British troops in Kosovo, writes Maj Gen (Retd) Edward Fursdon.

At Teretna railhead, near Pristina, none of the Italian railwaymen had yet learned to drive the MoD loco moving trucks of crushed stone from Macedonia into the siding for unloading.

In desperation – and half jokingly – the squadron sergeant major of 32 HQ Sqn RE turned to his driver, Spr Horner, and said: "Don't suppose you can drive an engine?" To which the totally unexpected answer was: "Yes, I can."

So for four days Spr Horner, who had undertaken work experience with the North Yorkshire Railway before starting his training as an apprentice boilermaster, happily drove the engine and kept the crushed stone flowing.

Luckily for the Army, Spr Horner had given up the idea of being a boilermaster and had enlisted into the Royal Engineers instead. A commendable case of the right sapper being in the right place at the right time.



Driven loco: Spr Chris Horner with the MoD engine which was beyond the Italian railmen

War memorial for women

An £80,000 appeal has been launched to pay for a national memorial to the women of the Second World War. Organisers hope to double the amount from Lottery funding and to site the memorial on the empty plinth in Trafalgar Square. Donations to Memorial to Women of World War 2 Fund, c/o Maj (Retd) David Robertson, HQ York Garrison, Imphal Barracks, Fulford Road, York YO10 4HD (tel 01904 662291, fax 662655).

Devil of a tradition

Showtime: Two female soldiers were part of the 68 (Inns of Court and City Yeomanry) Signal Squadron mounted contingent among the 150 floats which made up the Lord Mayor of London's Procession.

Traditionally the regiment, which glories in the unusual nickname "The Devil's Own", provides a detachment of 13 riders. Among those parading on horses borrowed from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment were Sgt Alvin Lewis, left, with Lt Zara Jeffreys and Capt David Thompson, the regimental medical officer.

In civvy street Sgt Lewis is a radiographic photographer, Lt Jeffreys a management consultant, and Capt Thompson a barrister (he's also a qualified doctor).

Their Territorial Army role is to provide assets to the National Defence Communications Network.



4 Div steps on the gas

Hut 12 opens in tribute
More than 300 veterans of the Korean War paraded to mark the inauguration of the Hut 12 millennium project at Camp Eden, Malton in North Yorkshire. The award-winning Second World War museum now offers visitors a display commemorating soldiers who fought in all post-1945 wars.

Largest of the new displays, on the Korean War, was opened at a ceremony attended by South Korea's Defence Attaché, Capt Lee Byung-Moon, the national president of the Korean Veterans' Association, Maj Archibald Birtwistle, and the national chairman, Col George Gadd.

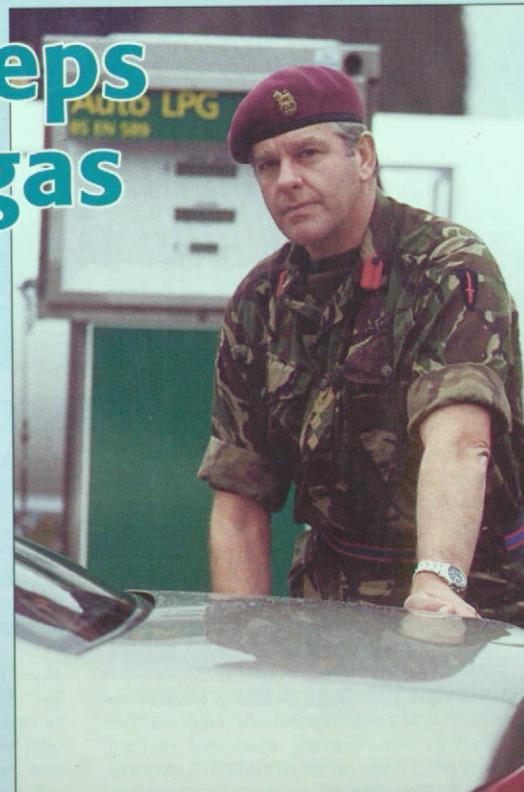
Standard-bearers from 21 KVA branches were followed by veterans from all over the country.

Dual fuel: Col David Keenan, Deputy Chief-of-Staff, 4 Division, tops up one of the new environmentally-friendly gas-driven Vauxhall cars now available to senior personnel in Aldershot.

The fleet of 18 Vectras, owned and managed by contractors Lex Primary Management, run on liquid petroleum gas (LPG), which is about 30 per cent cheaper than petrol and much less polluting.

Because LPG sales points are still relatively rare in the United Kingdom, the cars also carry reserve petrol tanks. Drivers can switch between fuels without stopping.

Col Paul Cummings, Commander Logistic Support at Headquarters 4 Division, said that the new fleet should prove the benefits of LPG, and could lead to much wider use of gas-driven vehicles.



Picture: Steve Dook

Fusiliers return to their Caribbean island of plumes

The 5th Foot (later the Northumberland Fusiliers) earned their plume when they thwarted a French attack on the island of St Lucia in the West Indies in 1778. They took the white plumes from the defeated French and wore them in their hats for the next 51 years.

White plumes were then authorised to be worn by all line regiments, but the 5th were allowed a red tip to theirs as a mark of distinction. Needless to say, there was no shortage of volunteers when an offer for three TA fusiliers to visit St Lucia was made by HMS

Northumberland, the regiment's affiliated ship. CSgt Ian Fairbairn and Cpl Mark Keeler from Ashington and Fus Paul Goldie from Whitley Bay got the nod.

Their week in the sun was interrupted by Hurricane José, and they found themselves standing by with the ship's company to provide disaster relief. But they did get to see the site of the 5th's famous victory... the former battlefield is now an airstrip.



CSgt Ian Fairbairn



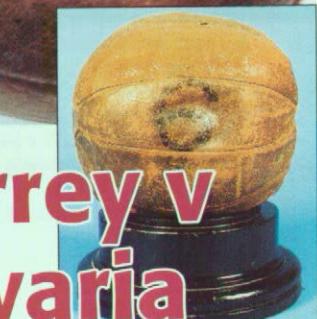
Cpl Mark Keeler

Legends of the regiments and corps

7 Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum, Guildford and PWRR and Queen's Museum, Dover



To the death: East Surrey footballs kept at Guildford, left, and Dover Castle, inset



Surrey v Bavaria

EARLY on the morning of July 1, 1916 Capt Wilfred "Billie" Nevill, a Dover College old boy, began perhaps the most glorious football "kick-about" there has ever been.

When the order was given at 0727 for his B Company, 8th Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment to assault the German Breslau trench, he issued each of his platoons with a football to kick across the 400 yards of no-man's-land.

His reason was to try to take their minds off the near certainty of annihilation and to think of the German trench as their "goal". Nevill was killed just outside the German wire, where two footballs were found the next day.

BLOODIEST DAY

Only about 250 men reached Breslau trench unwounded in an attack lasting nine hours. This was the first day of the Battle of the Somme, on which 57,000 casualties were sustained, the bloodiest day in British military history.

The two footballs are revered items in two museums which serve the memory of the East Surreys: The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum in Clandon Park, Guildford, Surrey, and the PWRR and Queen's Museum in Dover Castle.

Their story is one which continues to capture the world's imagination 84 years after the "match".

Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum, opening times available on 01483 223419 or fax 224636.

PWRR and Queen's Museum, opening times available on 01304 240121.

Bulletin board

Hello, old friend

Fancy seeing you again: The Duke of Edinburgh was reunited with a 1954 Aston Martin Lagonda coupé which he had sold in 1958 when he visited Arborfield to open a new exhibition hall at the REME Museum of Technology.

With the car, which is in immaculate condition, were its owners, Peter and Valerie Biggs from Cambridge. The vehicle is one of the few examples of Prince Philip's former Aston Martins still in private hands. Most have been snapped up by museums.

Pictured with the Duke, who is Colonel-in-Chief of the REME, are current owner Peter Biggs, left, and Brig Rod Croucher, Director Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Army).

Why was the Lagonda there in the first place? Because Garrison Commander Brig Stephen Matthews is a Lagonda enthusiast and knew the whereabouts of the Duke's old car. He thought it would be a nice surprise... and he was right.

Picture: Chris Fletcher



Walsall: home of military leatherware

READERS may be unaware that many items of royal and military saddlery originated in the West Midlands.

To mark the millennium, the Walsall Leather Museum is mounting a special exhibition entitled "All the Queen's Horses".

Open until February 29, it features items from the Royal Mews, including the ivory quill semi-state harness made for Prince Albert, the side-saddle formerly used by the Queen during the annual Trooping the Colour ceremony, and many personal items from the royal stable.

With the Queen's permission, most of the pieces are appearing for the first time on a public display.

The Household Cavalry Regiment has also loaned uniforms, equipment, saddlery and harnesses.

If you want to know more, contact Dr Roland Rotherham at the Walsall Leather Museum, Littleton Street West, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 8EQ (tel 01922 721153).

APPOINTMENTS

Senior appointments: Capt the Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Pattie is appointed Deputy Colonel Commandant Royal Green Jackets, in a new appointment.

Gen Sir Roger Wheeler is appointed Honorary Colonel Queen's University Officers' Training Corps, Dec 23.

Brigadiers: C C Brown to be Cmdr Arty 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, Nov 29; C L Le Gallais to be Chief Faction Liaison Officer SFOR, Nov 26; M J Rutledge to be Chief Air HQ ARRC, Nov 25.

Colonels: R A P Cary to be DACOS G3

REUNIONS

Queen's Regiment: Annual reunion on Mar 4 at Victory Services Club, London. Contact Assoc Secretary, RHQ PWRR, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY (tel 01227 818054/56).

6 Squad Junior Marines: Reunion at Home Club, Portsmouth, May 6. Contact Geof Haywood on 01202 888194.

50th Missile Club, Royal Artillery: Millennium reunion at the Lawn, Lincoln on May 13. For reunion or membership details contact secretary A J Todd on 01387 262378, write to him at 9 The Grove, Heathhall, Dumfries,

Scotland DG1 1TN or by e-mail at TODD.A.J@ic24.net

Military Survey Branch, RE Association: Major reunion planned at Hermitage on Aug 26. Details from Alan Gordon, Hon Sec, Military Survey Branch REA, 1 Majorca Avenue, Andover, Hants SP10 1JW.

Red Devils: Reunion 2000 to be held at Airfield Camp, Netheravon, on Nov 25 for former team members and people associated with the team. Details on 01980 678211 or write to Red Devils Reunion, Airfield Camp, Netheravon, Wilts SP4 9SF.

Command Plans, Nov 26; M B Cooper to be RHQ Col RA Regiment, Nov 29; P E Dennison to be Def Mil & Air Attaché, Cairo, Dec 1; W H Farrington to be Col AGC MCM Div, Nov 29; M N Pountain to be Col R A MCM Div, Nov 22; S F Sherry to be Col MS(A), Dec 1; M R Toms to be Director Operations and Plans Div, Dec 3; K M Tutt to be RHQ Col RLC, Nov 19.

Lieutenant Colonels: S J Barry, Para - to HQ Inf, Jan 10; R I Braithwaite RE - to SP Pol, May 2; M P A Bullen, Scots DG - to PJHQ (UK), Oct 4; S C Burgess AGC - to Unicom, Mar 27; D R Caldwell RLC - to Dir Sup Chain (A), Feb 7; R G C Campbell RLC - to PROJ Allenby, Sept 20; R K Edwards RLC - to PATO,

Land, Oct 18; M E Faulkener RLC - to DPCS, May 7; J H Gibbon RA - to ACSAS, Feb 28; RAL Gilchrist BW - to HQ 2 Div, Jan 24; L A Holley RGT - to HQ DGTS Div 6; J R Ibbotson, Para - to HQ Land, Apr 3.

M R Lilley RLC - to HQ RLC Trg Gp, May 29; JGO Lowe RLC - to Scholog, Feb 7; P W Middlemiss KOSB - to BLQ Germany, Dec 4; J C Miller RLC - to HQ Londist, Nov 1; S W Norman WFR - to RCB, Feb 7; M P J O'Hanlon, R Irish - to JSCSC, Nov 1; J J P Poraj-Wilczynski, Para - to UNOMISL, Jan 28; D R Quinn-Hall RLC - to HQ AFSOUTH, Jan 16; D P Richards RA - to RMCS, Jan 10; M L Riddell-Webster BW - to HQ MND(SW), Apr



Fine stuff from these Welsh Terriers

THE Royal Welsh Regiment came into being last year with the cuts and amalgamations made in the Territorial Army. The Territorial Army Band of Wales became part of the new regiment and has recently cut its first disc, titled *The Goat Majors* (DONE CD 099).

Although it is described as the regimental band, would-be purchasers should be aware that this is in fact a Territorial Army brass band, not a regimental military band.

The first part is devoted to marches and march-type pieces; the second part is well-varied concert material. The programme includes among others, *The Goat Majors* (especially composed for this recording), *Cornish Cavalier*, *El Rave Pass*, *Bale Castle Bay*, *Caerphilly Castle*, *Let's Face The Music and Dance*, *My Grandfathers Clock*, and *Cwm Rhondda*. A very fine performance and an excellent recording.

One of the famous names to disappear with the TA cuts was **The Band of The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars**. A few months before being disbanded they recorded a programme of concert music which included tunes from the film *Titanic*, *Greensleeves*, *Linden Lea*, *Tin Pan Alley*, *The Archers* (theme tune), several solos and the four regimental marches of **The Royal Wessex Yeomanry**. What a pity such a fine band has had to go. (ADROIT Music TRACED 994).

Back with the Regular Army, the **Band of the Coldstream Guards** seems to spend

much of its free time in the recording studio and has here produced a programme entitled *Marches for the Connoisseur* (Band leader CD BAN 5152) – a fine collection of 23 good parade marches from Europe and the USA. Among the lesser-known works are *The Peacemaker* (Looter), *British Eight* (Elite), *Young Courageous* (Lovely), *The Liberators* (Charles Incline) and *Europe United* (Zeal).

Also on the Bandleader label is the Band of the Irish Guards playing *Marches of the Two World Wars* (Bandleader CD BAN 5156). It's a good collection of parade marches, even if most have already appeared on compact disc.

Six of the 22 are by Kenneth Afford and two by his younger brother Leo Stanley. The programme ends aptly with *American Legion* and Bigot's *The British Legion*, wrongly titled here as *The Royal British Legion*: the "Legion" has been granted the royal title, the march remains the same.

As can be seen from the track listing of *Marches of the Two World Wars*, the Irish Guards' programme consists in the main of marches that most collectors will already have on disc, but there are a few rarities and all-in-all this is a wonderful collection. I was particularly pleased to see *Flying Fortress March* and *Guadalcanal* included. A nice balance between cornets and euphonium in the former. The Band produces a good solid sound and generally speaking the balance is good with dynamics and style convincing.

Would you believe it?

Collateral damage

Urine damage, according to *Private Eye*, has become a major problem on Hercules aircraft belonging to the Canadian Armed Forces. The primary source of corrosion has been attributed to the current urinal installation and the "splash-over" of uric acid. Urine is especially corrosive to aluminium.

The problem has affected 23 of the 32 aircraft in the Canadian fleet at a cost of \$6 million.

Apparently the 23 Hercs have primitive bucket toilets in the rear of the cavernous fuselage and crew members sometimes miss the "target" when thrown about by a spot of turbulence.

Howard's end

The latest edition of *The Stafford Knot*, journal of The Staffordshire Regiment, reveals that the late Trevor Howard was cautioned by Scotland Yard in 1945 for falsely claiming the MC.

The star of *Cockleshell Heroes*, *Brief Encounters* and many other films was able to show that he had been mistaken for a genuine MC holder and had not chosen to correct the error.

Official records show that Howard was commissioned and posted to the 2nd South Staffords on October 3, 1942 and lasted just three months before being moved out of the Airborne Division.

After a period at No 5 Infantry Depot he relinquished his commission in October 1943 on grounds of ill health.

SEARCHLINE

New branch of **Queen's Regimental Assoc** formed in Horsham, E Sussex by ex-members of 6/7 PWRR. Anyone who served with Queens or PWRR, Regular or TA, is asked to contact Dave Holman, 53 Fairfield Road, Burgess Hill, W Sussex RH15 8QB (tel 01444 254079 or e-mail david.holman@bt.com) or Steve Bell, 40 Northway, Burgess Hill, W Sussex (01444 870092).

Doug Lindgren, who served with **28 Commonwealth Ordnance Field Park**, at Terendak Camp, Malacca, Malaysia in 1966-69, is visiting UK in June and wishes to hear from former colleagues Lt Sinclair-Lees, Lt Roy

Lennox, SSgt John Hickey, Pte Neil Slater, Pte Geordie Pooley, Cpl Colyer, Cpl Jeff Balcombe, Sgt Geordie Hedley, Sgt Paddy Sedgwick, Sgt Gordon Brocklebank, Cpl Keppie, Pte Mifsud, Cpl Wilson, SSgt Jim Rae and WO Brant. Replies to 80 Veale Road, Jensen, 4818, Townsville, Queensland, Australia.

Calling Italy campaign veterans. The town council of **Badia Agnano** (near Arezzo) in central Italy wishes to contact veterans who were in the area during the Second World War battles that took place in that part of the country. Contact Italy Star Association representative Harry Shindler, via S Evaristo 157, 00165 Rome, Italy (tel 06 6384227).

Undergraduate at School of Scottish Studies at University of Edinburgh researching and recording the traditions of **dance in Scottish regiments** seeks memorabilia, photographs to study and copy and anything else for inclusion in the archives of the Dance Trust or the school. Can travel for interviews, audio or visual recordings. Replies to David Anson, 56 Saughton Mains Street, Edinburgh EH 3HD.

B Westerneng seeks family of **LCpl A Jones, Cheshire Regiment** and **227 Coy RE** in Flanders and France during First World War, who made an aluminium matchbox holder for his late father, a Dutch soldier. Replies: 'tHazeveld 75, 3862 XA Nykerk, Netherlands.

Monika Vogt seeks details of a British military unit stationed at **St Georgen am Längsee**, **Bezirk St Veit and der Glan, Austria** from April 1945 until Sept 1945. A local archive suggests it might have been an infantry battalion. Replies to Monika Vogt, 50354 Hürth, Ursulastrasse 135 (tel 02233 74131).

LCpl Brian Champion, last known with REME, Paderborn, Germany (1994) and afterwards with RMP in Northern Ireland and Cyprus, is asked to contact Linda Aspinall on 01252 671909 or 07901 522418.

Gwyneth Evans wishes to hear from **Pippa Dannatt**, wife of LCpl Mick Dannatt, whose address she mislaid. Replies to 31 Tirenon, Llwynhendy, Llanelli, Carmarthen SA14 9DF.

PRIZE-WINNERS

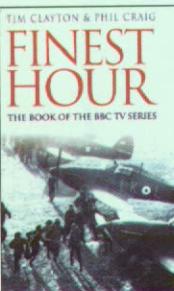
The Second World War in Colour video set and book (Nov issue): C A Stone, RAO, 9/12 Lancers, Swanton Morley, Norfolk. Answer: Sept 3, 1939.

Three copies of Fd Marshal Lord Carver's The National Army Museum Book of The Boer War (Nov issue): SSgt N France, 1 RRW LAD REME, Op Palantine, BFPO 548; Shawn M Wade, Burnaby, British Columbia; Sgt Andy Paton, Medical Centre, BATSUB, BFPO 12. Answer: Mauser.

Books

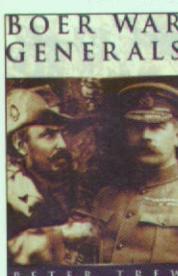
You've seen it on TV – now read the book

FASCINATING recollections of Service men and women and their exploits in 1940 are to be found in *Finest Hour* by Tim Clayton and Phil Craig (Hodder & Stoughton, £20), the book of the BBC TV series. They recall not just nostalgia but the hopes, fears, anguish, joy and despair of men and women of all ranks and all services. They tell of betrayal and cover-ups and even of American plans for dealing with a Nazi-occupied Britain. A first-class page-turner and a valuable historical document in itself.



Professional generals versus the amateurs

THE proliferation of books about events a century ago continues with *The Boer War Generals* by

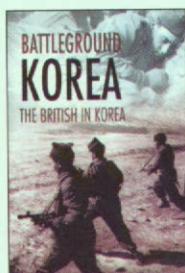


Peter Trew (Sutton, £19.99). Senior commanders from both sides come under the microscope in a conflict that pitched professional British generals against Boer farmers who commanded out of necessity and sometimes brilliantly.

In this uncomplicated volume supported by maps and photographs, readers will find it easy to compare the abilities and achievements of the protagonists, with stories of De Wet's railway exploits to thwart Roberts, and failures which destroyed Buller's reputation.

British perspective on the Korean War

THIS year marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War and this will lead



almost certainly to a multitude of publications. But while most will give a great deal of coverage to the American activities, *Battleground Korea*, by Charles Whiting (Sutton, £19.99) concentrates on the British involvement in

1950–51. Supported by eyewitness accounts, Whiting's vivid record of the first years of "the nastiest little war" which involved 40,000 British men, 687 of whom were killed, reflects on events from the ground up to the "dithering politicians".

WHAT broke out in South Africa in October, 1899 was not the first Boer War – there had been a short conflict lasting from December 20, 1880 until February 27, 1881.

An account of this war as well as events since the Dutch settled in 1652 and British troops first landed in South Africa in 1795 to establish a strategic base, are covered in David Smurthwaite's background to this book.

This is not just another "coffee table" book – it is much more. The author, Assistant Director of the National Army Museum, has presented a well-organised and lavishly-illustrated coverage of the war in succinct summaries and eye-witness accounts, both Boer and British, which make up half the text.

Most notable are those of Winston Churchill, the black interpreter Solomon T Plaatje, photographer Horace Nicholls,

The Boer War 1899–1902 by David Smurthwaite (Hamlyn, £20).



Young Winston Churchill, above, and, inset, Solomon T Plaatje



war correspondent Rudyard Kipling, John Lane – a British uitlander forced to serve with the Boers – and the fighting men of both sides.

IN BRIEF

Mentioned in Despatches 1948–1968 compiled by Mick Dalzell and Paul Riches. Lists the name, rank, number, Service, London Gazette date and theatre of "mention" of 8,800 British and Commonwealth men and women. Dedicated to Dalzell, who died of cancer in September. Available from Paul Riches, Rudloe House, Leafy Lane, Corsham, Wilts SN13 0JY at £24.95 plus £2.50 p&p.

The South Wales Borderers (24th Regiment of Foot) 1881–1969 compiled by Martin Everett for the South Wales Borderers Museum. The 24th is best known for its role in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, but the 200 or so photographs in this "Images of

Wales" book illustrate the distinguished service of the regiment under its subsequent title. (Tempus Publishing Ltd, Stroud, Glos; paperback, £9.99.)

'Look to Your Front': Studies in the First World War by the British Commission for Military History. Eleven contributors who share a conviction that the war should now be treated dispassionately as history. (Spellmount, paperback, £14.95.)

Channel Islands at War: A German Perspective by George Forty. Well-researched and illustrated "view from the other side" by this prolific author. (Ian Allan, £24.99.)

War, Resistance and Intelligence edited by K G Robertson. Distinguished historians contribute to this tribute to former SAS officer, writer and broadcaster M R D Foot, published to mark his 80th birthday on December 14, 1999. (Leo Cooper, £19.95.)

Men of Steel by Michael Reynolds. Following *The Devil's Adjutant* and *Steel Inferno*, Maj Gen Reynolds completes his history of the 1st SS Panzer Corps with this authoritative account of their final actions in the Ardennes and on the Eastern Front in 1944 and 1945. (Spellmount, £20.)

Inside the Afrika Korps: The Crusader Battles, 1941–42 by Col Rainer Kriebel and the United States Army Intelligence Service, edited by Bruce I Gudmundsson. Insight into the strength and weaknesses of Rommel and his men. (Greenhill Books, £18.99.)

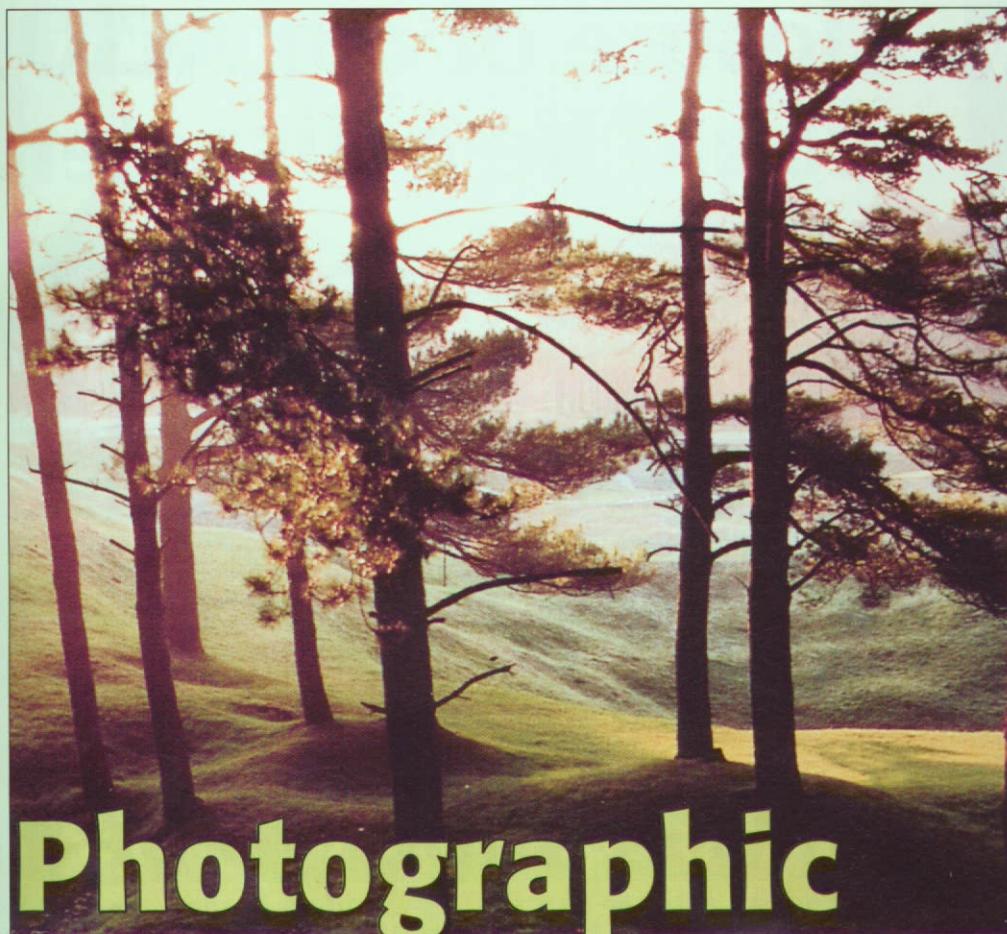
Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Postal address: Helion &

Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, UK (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 1315).

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<http://www.helion.co.uk>

Britain's Vietnam



Photographic memories

STIMULATED by the splendid photography, seduced by the narratives and then shattered by the stories.

Fields of Memory was written in French and not unnaturally tends to emphasise the French perspective of the Great War. It does, however, contain invaluable chapters on the Battles of the Somme and Ypres, where the British Empire made a major contribution.

The words lose nothing in the translation and John Foley's superb photography, together with much archive material, ensures that in the unusual competition between narrative and pictorial, neither has to yield.

Many of Foley's pictures are worth 1,000 words – the rest considerably more.

He has presented his moody photographs, the dawns, the mists and the dusks, in such a way as to add to the pathos generated by the words.

The cameos presented by

Fields of Memory: A Testament to the Great War by Anne Roze, photography by John Foley. Cassell, large-format hardback, £25.

historians, poets, journalists, the cultured and uneducated, from many countries each add a poignant sentence or two.

Each description together with its pictures asks the reader to ponder and think. Of course it is not possible truly to appreciate the depths of the anguish felt by the men on both sides of the front line but it is feasible to understand that this was about as low as mankind could stoop.

The Battle of the Somme cost the British Empire 1.2 million dead and eight times that number maimed. At Thiepval, 73,000 perished in a morning, equivalent to the entire crowd at Twickenham Rugby Stadium never re-emerging after a Saturday match. Of the 4,000 South Africans who attacked Devils Wood, 143 returned unscathed.

Idyllic: But once it was a blood-soaked killing field. Detail from the cover of *Fields of Memory: A Testament to the Great War*

As the book frequently restates, lest the reader's mind should wander, there are 410 British cemeteries on the Somme alone.

Fields of Memory provides no conclusion. It is questioning and stimulating. It adds to our knowledge through wonderful photographs and carefully-chosen texts – some old, some new.

In the preface, Jean Rouaud has written: "... All the bodies have returned to the earth in the great recycling of nature. So what is left. A vision of a devastated playground...".

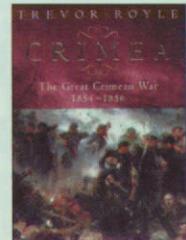
That is as good a summary as we can imagine.

One gripe and therefore a warning to the reader. In 228 pages containing thousands of place-names, there is not one map.

It is therefore difficult, even for one who knows the ground well, to differentiate between one's *Arras* and *Iles Beaux*. A good map would have been a welcome bonus. – RT

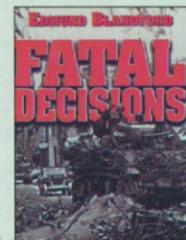
Britain and France versus America

DURING the siege of Sebastopol, Britain and France were on the point of declaring war on the US. This little-known fact is one of the many unearthed in **Crimea** by Trevor Royle (Little Brown, £22.50), the first complete history of the war based upon military and diplomatic sources including Russian documents. The book encompasses the political and military campaigns, deals with the jingoism of the period, examines the press coverage of "our first media war" and offers a simple and plausible theory about why the Charge of the Light Brigade took place.



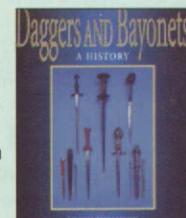
What happened to the wartime scrap?

IN the fog of war mistakes are made, and a mini-industry has arisen in the past few years along the lines of Edmund Blandford's **Fatal Decisions: Errors and Blunders in World War II** (Airlife, £19.95). The author attributes these failings as much to poor communications facilities as to human weakness and his 69 bite-size chapters cover incidents involving both Allied and Axis forces. One intriguing section questions the fate of all the scrap contributed to the war effort by British citizens answering Beaverbrook's famous appeal. Was it all dumped at sea?



Is this a dagger or a bayonet I see...

THE dagger was one of the earliest all-purpose tools, used for a variety of domestic, agricultural and artisan tasks as well as for fighting. It also became a status symbol. The bayonet has been almost exclusively a weapon of war, though like all sharp instruments it will have found other employment. Logan Thompson's **Daggers and Bayonets: A History** (Spellmount, £19.95), aimed at wargamers, modellers and re-enactment societies as much as social and military historians, is attractive and well-illustrated, though mostly in black-and-white.



Unmoved by DPS(A)'s arguments on ops' tax

IN regard to the question of being better off paying tax while on operational tours, I have major misgivings about the answers (Issues, Nov) given by the Directorate of Personal Services (Army).

C Smith of 1 Para said in his letter that as well as their earnings being tax-free while on tours, other Nato soldiers received additional benefits. For example, a German soldier on a four-month tour can receive up to DM16,000 on top of his ordinary pay. In reply, DPS(A) neglected to mention the benefits paid to US soldiers on tour. I admit their wages are the same, but they also get additional benefits while away from home.

With regard to the US soldier having to submit tax returns, every US Army unit has a help desk to assist. There are also detailed broadcasts on AFN, the military TV network found wherever American forces are stationed. Given the right direction, I think the average British squaddie could just about cope.

KOSOVO TAX LEVELS

As to the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 (ICTA 88) protecting us from local taxation outside the UK, can we have a comparison of exactly how much tax we would pay, for instance, in Kosovo? I doubt that it would be as high as in the UK.

I know it would take up valuable parliamentary time to change the law, but what is Parliament there for? Surely someone at Westminster is supposed to look after the Armed Forces' best interests.

Finally, before I get off my high horse, DPS(A) says non-payment of taxes could have a "knock-on effect in terms of daily pay... and subsequently pensions". Is this a threat to cut wages or is it advice? I am sure it would be a complicated process to change the law regarding taxation, requiring someone with more clout than a mere corporal, but can DPS(A) not come up with some more convincing arguments? – Cpl Jerry Winfield, C Troop, 26 Tpt Sqn RLC, BFPO 806.

Others get free flights

FOLLOWING C Smith's letter on tax (Issues, Nov), I would like to ask why British troops serving with the UN in Cyprus have to pay for their own flights if they wish to return to the UK for R and R. Fellow UN soldiers from other nations receive free R and R flights.

To add insult to injury, we receive 75p a day UN pay, while for the soldiers of other nations, UN pay nearly doubles their wages. – LBdr C Pacey, 22 Regiment, Royal Artillery, Gainsborough.

Closure of our ACIO would be a disaster

I WRITE this letter, incensed, after reading in a local newspaper that the MoD has entered into a contract with a civilian company to the tune of £100 million to build accommodation blocks for our Service personnel in the Balkans.

The use of this money comes at a time when the MoD is drastically cutting costs in other departments; recruiting, for example. Several offices have been told they will be closing. My office was due to move from the TA Centre into a prime site in the city centre, the lease for the past year having been signed and paid. The money for the refurbishment – approximately £100,000 – cannot be found and therefore in the not-too-distant future we will have to close an office which recruits a constant

Prize letter

flow of good-calibre potential soldiers and leave an area which has had a recruiting office for many years.

We know that youngsters from this area don't travel well and will not journey further afield to the nearest Armed Forces Careers Office. The recruiting figures will go down, not just here but in other areas where offices are closing.

This, at a time when we cannot meet our annual recruiting figures, is disastrous. Surely the £100 million for the Kosovo building programme should be funded by the United Nations, not the United Kingdom, as the Balkans are a UN commitment. We need to get our priorities right. – SSgt Ann Ford, ACIO Horden, Co Durham.

GSM is about to be overtaken by events

MAY I reply to Sgt O'Neill (Nov) who wrote concerning a bar to the General Service Medal 1962 for service in the Balkans.

The precedence of accepting certain foreign medals as British operational awards (and, as such, worn with other British campaign medals) and consequently not issuing a British medal, was started when the United Nations Special Service Medal with clasp "Congo" was accepted in 1962 as a British award.

A guiding principle of medals is that only one should be worn for each campaign, so to add a "Balkans" clasp to the GSM 62 would be "double-medalling".

The following six foreign medals have so far been accepted as British operational awards for service in the Balkans:

1. UN Medal (UNPROFOR);
2. Nato Medal with clasp "Former Yugoslavia";
3. Western European Union Mission Medal with clasp "Former Yugoslavia";
4. European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) Medal for monitors' service in former Yugoslavia;

5. UN Special Service Medal for service in, or direct support of, the airlift to Sarajevo;

6. Nato Medal with clasp "Kosovo".

You may also be interested to know that the GSM 62 will be replaced for operations after January 1 by the Operational Service Medal (OSM), which will be used where a separate campaign medal (Gulf Medal, for example) is not warranted and where the operation in question does not qualify for a UN/Nato medal.

As opposed to the clasp system currently used for the GSM, each operation for which the OSM is issued will attract a different medal ribbon, the basic ribbon colours being the same but with the addition of coloured stripes to indicate different theatres. The design of the medal and choice of basic ribbon colours is still being decided by the Cabinet Office.

Sgt O'Neill is not quite correct when he states that the last clasp to the GSM 62 was in 1991. Most recent was "Air Operations Iraq" issued in 1997 and still ongoing. And, of course, the clasp "Northern Ireland" can still be awarded. – Lt Col I A Vere Nicoll RA, PS12(A), MoD.

SOLDIER welcomes your letters, whether you are an officer or other rank; serving or civvy; nine, 19 or 90. All we ask is that you keep them brief and to the point. We'd prefer them to be typed but if they are handwritten, please put names, addresses and in block capitals (not necessarily for publication). A prize from the Soldier gift collection will be awarded each month if we judge that a letter, serious or humorous, merits it. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to amend for length, clarity or style. Anonymous letters will not be considered.

Mail us!

THEN AND THEN



50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, Jan 1950 A crimson bomb marks the headquarters of No 2 Squadron RE. Beside it (note his bomb flash) is Cpl N E Cuthew, from Glamorgan. The Richmond Park-based squadron is responsible for London and South-East England, an area in which they tackle, on average, up to 25 wartime bombs each month.

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, Jan 1975 Uncertainty hangs over the Overlord Embroidery, said to be the modern counterpart of the Bayeux Tapestry. This 264-foot-long embroidery, depicting the Allied invasion of Europe and created by 23 seamstresses of the Royal School of Needlework in London over five years, has yet to be shown in the UK.

PS...

Hidden virtues

ON picking up the November issue I turned straight to the Army Medical Services' section in the TA's new order of battle. I am surprised no one told you about 306 Field Hospital.

Perhaps the powers-that-be fear that if it becomes common knowledge that 306 recruits nationwide and, as a specialist unit, has a reduced training commitment of two weekends and one fortnight, then it would be overwhelmed with recruits. – Lt Col J Ashton, 24 Amd Fd Amb (306 attached), Op Agricola.

Disturbing views

I AM writing in reply to Cpl Steph Pender (Dec), who wrote complaining about the amount of the married man's disturbance allowance. My only comment is that if she was still married and in receipt of disturbance allowance, would she still be complaining? – SSgt Simon Livesey, SHAPE.

Art of insensitivity

I REGARD David Shepherd's proud boast (Dec) that he avoided National Service because he had just started his art career as an insult to 2.2 million National Servicemen who served in all parts of the world, including Korea, where they were wounded, taken prisoner and died keeping the peace. – Ken Wakeman, National Service Veterans Alliance, Eltham,

Go on, volunteer

IN reply to Pte Pickering ("Don't ask... call us up!", Oct), I feel he has either been badly advised or has not researched the prospect of volunteering enough. Even though I volunteered to serve in Bosnia last year, it was classed as a "call-out". This meant my employer was bound by the Reserve Forces Act 1996 and had to keep my job open for me for the six months I was away. They were also entitled to claim compensation from the MoD to cover any costs incurred in replacing me temporarily.

My advice is to volunteer. That is what the TA is there for. – A Pullan, Leeds.

Tattoo time

IN response to the *Soldier* to *Soldier* column (Nov), "It's just not fun any more", I wish to point out that there are still military tattoos held in the UK. An excellent international tattoo staged at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham attracts about 10,000 spectators to each performance and has proved so popular that a similar tattoo is being held at the Wembley Arena in London over the weekend of May 27-28. There is still a need for displays of military music and activities to delight the general public and there is still someone willing to organise these spectacular events. – Capt (Retd) A T Sutton, Solihull.

● RMT 2000 – see Pages 26-27

SFOR a Balkans operation?

I HAVE been doing a bit of research into phonetic alphabets – "Alpha, Bravo" etc – and wonder how they came about and who created them.

Does anyone recall the "Able, Baker" phonetic alphabet or, indeed, First World War "Ack Ack, Beer Beer" version? I remember my grandad telling me another one which old sweats quoted to brighten up dull periods or to baffle recruits. It went like this:

A for orses; B for mutton; C for looking;

D for ence; E for Adam; F for essence; G for (can't remember); H for ouse; I for Novello; J for oranges; K for ansis (Kay Francis); L for leather; M for size; N for mation; O for Christ's sake; P for Naafi tea; Q for pictures; R for Askey (as in Arthur); S for Williams (as in Esther); T for two; U for me; V for Mussolini; W for quits; X for breakfast; Y for goodness sake; Z for breeze.

It makes you wonder how we won the war. – John Paul Walsh, Leyland.

Treated like a second-class citizen in my own country

I HAVE been in the Army since I was 16 and in that time have been subjected to blatant discrimination because I am a soldier.

I have been refused credit, charged more for motor insurance and humiliated by a car salesman who requested a letter from my commanding officer before he would release my vehicle.

Recently, I and three friends socialising in Camberley, Surrey were refused entry to three public houses on the grounds that we were in the Army. When I tried to get assistance from the police, I was told in no uncertain terms that there was nothing I could do about it.

The Armed Forces have adopted an equal opportunities policy second to none. It's a pity that a minority of the

public seems to forget that singling out any group or individual for special treatment over race, colour, creed or religion is illegal. This should include employment. Imagine the outcry if I opened a pub in Aldershot and banned civilians.

The affair has left a bitter taste in the mouth of a soldier who served in the Falklands War and spent five years in Ulster. During recent high-profile operations, the humanitarian side of the Army has come to the fore, but that does not mean the British soldier is welcome everywhere.

I am coming to the end of my service and would recommend the Army as a career, but I don't want to be a second-class citizen in the country I am expected to die for. – Sgt M P Southall, Para, Army Apprentices' Col, Arborfield.

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

Gen Sir Roger Wheeler, Chief of the General Staff

My aspiration for the Army in the millennium year is that, while of course we must effectively meet whatever operational tasks there are, as we did so successfully in 1999, we have the opportunity to implement the Strategic Defence Review reorganisation; that will enable us to bring the formation readiness cycle into operation.

This, together with reducing commitments, will bring greater stability to the way of life of our soldiers and families, and not only enable us to train more effectively to be ready for whatever operations come our way, but also to have more time for the fun side of Army life.



Gen Sir Alex Harley, Adjutant General

I want to see a full-strength Army as a career of first choice, providing a fair balance between operational commitments and time for career and educational courses, sport and adventurous training, family time and time to enjoy the normal things of life. We must strive towards 21st Century standards



Resolutions for the new millennium

With millennium resolutions in mind, we asked the uniformed members of the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) to share with us their aspirations at the dawn of the 21st Century

of accommodation for all our single soldiers and families. Finally, I want to see an Army that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying in all its forms, and with a chain of command which itself has the time to lead and manage all our soldiers to the degree of detail they deserve.

Gen Sir Michael Walker, C-in-C Land Command

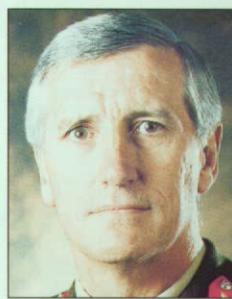
No one knows what the new millennium will bring for the British Army. I do know, however, that the men and women of our Army will continue to master whatever challenges are thrown at them, they will remain second-to-none on the world stage and they will serve with the same distinction as their forebears in previous centuries.

My own admiration for our officers and soldiers has never diminished – indeed, it has grown exponentially in my time in the Army. My resolution is to salute them at every opportunity – first.



Lt Gen Sir Scott Grant, Quartermaster General

In the future, as in the past, I would wish to see a confident, capable – and happy – Army, properly valued by the society it serves.



Maj Gen David Jenkins, Master General of the Ordnance

My aspiration for the millennium is to see the efforts of Smart Procurement really bear fruit. To continue bringing into service more capable equipment; in a more timely manner and without cost overruns.

It would be good to see any savings made passed back to the Army by way of extra equipment numbers or increased capability.

Soldiers on operations are doing an outstanding job and they deserve the best possible support. Our mission in the Defence Procurement Agency is to ensure that they receive first-class battle-winning equipment to get the job done.



Maj Gen Kevin O'Donoghue, Assistant Chief of the General Staff

The next century will bring many unforeseen challenges.

In taking forward ECAB's aspirations, I would wish to see a situation where we all, whether Regular, reservist or civilian, continue to enjoy the moral support of the nation and attract the necessary resources to allow us to remain the best Army in the world.



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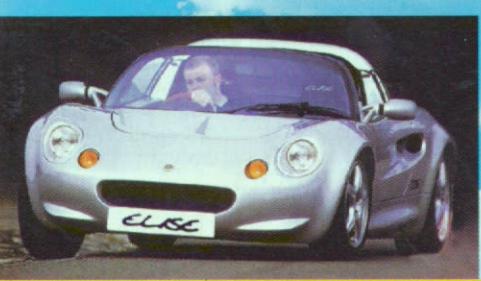


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