

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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victims
of terror

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up night sky

Why soldiers make
the best film extras



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Cover picture

The Last Post is sounded by Dmr Gary Salt, Support Coy, 1st Battalion, The Green Howards, during a ceremony at Shackleton Barracks, Ballykelly to re-dedicate a memorial to the 17 people – 11 of them soldiers – murdered by a terrorist attack on the Droppin Well pub in Ballykelly on December 6, 1982. The 20th anniversary service was attended by soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment, which lost eight men in the attack. The battalion is currently on a six-month tour of Northern Ireland

Picture: Sgt Paul Brownbridge

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Disabled? You wouldn't think so . . . Blesma daredevils live life in fast lane – Pages 42-43



December's photo competition winner
– see Page 65

Rising ambitions

When powerlifting Scots Guardsman Sgt Stephen Maden gives his mates a lift, he does it in spades.

– Sport, Page 52



'I find it really strange that houses sit empty, with nobody paying rent for them, while there are people in my situation suffering because of the distances we have to travel to spend time with our children'

– Heartfelt plea of a separated soldier, Talkback, Page 76

Yellow Watch awaits the call

Who was where during the eight-day strike

Army-led districts

Military HQ/Fresco Region	County/Region	Units
HQ 51 Brigade, Stirling/Scotland	Strathclyde	1 Hldrs, 2 RRF
	Lothian & Borders	1 KOSB
	Dumfries & Galloway	1 Para
HQ 15 Brigade, York/North East	Northumberland	40 RA
	Tyne and Wear	4 RA
	Durham	40 RA
	Cleveland	LD
	West Yorkshire	22 Eng Regt
	Humberside	38 Eng Regt
	South Yorkshire	1 DWR
HQ 42 Brigade, Preston/North West	Cumbria	RDG
	Lancashire	21 Eng Regt
	Greater Manchester	1 Kings, QRR
	Merseyside	1 QLR
	Cheshire	1 RHA
	Isle of Man	1 RHA
HQ 49 Brigade, Chilwell/Eastern	Derbyshire	22 RA
	Nottinghamshire	1 R Irish
	Northamptonshire	19 RA
	Bedfordshire	1 R Irish
	Hertfordshire	3 Para
	Essex	3 Para
HQ 2 Brigade, Dover/South East	Kent	1 Para
	Surrey	1 R Anglian
HQ 145 Brigade, Aldershot/Home Counties	Oxfordshire	4 GSR RLC
	Buckinghamshire	4 GSR RLC
	Berkshire	3 CSR RLC
HQ 143 Brigade, Shrewsbury/West Midlands	Staffordshire	3 CSR RLC
	West Midlands	1 RRW, 1 WG
	Warwickshire	1 WG
HQ 160 Brigade, Brecon/Wales	Gloucestershire	7 Para RHA
	Wiltshire	7 Para RHA
	Dorset	7 Para RHA
HQ London District, Chelsea/London	Greater London	1 SG, 1 WFR, HCR, 1 Gren Gds, 1 RWF
HQ Northern Ireland, Lisburn/Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	1 R Anglian, 1 RHF

Royal Navy-led districts

Scotland (Central and Fife), West Sussex, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.

RAF-led districts

Scotland (Highlands, Grampian, Tayside) North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Shropshire, Hereford and Worcester, North Wales, Mid and West Wales, and South Wales.

FROM north to south, east to west, Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel provided vital cover during the eight-day strike by firefighters at the end of November.

Up and down the country, lives were saved and potentially disastrous situations defused and made safe. A Soldier team spent a day with Servicemen manning a temporary fire station in Surrey. This is what they found.

IT looked like a dormitory... two rows of beds with sleeping bags and no privacy. It was shared by men in uniform, some military, some naval, some police, writes Ray Routledge.

They were waiting, ready for action as part of Operation Fresco, the Services' fire-and-rescue cover. They were the men of Yellow Watch, one of two 12-hour shifts at the Temporary Service Fire Station (TSFS) at Pirbright Barracks, which provided cover for the Woking area.

Calls for help during the day Soldier spent with Yellow Watch were intermittent. But no two days were alike during Fresco, with several "shouts" on one day, none the next.

When a call was received at Pirbright, six soldiers, a team of sailors and two police officers leapt for the stairwell and made for their vehicles parked outside.

It was believed a woman and baby had been trapped in a road traffic accident at West Byfleet, on the other side of Woking. With police guiding them, the Green Goddess made good time. Even so, the woman and child had been rescued by police already on the scene before Yellow Watch arrived. All that was left for the military team was to clean the road and push damaged vehicles to the pavement.

For Yellow and Red Watches, manned by men of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, it was the highlight of another long day. In a little over a week, the two watches answered 20 shouts, some more exciting than others.

Giving them the call was a Royal Navy chief petty officer, Paul Hutchinson. He took messages from HQ, called the team to action and looked after Royal Navy personnel manning the breathing apparatus rescue team (BART).

"Although fire-fighting in Surrey is

Yellow Watch awaits the call



Inside a Green Goddess: This 1 R Anglian fire crew at Godalming, above, was made up, from left, of Cpl Wayne Cole, Pte Andy Dolies, Pte Daniel Robinson, Pte John Brooks, LCpl Pogo Patterson and LCpl Ray Hoogendijk

Nerve centre: Joint command at Police HQ in Guildford, manned by Capt Paul Muncey, Capt David James-Roll, Pte Leanne Shirreffs and Sgt Les Bishop with members of the Ambulance, Defence Fire and Police services
Pictures: Graeme Main



Army-led, the Navy provide the BART because they have learned the skills as part of their basic training," he said.

The Pirbright patch, and others in the county, were controlled from a central HQ in Guildford, where a Joint Command Centre (JCC) was advised by representatives from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

Pirbright district included Woking, Bagshot, Camberley and part of the M3.

Capt David James-Roll, C Company 1 R Anglian, explained that Army training had been given by the Defence Fire Service (DFS). "Our guys have one day of intensive training for fire-fighting and continuation instruction," he explained. "The DFS representative gave assistance

and advice at the two major fires we've had at this station." The first of those was in Bloomfield Drive, Woking, where Cpl Matt Ieoden of Yellow Watch led the crew.

"When we arrived the roof was covered in thick smoke," he said. "Lightning had hit the TV mast and set fire to the loft. We had to make a hole in the roof to put it out. We rescued the owner's pet hamster."

The second house fire began in an

WITH the Fire Brigades Union agreeing to a conciliation process, their strike planned to start on December 4 was called off. As this edition went to press it was still not known whether the next eight-day action, starting on December 16 and ending on Christmas Eve, would go ahead.

board games were well played, books read and computer stations used to the point of meltdown. Capt James-Roll said: "Our remit was to save lives and property and we have been doing just that. In between times, we waited."

The Pirbright station also coped with several car fires, mostly caused by vandals. And a mother and child stuck in a lift at the Allders store in Woking were released by troops who winched the car to a floor where the doors could be opened.

Green Goddess driver and pump operator Pte Bugsy Malone said that although the vehicles were slow – 40mph is the top safe speed, he reckoned – the six-man crew was quick and proficient.

"We are getting more experienced and the drills at an incident are becoming natural to us," he said. "When we got back we talked through incidents to see where we can improve efficiency and safety."

Soldiers wore Combat 95 clothing on duty, augmented by leather gloves and high-visibility vests. They were issued with goggles and visors.

While incidents provided some excitement, boredom was a concern for the crews. DVDs and

Day-by-day diary of events

This diary of events, collated from newspaper cuttings and other sources, is intended to give a snapshot view of military involvement across the nation during the eight-day strike. It is not comprehensive.

NOV 22

In a major incident, 60 Servicemen in five red appliances and 13 Green Goddesses fight for many hours to contain a fire in a disused plastics factory in West Bromwich. Several are treated for smoke inhalation.

Soldiers control a fire in six houses in the Gaywood area of King's Lynn, Norfolk.

In Portsmouth, a Green Goddess attends a pensioner who set fire to his trousers by dropping a cigarette on to a colostomy bag in his pocket. The flames were extinguished by a passer-by with a cup of water. A military spokesman said the cigarette had ignited methane in the bag.

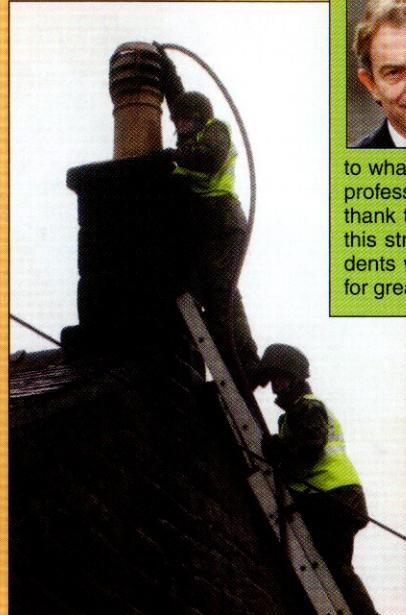
Green Goddesses were called to Bank Station on London Underground when smoke was spotted on a platform. It proved to be a minor incident although the station was closed for a time. A Green Goddess attended a school in Shepherd's Bush at which a pupil had sprayed CS gas during a music lesson.

NOV 22 (cont)

In Basingstoke, Service personnel put out a fire in a Pizza Hut, and in Barnsley, teams douse a blaze in a boarded-up house in 30 minutes. A Goddess is also called out when a dog, which subsequently freed itself, gets its head stuck in a gate at Conisthrough, South Yorks.

In Wales, a Service crew attends a lorry fire on the A483 near Swansea. It is the only incident of the day in the area. The most serious fire in Scotland is in a leisure centre in Dalkeith, East Lothian. It is put out by two of the five Green Goddesses that attend. Military crews also put out a chip-pan blaze at a house in Glasgow and a fire in a commercial garage in Falkirk. Striking firefighters leave their pickets to help Army crews attending a nine-car accident on the A1 near Edinburgh.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 866. False alarms: 424.



On the roof: Soldiers from 3 CS Regt RLC put out a fire in a farmhouse chimney at Blackshaw Moor, Leek in Staffordshire. They had to clear a blocked flue before they could stop the blaze

NOV 23

Crews tackle huge fire in plastics factory on outskirts of Belfast. Breathing apparatus and rescue team (BART) cuts injured driver from crumpled car in London.

A man pulled from his home in Eccles, Kent by military firemen later dies in hospital. Green Goddesses attend a fire at Woodstock, Oxfordshire, in which a 90-year-old man dies. In Waterloo, Liverpool, Army crews arrive within 15 minutes of a house fire but are unable to save an elderly woman. Crews at Staining, near Blackpool, recover the body of a man from a caravan.

By midnight, Armed Forces crews had responded to 2,293 call-outs nationwide, including 1,447 fire incidents, 249 other incidents and 597 false alarms.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,431. False alarms: 466.

NOV 24

An Army team in breathing apparatus rescues a woman trapped in a burning flat in Northfleet, Kent.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,736. False alarms: 462.

PM's praise

I would like to thank, and pay tribute, to the soldiers, sailors, airmen and women who are providing fire cover for the country at this time. They didn't join the Armed Forces to fight fires, but as ever they have faced up to what is demanded of them with typical straightforward professionalism, and I commend them for it. I'd like to thank the public too for the way they have responded to this strike. Hoax calls are down, so are call-outs to incidents which suggests that people are heeding the need for greater attention to basic fire safety. — Tony Blair

NOV 25

Troops from 1 Kings extinguish a burning tyre warehouse in Rochdale, Lancs, during an operation lasting 24 hours. Two need treatment for smoke inhalation.

Military personnel attend a fatal crash on the fog-bound M40. Elsewhere, a driver is cut free from a vehicle on the M25 near the Dartford Tunnel, and a crew based in the Old Kent Road frees a bus driver trapped in his cab at London Bridge railway station. A driver is cut free from a four-vehicle accident on A15 Top in West Yorkshire.

Army firefighters rescue two people from a burning flat in South Ockenden, Essex, two more from a smoke-filled flat in Scarborough, North Yorkshire, and a man from his blazing home in Baildon, West Yorkshire.

In Northern Ireland, one in five 999 calls turns out to be a hoax, while on the mainland, as many as one in ten calls is reported to be false.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,359. False alarms: 478.



Crash: Soldiers from 7 Para RHA free a woman trapped by a road traffic accident in Cheltenham.

Picture: Sgt Brian Gamble

NOV 26

A soldier is injured while trying to rescue a couple and baby from a fire at a motor-cycle repair shop near Huddersfield. Despite exploding gas canisters, two Green Goddesses extinguish the flames within four hours. Cpl Taff Williams has his cuts stitched in hospital but insists on returning to duty.

Two Goddess crews and two BART teams rescue 16 people from a terrace house in Cardiff, while in Essex striking firefighters help military crews when a privately-owned Gazelle helicopter crashes in a field at Hadleigh. The pilot suffers only minor injuries.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,363. False alarms: 444.

SOLDIER January 2003

events

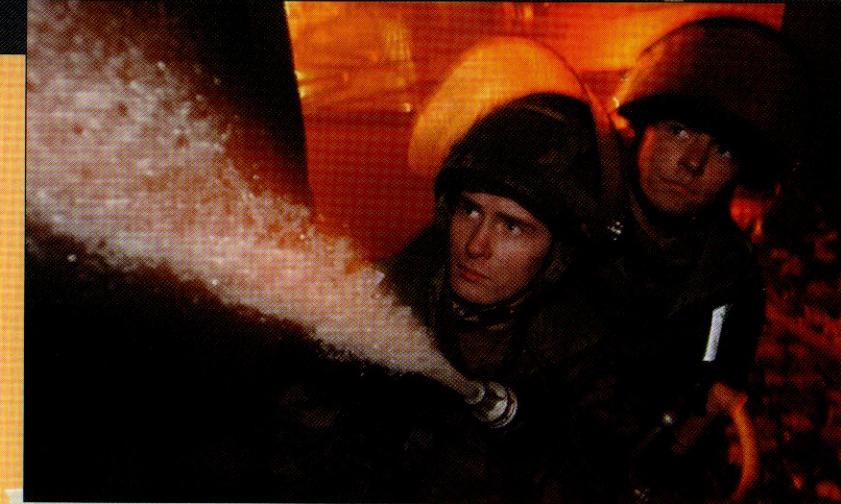


Midlands: Fire crews from The Royal Regiment of Wales and the Royal Air Force tackle a blaze in six empty factory buildings in West Bromwich. The fire spread through the former plastics factory, sending huge black clouds of acrid smoke across the West Midlands

Picture: Stuart Bingham

NOV 28

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,151. False alarms: 503.



Hose team: Kgm David Morgan and Jonathan Haggerty of 1 Kings dampen a smouldering tyre factory in Rochdale, Manchester

Picture: WO2 Giles Penfound

NOV 29

Military firemen who climb into a burning first-floor flat at Kirby in Liverpool are thanked by a 20-year-old mother for saving her and her four-week-old son.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,251. False alarms: 397.

NOV 27

A gang of youths stone a naval crew putting out a burning stolen car at Leigh Park, near Portsmouth. Police intervene. London-based firefighters cross their picket lines to cut free people trapped in crashed vehicles in Tottenham, Wembley and Hampstead Heath.

● Responses by MoD personnel: 1,124. False alarms: 457.

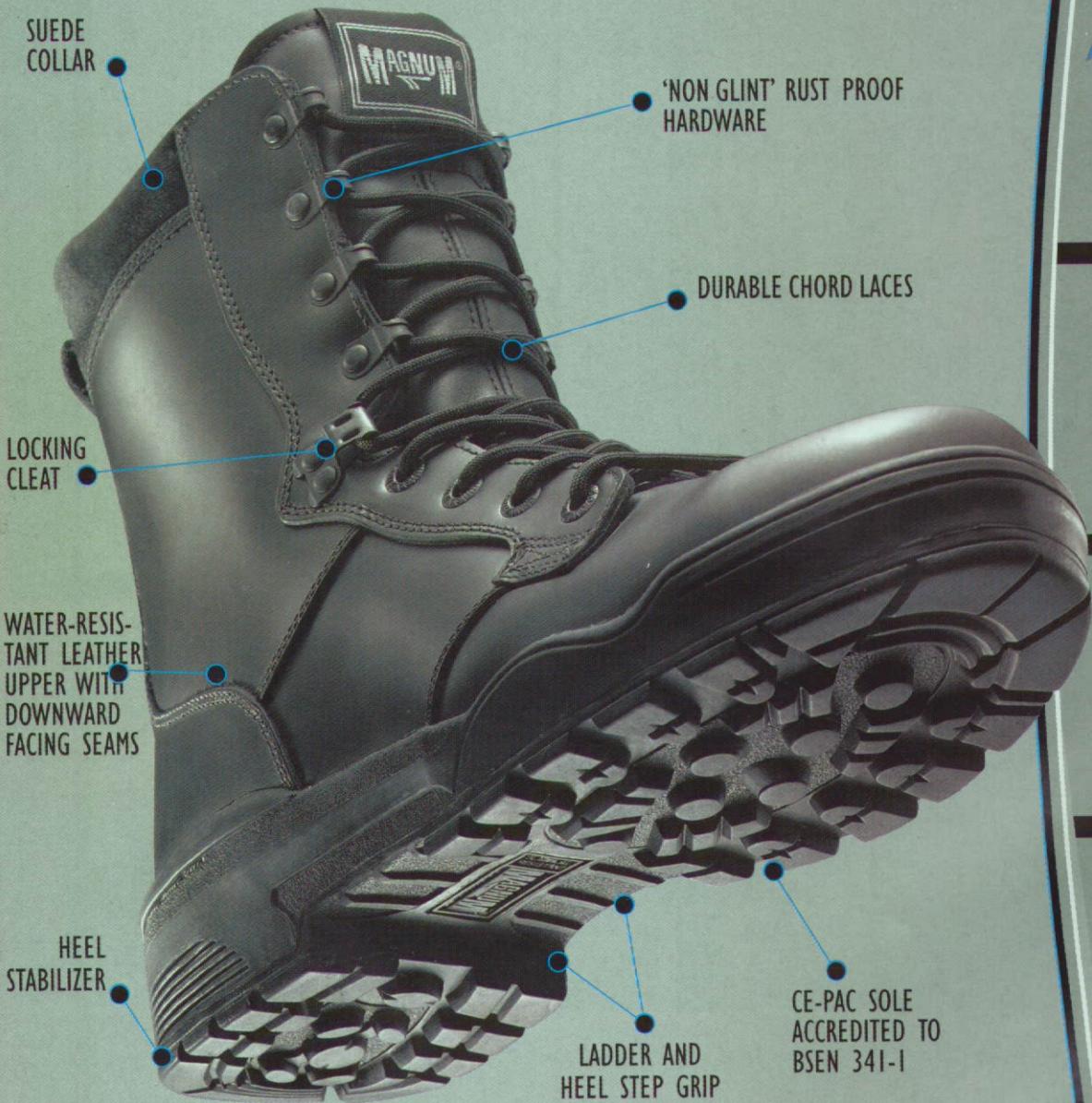
NOV 30 (0001 to 0900)

● Responses by MoD personnel: 510. False alarms: 100.

● Chuckle with Chip – Page 23

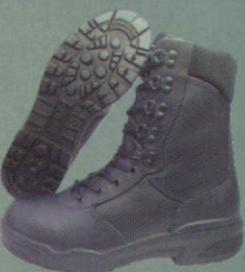
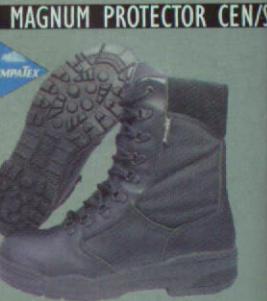
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Deepcut one of eight facing closure

DEEPCUT Barracks, which is at the centre of inquiries into the deaths of four recruits at the establishment, is one of eight sites identified for possible closure, but the MoD has categorically denied that there is any link between this and the tragedies.

The on-going Defence Training Review, which has been considering options for

the past six years, has been looking at a variety of ways to rationalise specialist training along defence rather than single-Service lines. Where appropriate, this would draw together on one site specialist training facilities for the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

Deepcut is one of eight sites where

training may cease, and for which no alternative military use is envisaged. The others are at Arborfield, Bordon, Lodge Hill and Chattenden, St Omer, Chichester, Worthy Down and Beaconsfield. There is said to be much work before any decision will be made to cease operations at any of the establishments.

Palace offering

Gurkha "Colour": The unique Queen's Truncheon is presented to the Queen at Buckingham Palace by Lt (QGO) Rajan Rai.

It was the first time The Royal Gurkha Rifles had been involved in the ceremony and the sixth occasion on which the

"Jemadar" – or Colour – had been presented to the Monarch since 1953.

Queen Victoria gave the Truncheon to the 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles in lieu of a third Colour granted to the Sirmoor Battalion (later the 2nd) for



Picture: PA

distinguished service during the Indian Mutiny. It is accorded "the dignities and compliments appropriate to a King's Colour of Infantry".

Gurkha recruits are sworn into the regiment in the presence of the Truncheon.

Sorry, Glasgow, it's one of ours

Wartime bomb causes gridlock on expressway

SAPPERS from 33 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Regiment RE destroyed a 50kg wartime bomb found in Glasgow, then revealed it was British not German.

Believed to be a Second World War experimental munition, it was unearthed on the Glasgow Harbour building site in Partick. People were evacuated from more than 100 homes in the vicinity and the busy Clydesdale Expressway was



Wedged: The old bomb is held between sandbags

closed, causing gridlock in the area.

A team from 11 EOD Regiment RLC, called to the scene when the bomb was discovered, handed over to the sappers from Wimbush, near Saffron Walden, who specialise in the disposal of military ordnance.

SSgt Taff Parnell and Cpl Keith Jones destroyed

the device in a controlled explosion at a Lanarkshire quarry.

Afghan force extended

THE MoD has welcomed a UN decision to extend the deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) in Kabul for a further 12 months. The force includes about 300 British soldiers.

Gunners in switch from rockets to Phoenix

GUNNERS serving with 32 Regiment RA, the Larkhill-based Multiple-Launch Rocket System (MLRS) specialists, are to focus exclusively on the Phoenix unmanned air vehicle.

Their change is one of a number to the organisation and equipment of the Royal Artillery under the post-September 11 Strategic Defence Review New Chapter.

Foremost among the changes are enhancements in the use of pilotless "spy planes", which provide vital surveillance, intelligence gathering and target acquisition for the artillery fire, and the immediate withdrawal from service of the ageing Rapier Field Standard B2 air defence missile system.

Air defence will now be provided by the more advanced Rapier Field Standard C variant, operated by 16 Regiment RA – which is to be bolstered by the creation of a fourth Rapier FSC battery – and the RAF Regiment.

There is to be no change in the role of 39 Regiment RA, an MLRS-Phoenix regiment stationed at Harlow Hill, outside Newcastle, but 22 Regiment at Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincs, is to disband in March next year following a UN tour in Cyprus.

Its personnel will re-deploy to other artillery regiments.

Under current plans, 16 Regt is to move from Woolwich to Kirton-in-Lindsey in late 2004 to be closer to the Joint Rapid Training Unit at Honington and the Air Warfare Centre located at RAF Waddington.

The Rapier Field Standard B2 missile is to be pulled out of service by the end of March.

A requirement for improved use of unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) was identified during studies made into the military response to the war on terrorism.

SA80 A2's a big hit



Top marksmen: Csgt Manbahadur Garbuja, the Queen's Medallist 2002, kneeling, and Cpl Prembahadur Baral, the runner-up at Bisley, who are both members of the British Army Combat Shooting Team which has won several international competitions using SA80 A2

Rifle gives shooters the edge

SINCE taking delivery of the new A2 version of the SA80, the British Army Combat Shooting Team has enjoyed tremendous success at international competitions around the world.

In its latest outing, at Little Rock, Arkansas in the prestigious US National Guard's Armed Forces Skill-at-Arms Meeting, the 22 rifle- and pistol-firers collected 24 individual or team medals (11 gold, seven silver and six bronze) from 29 events contested.

Their SA80 A2s dominated the rifle team matches, with the British Army winning six out of 12 events and finishing in the top three in all the others.

Cpl Paul Cullen, R Irish, was top individual shot, with Cpl Beindrakumar Magar, RGR, close behind in second place.

Not to be outdone, the pistol team achieved a unique win over the National Guard in the eight-man international Service pistol match, a feat no other team has equalled in the 12 years of this competition.

During the summer the team won the majority of the individual rifle matches and all bar one of the rifle team matches, as well as all the sniper matches at the Canadian Forces skill-at-arms competition in Ottawa. Eleven of the 18 firers achieved a qualifying score for Stage 2 of the Queen's Medal (top 50). These successes follow the team's triumphs at the Australian Army's SAAM in Brisbane a year ago.

Throughout these high-profile matches the A2s have performed without a malfunction, stoppage or breakage.



Surf (anca bit more) is up in Cyprus

Hameln-based sappers, left, from 64 HQ Squadron RE built a surfboard store at Lemmings Beach in Cyprus during a ten-week exercise involving a variety of engineering projects around the Eastern Sovereign Base Area. From left to right are Spr Adam Harris, Commander British Forces Air Vice-Marshal Bill Rimmer, Maj Kev Johnson, Cpl Steve Ashton, Spr Daz Berkhill and Spr Lee Marshall. Meanwhile, 51 specialists from Wimbish-based 58 Field Squadron (EOD) have been clearing the beautiful Akamas Peninsula of left-over ordnance, above. Used as a training ground until January 1999, the area has thrown up bullets, shells, mortars, detonators, flares and hand-grenades. Pictures: Cpl Will Craig



Magnificent ten



Golden girl: Pte Ewa Sterecka of Canterbury-based 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, shows off the Duke of Edinburgh gold award she received during a ceremony at St James's Palace. Ewa was one of ten former Army cadets who were presented with their gold awards by the Prince of Wales. Of the other nine, two, like Ewa, joined the Territorial Army, and one is a Regular soldier. Picture: Mike Weston

Gallantry medal for gunner who faced up to man with gun

A bombardier serving with 26th Regiment RA at Gütersloh has been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal for overpowering a drunk soldier who had wrested a loaded weapon from a guard and was firing indiscriminately.

Bdr Darren Needham had returned with a colleague to Mansergh Barracks in the early hours of January 18, 2001 when he heard the soldier screaming and saw him shooting at the guardroom.

The soldier had left a party in the barracks, where he had consumed a large amount of alcohol. He argued with colleagues and punched a gate guard several times before taking his personal weapon. He aimed the loaded rifle at a second guard and disarmed him. Armed with the two weapons, the soldier began firing single shots and bursts at the guardroom and



Bdr Darren Needham

people in the vicinity. Bdr Needham, realising there was an immediate danger to the lives of the guards and others, approached the man and tried to persuade him to give up the weapons.

Realising that he was unlikely to calm down, Bdr Needham darted forward and caught the foresight of the rifle, twisting it away and wrestling the soldier to the ground. The bombardier restrained the man until police arrived.

A citation says that during this fleeting but violent and potentially tragic sequence of events, Bdr Needham's "selfless courage and extremely brave intervention" had prevented loss of life.

Since the incident he has been posted to the UK, where he is serving as an instructor at the Army Training Regiment Pirbright.

Smallpox response teams put in place

Medical units ready to move at short notice

VOLUNTEERS to make up smallpox response teams are being identified by the Services. The measure follows a Government announcement that military personnel whose specialisations mean they face a greater risk of exposure will be offered vaccinations.

Teams of doctors, combat medical technicians and nurses would deploy in the event of a smallpox incident or other major outbreaks of infectious disease. Selected personnel have to be ready to deploy at short notice so may not be earmarked for other military tasks or missions.

They have to test for atopic eczema and take an HIV test. Female volunteers must also undergo pregnancy testing.

Service chefs cook up World Cup treat

SIX chefs from the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force scooped top prizes at the 2002 Culinary World Cup in Luxembourg. Team captain WO2 Billy Barrie, 30 Sig Regt, and WO2 Mark Roberts, 23 Pioneer Regt RLC, joined other Service chefs taking on the best military teams from around the world.

The British team finished fourth overall, with Switzerland the outright winners, but they did land several other awards, including the team silver medal for the cold buffet section and the gold medal for the team hot meal.

Mountain men



High achievers: A team from 266 Para Battery RA (V) poses on the summit of Mount Blanc. Led by LBdr Simon Lamb, the expedition consisted of 2nd Lt Nick Shorter (wearing the beret), 2nd Lt Andy Eden, LBdr Will Garvey, Gnr Oliver Downes and the base camp manager, 2nd Lt Dan Chapman, from 29 Commando Regiment RA.

Scrap challenge



Eyesore: WO2 Stewart Jack inspects a wreck before it was hauled away from an overgrown bing – a by-product of the long-gone oil-shale industry – in West Lothian by Edinburgh-based 230 Squadron of the Scottish Transport Regiment. In all, the soldiers got rid of 32 abandoned vehicles.

IN BRIEF

• US and British field artillery commanders attended a major fire-support conference at the US Army's Field Artillery School in Oklahoma. The British delegation, led by Maj Gen James Shaw, Commander Theatre Troops, included the Director Royal Artillery, Brig Chris Brown. The conference provides a forum for field artillery topics.

• Maj Gen John McColl, Commander 3 (UK) Division in Bulford, presented cheques totalling more than £7,000 to the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA-Forces Help and the Royal British Legion. The money was raised at last summer's 3 Div Beating Retreat musical extravaganza at the Tattoo Ground, Tedworth House, Tidworth.

• Rheindahlen-based Support Battalion, HQ ARRC celebrated its tenth anniversary with a light-hearted military skills competition involving its three squadrons.

• Soldiers from 13 Air Assault Support Regiment RLC called on the children's ward at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cam-

bridge to deliver Christmas "goodie bags" containing T-shirts, hats, pens and drinks.

• More than 100 people visited Infantry Training Centre Wales at Brecon during European Heritage Days. Main attraction was the ITC Wales museum inside the camp's last remaining wooden hut.

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Car illustrated is a Jaguar X-TYPE 2 litre V6. Any other goods or services supplied by agreement between the customer and dealer are not included.

All prices shown are correct at time of going to press and are subject to change without notice.



Trumpet section: From left, Cpl Steven Bell, LCpl Andrew Smith, Piper Andrew Raymond and Piper Scott Gray, of the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers, get acquainted with an orphan elephant during a visit to the Daphne Sheldrick Wildlife Trust in Kenya. The charity is sponsored by the British Peace Support Team (East Africa),

which the pipers supported at a high-profile Beating Retreat ceremony in Nairobi.

The musicians, who found themselves in Africa rather than on Op Fresco duty, played alongside the Kenya Army Band as part of the team's defence diplomacy effort. The event was watched by about 250 East African military, diplomatic and industrial leaders.

Service link to homelessness

A SURVEY by the housing charity Shelter found that two-thirds of its housing aid projects in the previous year had helped people with a Services background.

The figures were released as Shelter launched a report on its Armed Forces Project, a joint initiative between the charity and the MoD to work with individuals being discharged from the Services who may face homelessness.

Launched at the Military Correction and Training Centre (MCTC), Colchester in April 2001, the project has so far helped 90 people from all three Services. Many of them had a range of problems which put them at greater risk of homelessness,

including combat stress and other mental issues, a background in local authority care, and drug and alcohol difficulties.

The project works with people before they leave the MCTC to advise on housing rights and help them find somewhere to live. It also refers them to local support services in their home areas.

Vulnerable ex-Servicemen and women will have better access to housing help under the new Homelessness Act, which came into force in July and which recognises the links between a Forces background and street homelessness.

The report can be downloaded from www.shelter.org.uk/media/armedforces.asp

Nice work

COLCHESTER
Women's Aid Refuge has been brightened up by detainees from the **Military Corrective Training Centre**, who painted ceilings, walls and woodwork.

Little time for recovery

THIRTY-TWO students took part in the gruelling four-week 1 (UK) Armoured Division recovery mechanic training exercise run by **3 Battalion REME** on the Stapel training area near Sennelager. Bomb holes, bogs, pits and lakes added realism, as did the addition of two Challenger 1 tanks and four Chieftain recovery vehicles. On most days the students worked from 12 to 14 hours.

Weekend retreat

A Combined Services **Catholic retreat** is to take place on the weekend February 14-16 at Amport House, near Andover. Details can be obtained from Maj (QM) J P Hamill, 3 (V) MI Bn, Ashford House, 79-85 Worship Street, London EC2A 2BE, mil 94621 3917, civ 0207 611 3917.

Police praise TA soldiers who took charge at fatal crash

PART-TIME soldiers from Manchester who took charge when they arrived at the scene of a fatal accident on the A1 have been commended by police.

A coach carrying members of 127 Workshop Company REME (V), a Manchester-based sub-unit of 101 Battalion REME (V) from Wrexham, was in following traffic when the two-car accident happened on the southbound A1 in Leicestershire in June. The Territorial Army soldiers were on their way to an annual camp in Germany.

They took charge of the situation, preserving the area, diverting traffic and caring for four injured people.

A policeman who reached the site 30 minutes after the collision said: "I was truly amazed at what they had already done and continued to do while I gathered the information and waited for other emergency services.

"The soldiers who cared for the injured carried out exceptional work, talking to them, keeping the driver safe from further injury and dressing wounds. It was all carried out calmly and methodically.

"The job of the Fire Service and paramedics was made much easier because of the professional and dedicated manner the TA personnel showed."

One of the injured died in hospital.

When paramedics and firefighters arrived, the REME personnel carried on helping until they were released to continue their journey.

Three members of the workshop – WO2 (AQMS) Simon Holmes, Cpl John Crook and LCpl Debra Flitcroft – were singled out for special praise.

● **47 Regiment RA** based at Thorney Island, near Portsmouth, deployed last month on a six-month UN mission to patrol Cyprus's Green Line separating Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities.

Bosses on the spot

EMPLOYERS of Territorial Army soldiers of Luton-based **201 (Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Yeomanry) Battery RA (V)**, part of 100 (Y) Regt RA (V), experienced the delights of a day of military skills competitions at ATR Pirbright run by the battery. Stands included shooting, an obstacle course and a command task.



Under Big Ben

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

Back-carried water packs to be issued

PERSONAL hydration sets are being procured for personnel deployed in hotter climates, according to a written answer from Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie.

He was responding to a question on what plans there were for Servicemen to be provided with personal, back-carried water containers when deployed to warm-weather theatres.

Computer theft: Since December 2000 there have been 260 reported cases of computer theft from the MoD and six reported cases of lost computers.

Fresco costs: The additional costs of Operation Fresco on the Armed Forces will be recovered from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. In preparing for the strike, the MoD incurred costs of about £8 million, mainly on buying major items of equipment such as protective clothing and breathing apparatus.

Hullavington quarters: A Defence Housing Executive project to refurbish 110 family quarters at Hullavington is due to start early next year.

Drug use: Two hundred and fifty-five positive results were found from 44,625 tests carried out under the Compulsory Drugs Testing programme between January 1 and June 30 last year. They resulted in the discharge of two corporals, 16 lance corporals and 165 privates.

Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie

44,625 tests carried out under the Compulsory Drugs Testing programme between January 1 and June 30 last year. They resulted in the discharge of two corporals, 16 lance corporals and 165 privates.

London parking: The MoD has parking spaces for 203 cars within the proposed Central London Road User Charging Zone. They are used for official vehicles, shift workers and disabled staff. Wellington Barracks has 270 spaces, 266 of them allocated to residents.

UAVs: Although there are no current plans for British forces to deploy weaponised unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Joint UAV Experimentation Programme, which was announced earlier this year as part of the Strategic Defence Review New Chapter, will look at the operational utility of UAVs in a wide range of areas, including the potential for weaponisation.

Contractors blamed for recent problems with boot supplies

RECENT problems with the supply of combat assault boots have been laid at the door of the contractors concerned, Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie told the House of Commons.

In a written answer he said that stocks had now been replenished.

On November 27 there were 18,745 pairs in stock, sufficient for about eight weeks. Between November 1, 2001 and October 31 last year, 79,000 pairs of combat boots were issued.

The combat boot is officially expected to last for about 24 months, while the

desert boot is expected to give six months' service before it needs replacing.

Combat trousers, meanwhile, are expected to last for about 18 to 24 months for light use and between four and six months for heavy use.

Dr Moonie said that in the past 12 months the MoD had received 30 complaints from Service personnel regarding combat boots, 15 complaints about combat trousers, no complaints about sleeping bags and three regarding tents.

● Clothing maintenance limits suspended to ensure supplies – Mailbag, Page 75

Scots uncover rockets cache

TROOPS from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots discovered a large stash of illegal weapons and ammunition in business premises at Brezicani, near Prijedor in Bosnia.

They made their find in the early hours while conducting a search under Operation Silver Fox. In a storeroom at the rear of the building they uncovered boxes of hand-held rockets, grenade-launchers, anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines, mortars and huge amounts of mixed ammunition.

It took the Sfor soldiers two hours to move the cache outside, where the mines were destroyed. The rest of the find filled two trucks and was taken to Banja Luka for cataloguing before being destroyed at Manjaca ranges.

Units taking part in the operation included C Squadron, Light Dragoons, the Royal Scots' reconnaissance company, members of an explosive ordnance team and officers from the RMP and



Found: The Brezicani cache

Picture: Maj Gene Maxwell

European Union Police Mission. A spokesman said the anti-personnel mines had had to be destroyed at the scene because they were in poor condition, suggesting they had been in the warehouse for a considerable time.

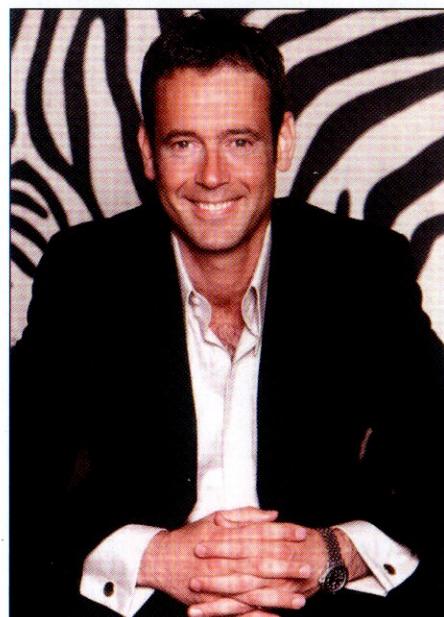
IN BRIEF

● An Export Support Team Royal Artillery, right, visit Santa at his village at Rovaniemi during a trip to demonstrate the HALO artillery locating system to the Finnish Defence Force. The team, supported by a half-troop from 5 Regiment RA, worked in temperatures as low as minus 30C.



● A new Hive, right, for British Service families with the Italian-led Nato high-readiness corps near Milan has opened in The Parco, a married quarters estate at Solbiate Olona near Lake Lugano. A plaque outside the

TV's Mr Right gets it so wrong



FORMER Royal Anglian officer Lance Gerrard-Wright is still looking for love, despite having been the star of ITV's reality television show *Mr Right*.

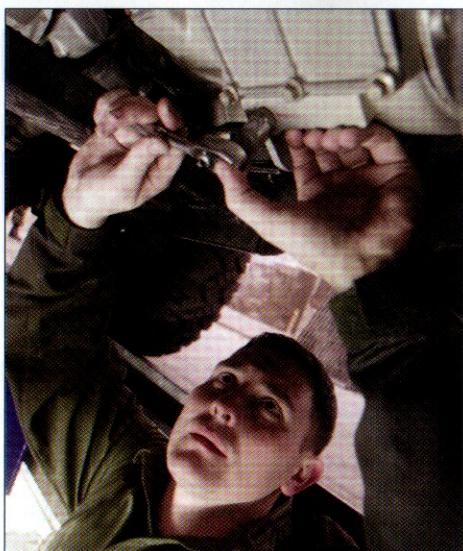
During the series, which attracted audiences of more than three-and-a-half million, Lance, left, who served as a platoon commander with the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment during tours of Northern Ireland and Bosnia, was asked to pick his Mrs Right from 15 highly attractive single women.

Having whittled down the field to just two, the 35-year-old bachelor chose American beauty Jeannie Beebe over viewers' favourite Nicola Browning, but was stunned when the gorgeous 28-year-old, right, turned him – and the chance of an exotic holiday – down.

Lance, who was featured in December's issue of *Soldier*, said: "I'm very sad it didn't work. There were no guarantees on this show... not for me, not for the girls."



That's fixed it...



Picture: Graeme Main

Raft of measures in place to stop suicides

Figures broadly compatible with wider population

ALTHOUGH there are no training programmes within the Services aimed specifically at suicide awareness or prevention, officers and NCOs receive career-long training in welfare and management of personnel, Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie told Parliament in a written answer.

He was responding to a question on steps taken since 1997 to tackle suicides within the Services.

Dr Moonie said the Army published a pamphlet on suicide awareness and prevention which was issued to all commanders and NCOs. In addition, all Army recruits were given a handbook informing them of the welfare support available to them.

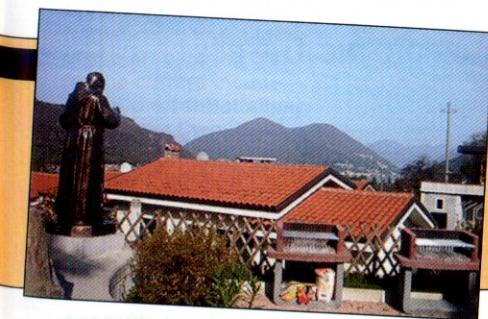
Although statistics indicate that the incidence of suicide within the Services is broadly compatible with that in the population at large, the Armed Forces

regarded even a low rate as too high, the minister said, and measures were in place, both within and independently of the chain of command, to enable vulnerable individuals to seek help.

Since 1995, these had included free confidential telephone lines manned by counsellors.

Other specially-trained personnel readily available to commanding officers included medical staff, chaplains, unit welfare officers and the Army Welfare Service, as well as staff from charities providing specific services. These included the WRVS, SSAFA-Forces Help, the Samaritans and Relate marriage guidance counsellors.

In the 12 years between the beginning of 1990 and the end of 2001 there were 326 coroner-confirmed suicides and open verdicts recorded for serving members of the Armed Forces.



advice and information centre was unveiled by Maj Gen Fabrizio Castagnetti, the corps commander, who was accompanied by his deputy, Maj Gen Seymour Monro.

● Three members of Merthyr Tydfil Army Careers Information Office – Ssgt Paul Lewis REME and Sgts Stephen Lewis RRW and

Mark Hornby RWF – completed a marathon each on rowing machines to raise £463 for Cancer Research Wales.

● A team of Grenadier Guards-badged cadets from Whittlesey Army Cadet Detachment won the Grenadier Cup for military skills for the second year running at ATR Pirbright.



A seriously injured recruit didn't just need medical help.

Whilst still undergoing training, a young Scottish recruit was seriously injured in a car crash, which left him paraplegic. A property became vacant, but needed extensive adaptation to make it suitable for his needs. We were able to contribute to the renovation costs and give a grant towards essential items and furnishings.

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Beach party: Sandhurst officer cadets from Intake 021 storm ashore at Melanda Beach near Episkopi to attack Paramali village during an infantry package in Cyprus. The exercise, which included the landing craft assault, helicopter insertions and a range of company-level manoeuvres, was the culmination of months of training for the 200 cadets. Picture: Cpl Pete Mobbs

Suez veterans have their say

VETERANS of Suez Canal Zone in the early 1950s explained just why they believe they deserve recognition when they met the Government-appointed sub-committee which is considering the case for a general service medal.

Delegation leader Lt Col Ashley Tinson, who outlined the nature of the military operations in the Canal Zone, said the case for a medal was never considered by the Army Council or the Honours and Decorations Committee at the time.

Other delegates were given the opportunity to relate their personal experiences, describe the conditions in which they served, or voice support for the campaign.

Cyprus cuisine: Things are looking brighter in the cookhouse of the resident infantry battalion at Episkopi, which has been transformed into a state-of-the-art catering facility for the current incumbents, the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment.

Also smiling are RLC chefs LCpls Mark Stratford, left, Jim Edgar, centre, and Kev Thornton. Picture: Cpl Will Craig

The delegation included former Army minister Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, who served in the Royal Artillery during the Second World War; Royal Marines Maj Gen Julian Thompson, who led 3 Commando Brigade in the Falklands War; and two MPs, Annette Brooke and Bob Blizard.

The Honours and Decorations sub-committee, which received the delegation in late November, is chaired by former Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Lord Guthrie and includes Fd Marshal Sir John Chapple, former Chief of the General Staff; Air Vice Marshal K D Filbey; and the military historian Sir Max Hastings.



Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● Furious war veterans hit back at a new Government-funded report that claims Gulf War syndrome does not exist. – *Daily Express*

● Kenyan tribesmen maimed or bereaved by British Army explosives celebrated the arrival of millions of pounds in compensation from the British Government by going on an enormous binge in Nanyuki. – *Daily Telegraph*

● Three Gurkhas held in Japanese labour camps during the Second World War won their case for compensation against the British Government. They claimed they had been excluded from £10,000 payouts received by other PoWs because of their race. – *Daily Mail*

● American and British troops are poised to extend their deployment in Afghanistan to six regional cities in an effort to pacify parts of the country still under the control of warlords and militias. – *Times*

● “... as just one grateful member of the public, I'd like to thank the uncomplaining Servicemen and women who are daily risking their lives for the rest of us”. – Lynda Lee-Potter's column in the *Daily Mail*

● Old soldier Gordon Husband was in for a big surprise when he threw a stick and called “fetch” to his dog, Shadow. The three-year-old collie rushed off and returned with a live grenade between his teeth. After checking the pin was still securely in place, Mr Husband took the grenade home to get it out of harm's way and called an Army bomb disposal team. He and Shadow had been walking along the River Wye near their home at Hereford. – *Daily Express*

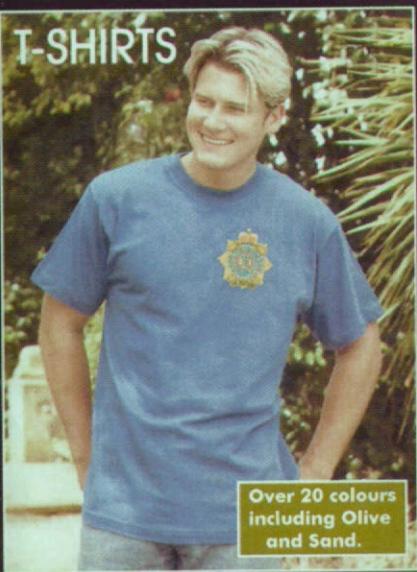
● After more than 30 years, Nato HQ at Brussels is moving to a new site literally across the road. An architectural contest is under way to select the replacement headquarters. – *Independent on Sunday*

● “While teaching with the Army in Germany, we kept the children in one playtime as there was an important burial going on in the churchyard next door. When the gun salute began one little girl asked: ‘Have they only just shot him then?’” – Letter to *Daily Telegraph*

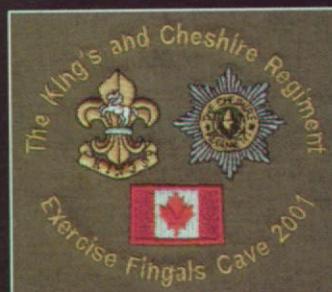
● Gerard “Toys” Norton, 87, who won the VC while serving with the Hampshire Regiment in Italy in 1944, has been evicted from his farm in Zimbabwe. – *Sunday Telegraph*

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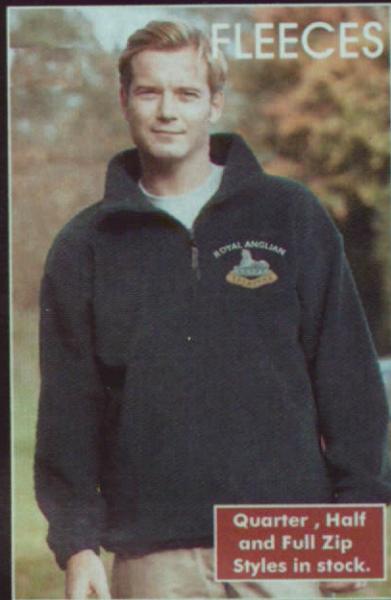


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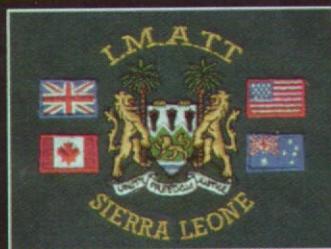
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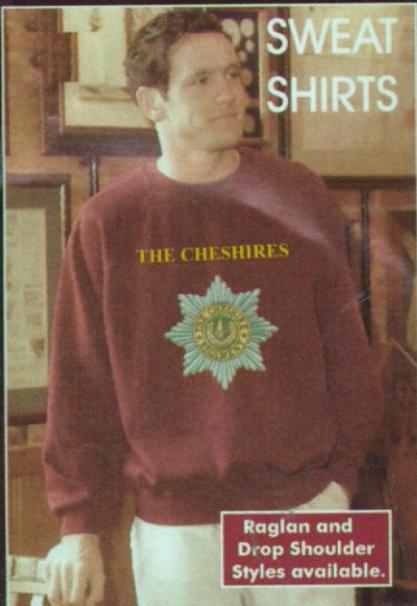
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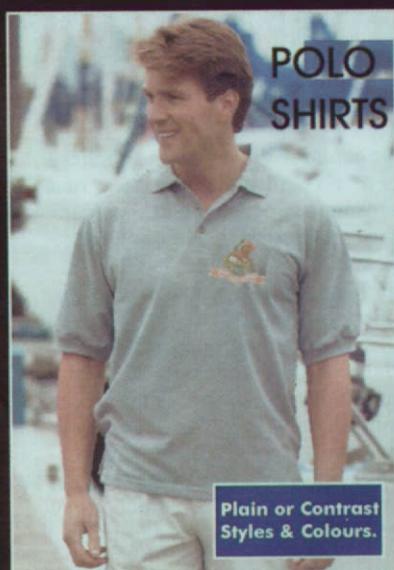


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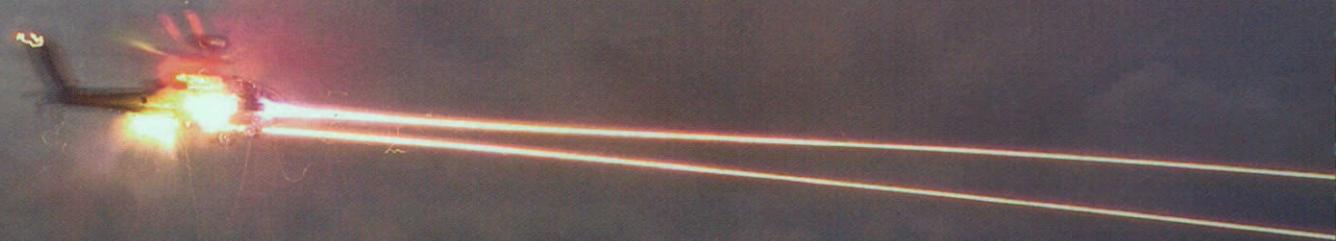
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Dark forces

Apache firing lights up Dorset night sky

DRIVERS passing on roads near ranges at Lulworth in Dorset stopped for a spectacular display of aerial pyrotechnics as up to six Apache AH Mk 1 helicopters took part in a series of night firings.

In all, 118 unguided CRV7 rockets lit up the night skyline as the Army Air Corps' new attack aircraft flexed its muscles in the environment in which it is designed to be most lethal – under cover of darkness.

Both rocket and 30mm cannon systems displayed high degrees of reliability and accuracy, although observers had problems picking up the fall of shot due to a combination of inert projectiles and ground softened by weeks of rain.

The night firings involved personnel from the School of Army Aviation, 651 (Attack Helicopter Fielding) Squadron AAC, 672 Squadron AAC and 3 Regiment AAC.



Rockets away: An Apache sends a salvo of CRV7 unguided missiles down the range at Lulworth, above. The system displayed a high degree of reliability and accuracy

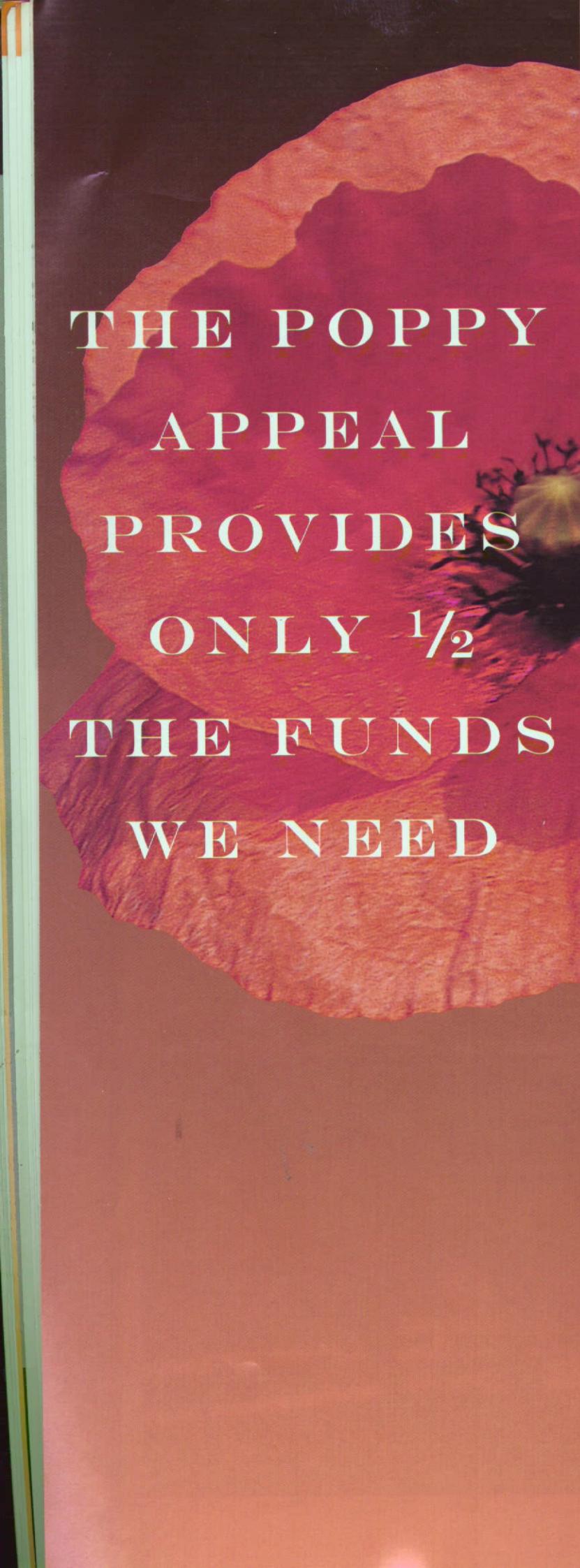
Dark destroyer: Apache AH Mk 1s silhouetted against the Dorset sky, left

Close up: Rockets light up the underneath of an Apache as it completes another firing, below



Ready for a test mission: An Apache AH is prepared on the ground, above





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Picture: Kevin Capon



Wreck recce

Army divers uncover nautical secrets in the Caribbean

MILITARY divers are getting ready to uncover the centuries-old secrets of beautiful Whitehouse Bay in St Kitts.

Members of the Londinium Military Diving Club have completed a recce of the site and are due to return in April for a month-long expedition named Cockney Caribbean Quest.

The team, who worked closely with Simon Sponner from Bristol University's Department of Archaeology and the Government of St Kitts, confirmed that the crystal blue Caribbean bay held two pre-1760 wrecks and uncovered five cannons using basic survey techniques.

When they return, the divers will work with underwater archaeologists to survey, record and recover artefacts from the unknown ship or ships.

The waters of Whitehouse Bay are believed to conceal several historical mysteries, and with the weather and looters taking their toll, the team faces a race against time to survey as much as possible before it is washed away or stolen. They hope that by careful recording and some detective work they will reveal more secrets of the deep.

The expedition has already attracted media interest, with HTV committing to

Big guns: 2nd Lt Jeremy Schomerg, RGJ, swims over two barnacle-encrusted cannons in Whitehouse Bay, St Kitts. The guns are from an unknown wreck

a series of news reports and Channel Five considering a documentary.

Before they leave for the Caribbean, the Army divers will receive instruction on underwater archaeology, including mapping, surveying, artefact recording, excavation techniques and small-finds photography. It is hoped that they will also complete courses on underwater metal detectors, proton magnetometers and side-scan sonar.

● If you want to know more about the project, ring the Londinium Military Diving Club's WO2 Mick Culling on 020 7414 4261 or mobile 07771 825462.

Sappers' southern challenge

AS this issue went to press, 12 soldiers with the Geographic Engineer Group (previously 42 Survey Engineer Group) were coming to the end of an adventurous and scientific expedition to southern Chile. The Hermitage-based Royal Engineers were attempting to cross the northern Patagonian ice cap and climb San Valentin, Patagonia's highest mountain. They also planned to investigate navigational techniques using the latest GPS and DPA technology and measure the height of Mount San Valentin.

Journey into the dark

A FOUR-week caving expedition to Mexico is to be carried out by a joint-Service expedition in March. Five soldiers, including team leader Maj Steve Whitlock, are in the 14-strong party which will continue an investigation into the unexplored Cuetzalan cave system begun by a military expedition two years ago. Others on Exercise Cuetzalan Tiger will include three naval, three RAF and three civilians.

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"I don't care how traditional it's supposed to be ... you are not moonlighting as a window cleaner!"

Chuckle with Chip



"Never mind, Sarge ... maybe you'll get to drive the big red engine next time."



"Now darlings ... if we re-light it, could you put it out again? With a bit more drama, luvvies."

Firefighting and all that

An *alfresco* experience



"Did anyone see where our copper went?"



"I wondered how long Andrea would put up with the crowd shouting 'Well done, lads'."

When the Army won the Cup

A military team took part in four Football Association cup finals, including the very first one in 1872

Report: Ray Routledge

AS the minnows join the big boys for the third round of this season's FA Cup competition, the romance of the tournament comes to life.

Will the small town team beat their big-time rivals? It's happened, many times. But before Manchester United were formed, and long before Liverpool and Newcastle United had been thought of, a team from the Army – the Royal Engineers of Chatham – was one of the dominant teams in the competition.

Formed in 1863 under the captaincy of Maj Francis Marindin, the sappers were a force to be reckoned with. The Royal Engineers appeared in four FA Cup finals, including the first one (which they lost), and a successful campaign in 1875. Marindin was to become a leading figure in the Football Association in the late 19th century.

Launched in 1871-72, the FA Cup became the world's first national football competition. The original concept was that the holders of the cup would be exempt from the qualifying rounds of the following competition, going straight into the final to be challenged for the trophy. This changed, but the name of the trophy, the FA Challenge Cup, owes its existence to that early idea.

Unlike today, when more than 600 teams enter the competition each season, only 12 took part in the first year. The first matches were held on November 11, 1871 although some teams were exempt until the later rounds.

Queen's Park, from Glasgow, for example, then the dominant force in Scottish football, were, because of the travelling involved, given a bye into the semi-finals, where they met the Wanderers. The Glasgow club made the trip south only with the help of a public appeal. They drew their first match but couldn't afford to stay on for the replay so withdrew from the contest.

The sappers reached the first final and were installed as favourites, having disposed of Hitchin, Hampstead Heathens



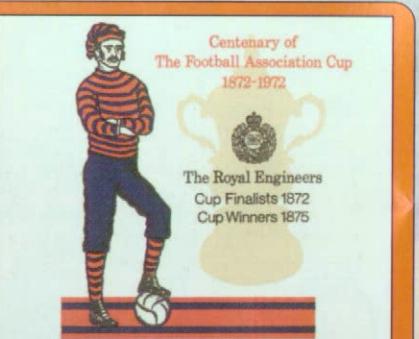
Finalists: The Royal Engineers of 1872 with Maj Marindin in the centre of the back row

A Royal Engineers (Depot) side won the FA Amateur Cup in 1903. The first Army Challenge Cup competition, held in 1889, was won by the 2nd Battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who beat the 2nd Battalion, The South Staffordshire Regiment 2-0 at the Oval.

Picture: Soldier archive

Royal Engineers' FA Cup record 1872-78

- 1872: Runners-up (lost 1-0 to Wanderers)
- 1873: Quarter-finals (lost to Oxford University, the eventual runners-up)
- 1874: Runners-up (lost 2-0 to Oxford University)
- 1875: Winners (beat Old Etonians 2-0 in replay after 1-1 draw)
- 1876: Quarter-final (lost to Swifts 3-1)
- 1877: Quarter-finals (lost 1-0 to Cambridge University)
- 1878: Runners-up (lost 3-1 to Wanderers)



Stamp of approval: Part of a first day cover, below, issued in 1972 to commemorate the centenary of the FA Cup

and Crystal Palace (no relation to the Palace side of today). Unfortunately, they went down 1-0 to the Wanderers in front of a crowd of 2,000 at the Oval.

For most of the game they were forced to play virtually a man short. Lt Edmund Cresswell broke his collar bone after ten minutes (substitutes were not allowed in

those days) and, although he remained on the field, not surprisingly he made no meaningful contribution.

The Royal Engineers had some serious rivals other than the Wanderers, who went on to make five final appearances. Old Etonians and Oxford University were also teams to be reckoned with.

Records show that a second Army team, the 1st Surrey Rifles, competed in the FA Cup in 1872-73.

So highly regarded were the Royal Engineers team that Maj Marindin became President of the Football Association in 1874, a position he held for 16 years. But the rules of the post prevented him from turning out for his team. Ironically, the following season they enjoyed their one and only cup triumph, beating the Old Etonians 2-0 in a final replay at the Oval.

One of their goalscorers was India-born Henry Waugh Renny-Tailyour, who played football for England and rugby for Scotland. The crack Old Etonians beaten by Henry and his colleagues boasted pedigree players, eight of whom had appeared for Wanderers or Oxford University in previous finals.

Although Marindin missed out on a winner's medal, he was to accrue more cup honours. He refereed eight finals between 1880 and 1890, and took charge of the England-Scotland international in March, 1875.



On target: Arsenal's Freddie Ljungberg scores in a 2-0 win over Chelsea in the 2002 final

Picture: Stuart McFarlane

'Open wide, Adolf - the dentists are coming . . .'

Soldier talks exclusively to Kenneth Cranham, the star of British film *Two Men Went to War*

Interview: Andy Simms

JUST one look at the script for *Two Men Went to War* was enough to convince Kenneth Cranham that he wanted a part in the Second World War comedy-drama – quite a feat when you consider that he has a vehement dislike for wearing military fatigues.

The accomplished screen and theatre actor, who became an international household name during the 1980s playing the title role in *Shine on Harvey Moon*, first discovered he had a loathing for military attire as a schoolboy.

"I went to a comprehensive school where the Air Training Corps was vigorously endorsed," he said. "In the end I did voluntarily join up and during my short stint stayed on Royal Air Force camps in Doncaster and Shropshire. I found life on camp quite mystical and was intrigued by the military way, but found that I had a big problem with having to wear a uniform."

"I found the trousers so uncomfortable and really rather unpleasant to wear."

Cranham, whose television credits range from BBC landmark classics such as *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit* to costume dramas including *Our Mutual Friend* and the contemporary drama *Sins*, added: "In the end it got so bad I took to wearing my pyjama bottoms beneath my trousers."

Unfortunately, future roles in a string of wartime dramas did little to change the thespian's low opinion of defence clothing.

"In *Danger UXB* I played a sapper and was given the most unforgiving shirt to wear – every time I moved it would chafe my nipples," he explained. "The guys playing officers were given nice cotton shirts."

"It was so unfair and I hope that's not the case for real soldiers. It's rough justice if, as a sapper, you are at the bottom end of the game and you have to put up with an uncomfortable shirt as well."

And things did not get any better on the



Back in Army uniform: Kenneth Cranham on the set of British film *Two Men Went to War*

ing Camp in Hampshire, and hit cinema screens late last year.

"During filming we had a sergeant major on set who spent his whole time shouting at the cast and drilling them," he added. "I spent most of my time trying to avoid him and consequently appeared on screen with an incorrect patch on my arm – which proved to be a fatal mistake."

"The production company received 500 letters of complaint and I quickly learned that if you do anything in this country to do with the Army, or railways, you had better do it right because there are a heck of a lot of spotters out there."

Having sent a letter to Winston Churchill explaining their intention to invade France and fight the Germans, the pair do exactly that, only to be held as suspected spies on their return to British soil. "I took one look at this remarkable story of British eccentricity and knew I wanted to be involved," explained Cranham, whose father served in the Royal Engineers during the Second World War. "King is a wonderful character, who is

totally expanded by his wartime experiences, but has to somehow come to terms with a subjugated, small life in the Dental Corps. Ultimately, King can't accept this job and this is what the story is about. I played King as he no doubt saw himself – as a remnant of the British Empire."

"Critics have compared the film to the better episodes of *Dad's Army* and my character to Arthur Lowe's Capt Mainwaring – which you can only take as a compliment."

"*Two Men Went to War* is funny, but we did not need to play the parts for laughs – there is something intrinsically funny about two dentists going off to fight Hitler's war machine single-handedly."

And as for being back in uniform . . .

"I made quite sure King's uniform was comfortable," he said. "I'm 57 now and to coin a military phrase 'any fool can be uncomfortable'."

But Villiers insists that it is not only a sol-



"Oh all right then luvvie, you win . . . you can have your name on the flaming chair!"

From square-bashing to the silver screen

Why squaddies make world's best extras

FORGET about enrolling at an expensive drama school, according to Christopher Villiers, a stint in the British Army offers wannabe actors a far better grounding for a career in the movies.

"Former soldiers make the best film extras in the world," explained Villiers, who co-wrote *Two Men Went to War* with Richard Everett and formed an extras agency called 2020 Casting seven years ago.

"Over the years my company has supplied extras for a host of box-office hits including *Saving Private Ryan*, *Gladiator* and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, and we have used hundreds upon hundreds of soldiers for these films."

"What makes soldiers such good extras is that they fully understand the concept of having to get up at a certain time in the morning, about finding their own way to a location, which is often just a grid reference on a map, and about the importance of arriving there on time," he said.

"They don't need to be told where the tea and coffee is, they always find a sensible place to billet their equipment, they sit down quietly knowing that they will probably be kept waiting for several hours, and then when they are called upon they simply get up, get to work and do exactly what they are told."

"Having real soldiers there makes the leading actors feel that they have reliable back-up – they have someone to tell them who they should and shouldn't be saluting and people to ensure that they are dressed correctly."

"And although soldiers can be critical if

things aren't just so, most of them are

level-headed enough to understand that

there are occasions when you have to

bend the truth to make it fit the film."

www.2020casting.com



Christopher Villiers

"These guys are the real McCoy and helped to bring a reality and authenticity to the film set."

"Having real soldiers there makes the leading actors feel that they have reliable back-up – they have someone to tell them who they should and shouldn't be saluting and people to ensure that they are dressed correctly."

"And although soldiers can be critical if things aren't just so, most of them are level-headed enough to understand that there are occasions when you have to bend the truth to make it fit the film."

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Pictures: Steve Dock



Undercover operations: The enormous main hall, above, across which simulated armoured battles will be fought. Inset left: A soldier at the controls of a Warrior simulator. Inset right: Neil Goble and Maj Russ Lee RA, front, run an exercise programme from the Opcon room



World's largest virtual trainer opens for war

THE Army's second state-of-the-art battlefield simulator is ready for war.

Warminster's Combined Arms' Tactical Trainer (CATT) can accommodate up to 700 soldiers a day, offering individual and crew-level tutoring right up to full-scale battle-group warfare.

As big as two football pitches, it is the largest and most sophisticated virtual training facility in the world. The £250-million CATT (UK) was unveiled by Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram on November 27.

Like its Sennelager sister (featured in September's *Soldier*), it allows soldiers to fight realistic battles involving Challenger 2 main battle tanks, Warriors, Scimitars and dismounted infantry. The virtual battlefield, which gives exercise directors the

freedom to introduce a high-fidelity range of terrain, weather situations, equipment failures and "fog-of-war" factors, offers amazingly realistic training at a fraction of the cost of a major field training exercise involving massed armoured vehicles.

The Warminster trainer boasts simulators designed to replicate the interiors of 29 Challenger 2s, 29 Warriors and eight Scimitars, plus 16 generic simulators representing 15 other configurable vehicles and Apache and Lynx helicopters.

It provides an ultra-realistic level of manoeuvre and procedural training on an unconstrained virtual battlefield... and everything that takes place is recorded for an "after-action" review so that the warring factions can learn from their mistakes and build on their successes.

Kitbits

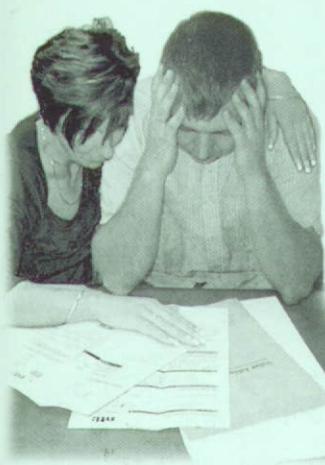
- General Dynamics UK has won Preferred Supplier status to demonstrate, supply and support a state-of-the-art battlefield information system worth more than £300 million. It is part of the MoD's huge Bowman project.

Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon opened the new headquarters of GD UK at Oakdale in South Wales. The company already has a £1.9-billion contract to build and supply the Bowman digital communications infrastructure. Designed to provide a tactical, secure, voice and data comms system for all three Services until at least 2036, it will begin to come into service this year.

- The Lightweight Mobile Artillery Weapon System Rocket programme has received initial approval to enter its assessment phase.

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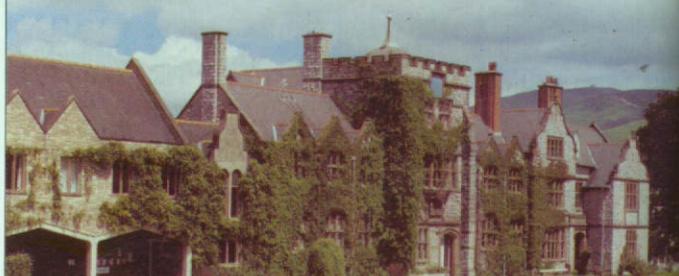
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Record breakers



Picnic spot: An idyllic beach on the route, above, provides a perfect place for the helicopter crew to stop for lunch

We're there: Pilot Cpl Clive Stevens and aircraft commander Maj Phil Cook, right, celebrate their arrival in Townsville in Australia

Brunei-to-Australia flight is longest for a military helicopter

MORE details have emerged of an extraordinary journey undertaken by a 7 Flight AAC detachment based in Brunei.

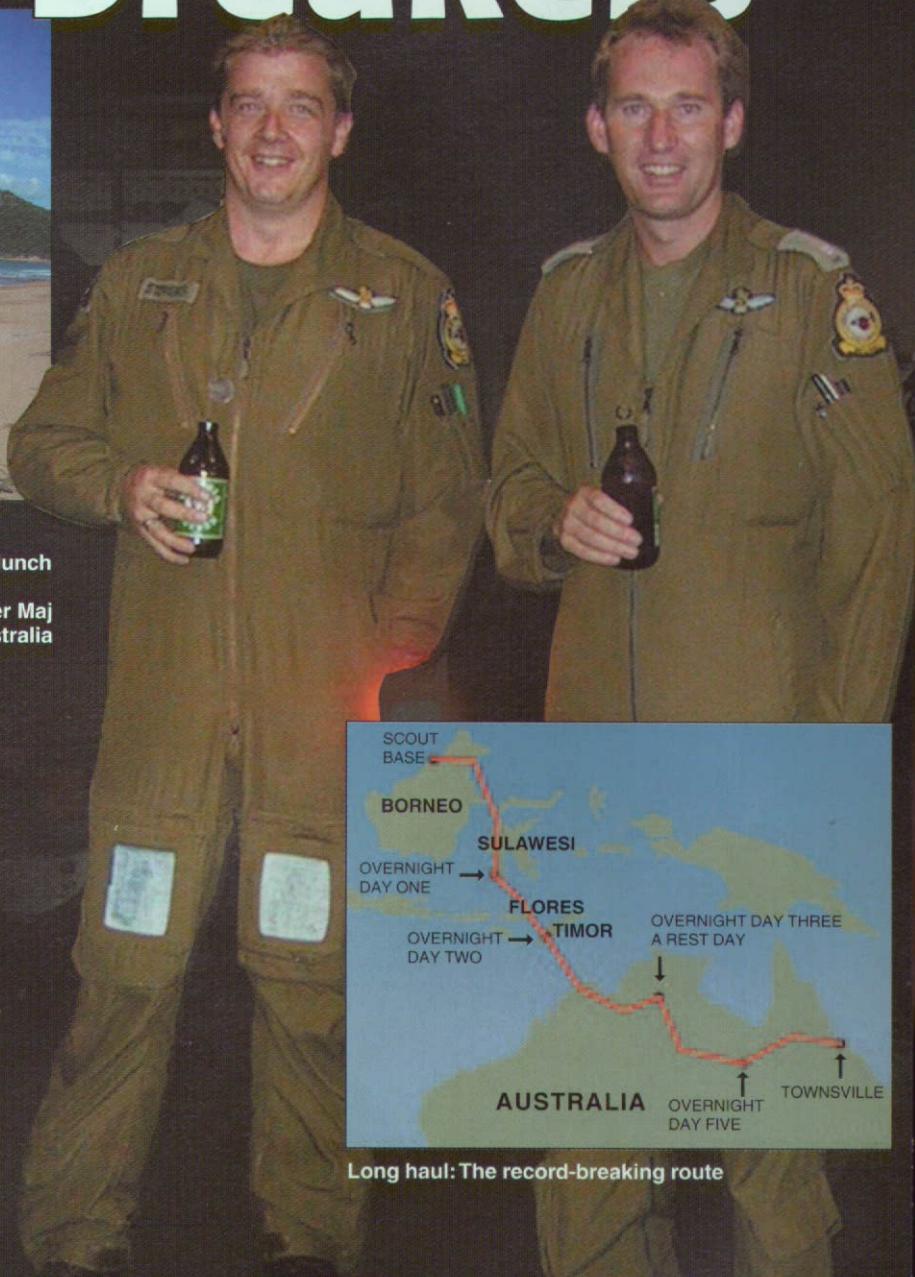
Their epic deployment of a Bell 212, from their base at Seria to Townsville in Eastern Australia, was the longest ever self-deployment by a solo Army Air Corps helicopter and included 1,000 miles over water.

Maj Phillip Cook, OC 7 Flight, said such a trip had never been attempted before and, because of the risks involved, was unlikely to be repeated. "As an indicator," he told *Soldier*, "it is the same distance as flying from the United Kingdom to Afghanistan, but over jungle, the sea and a very desolate Australian outback."

The route took the Bell aircraft across Borneo, a short sea crossing to Sulawesi, south to Flores, West Timor, across to the tip of Western Australia, and overland to Townsville. Diplomatic clearances were sought, survival kit checked, and crews nominated.

Longest sea leg on the flight was a 280-nautical-mile leg lasting almost three hours.

The reason for the ambitious project was to support C Company from Brunei-based 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles on the bi-annual Exercise Pacific Kukri in Eastern Australia. The company commander, Maj James De Labilliere LI (whose brother Simon is a pilot in the



Long haul: The record-breaking route



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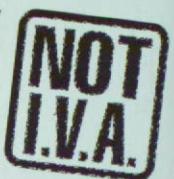
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Golden returns

Veterans find peace during pilgrimage to islands they helped to free 20 years ago

TWO hundred Falklands War veterans who made a pilgrimage to the islands to coincide with Remembrance Day took with them a small and precious package.

It contained a pair of gold medallions bearing the obverse and reverse images of the 1982 South Atlantic Medal which, a few days after its return to the UK, was presented to the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

The veterans, many of whom were returning for the first time to the battlefields they fought over 20 years ago, flew to the Falklands in an Air 2000 Boeing 757 chartered by the South Atlantic Medal Association (1982) - SAMA82.

Struck by the Royal Mint, the unique medallions were carried to some of the major battle sites during the pilgrimage, and were flown on a training sortie by a Royal Air Force F3 Tornado.

A second set of medallions, cast in silver, was presented by the veterans to the people of the islands.

Back in London, former Royal Navy doctor Rick Jolly, former Para Denzil Connick, Lt Col (Retd) Tony Davies of the Welsh Guards, and the Falklands' representative in the UK, Sukey Cameron, gathered at Falkland House before driving to the Palace for an audience with the Queen.

The gift from the SAMA82 veterans was intended to honour her during her golden jubilee year, which coincided with the 20th anniversary of the war to liberate the islands.

Denzil Connick, who was seriously injured during the battle for Mount Longdon and subsequently lost a leg, said that most of the returning veterans had no idea what went on in the islands during the Argentinian occupation, so the pilgrimage had been an opportunity for them to meet islanders involved for the first time.



Veterans' gift: The gold medallions, struck by the Royal Mint, which were given to the Queen to mark her Golden Jubilee, pictured above with a South Atlantic Medal ribbon



Down south: Former Falkland Islands policeman Terry Peck, above, who acted as a guide for British Forces during the 1982 conflict, holds the medallions at The Parachute Regiment memorial stone on Mount Longdon during a visit to the islands by 200 veterans

Picture: Nigel Hawks

Fit for a monarch: From left, Dr Rick Jolly, Denzil Connick and Lt Col Tony Davies with the gold medallions and medal ribbon before leaving for Buckingham Palace to present them to the Queen. Connick co-founded SAMA82 with Dr Jolly and remains its secretary

Picture: Mike Weston

He said many of those who had made the trip had gone home more at peace with themselves than they had been for many years.

Dr Jolly was a surgeon commander in charge of the temporary field hospital at Ajax Bay during the war. In three-and-a-half weeks of intensive fighting, only four of the 580 British soldiers wounded in action subsequently died of their injuries.

The trip to Buckingham Palace was his last action before handing over the chair-

manship of SAMA82 to Capt Martin Reed, Merchant Navy, who was chief officer of the ss *Canberra* during the conflict, when it was used as a troopship to carry 3 Commando Brigade to the South Atlantic.

The fourth member of the palace delegation, Lt Col Tony Davies, was regimental sergeant major of the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards in 1982. He was treasurer of the veterans' association until he became secretary of the Union Jack Club in London in September.

Author on historical highway

Former D and D officer divides his time between road haulage and his passion for military history

AS secretary of the Road Haulage Association, you would think James Falkner had enough on his plate, writes Ray Routledge.

It's a busy job. The association provides advice, information and business services tailored to Britain's haulage industry, but as a former captain in The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, James is accustomed to responsibility.

Despite a heavy workload, he finds time for his other passion – a love of military history, especially the American Civil War, and the life and times of the Duke of Marlborough.

His interest in the latter has led to him publishing a book on one of Britain's greatest military leaders. A former Territorial Army soldier, James

took a short-service commission in the D and D, serving in Germany and Northern Ireland. While in Germany he visited the battlefield sites of Marlborough's campaigns of the early 18th century.

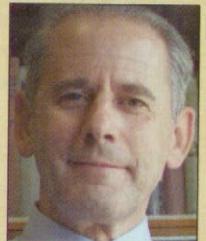
On leaving the Service he worked with the Army Museums Ogilby Trust as librarian, looking after its extensive collection of more than 10,000 books for several years. It was a job which indulged his fondness for military history. Later, after he had joined the Road Haulage Association, Spellmount Publishing commissioned him to write a book about the Duke of Marlborough. It is titled *Great and Glorious Days*.

"Although I had written many articles and pamphlets about the American Civil War, this was my first book and, unexpectedly, it's about Marlborough," he said.

The life of this general, diplomat and gigolo makes a cracking read.

While James has enjoyed having his work published, he is dedicated to his day job and is grateful to the Army for the training it gave him. "To do this job you have to be a good administrator and I use skills I learned in the Army," he said.

• We have a copy of *Great and Glorious Days*, signed by the author, to give away. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us **Which descendant of Marlborough became a 20th century Prime Minister?** Answers on a postcard marked "Marlborough Comp" should be received by January 31. The winner will be drawn at random from the correct answers received.



James Falkner

Climber who conquered Everest after losing a kneecap faces his greatest challenge ...

Interview: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Steve Dock

BORN in poverty in the backstreets of Birmingham, John "Brummie" Stokes never had much schooling. His was a tough upbringing, with no money and a sick mum at home, his future prospects seemed as bleak as the bombed-out city he grew up in.

"I turned out not to be a very nice kid," he said. "I was robbing, stealing, burning things down, taking drugs. By the time I was 13 I had a gun and I would have used it." One look into Brummie's piercing pale blue eyes and you know he means every word.

He ran away from home for the first time when he was nine, jumped a train and ended up in Scotland. On that excursion, he saw soldiers training and thought that might be for him. After leaving school he tried his hand at a series of dead-end jobs before joining The 3rd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets in Winchester, an event that changed his life.

For the first time Brummie was buckling under, learning discipline and learning to enjoy it. He was judged the best recruit of his intake, despite breaking his leg on the assault course. His first posting to Cyprus was a brutal introduction to sectarian violence. Kicking down the door to a building he was searching on the Green Line, he found four children with their throats cut.

Postings to Hong Kong, Singapore, Borneo, and Malaya followed. By his own admission he did some stupid things and ended up in the pokey a lot. He found an outlet for his natural rebellious streak through climbing – something he first discovered clambering up bridges along the Birmingham canals.

After three years in the Green Jackets, Brummie's mountaineering career really took off with a move to another unit. He fell in with another young soldier, Bronco

Lane, who shared his enthusiasm for climbing. It proved to be a dynamic and enduring friendship.

As the pair improved their climbing skills, Brummie also filled in the gaps in his formal education. "The Army taught me everything," he said. "It taught me to read and write and I learnt Arabic and German.

"Just because you don't have a formal background it doesn't mean that you cannot do anything if you really want to."

His resilience was further tested with a physical setback. "I got caught in a little bit of a battle and got shot," he said with classic understatement. With no medics to hand, he gave himself a jab of morphine before the teeth-grinding eight-hour transfer across desert and mountains to hospital.

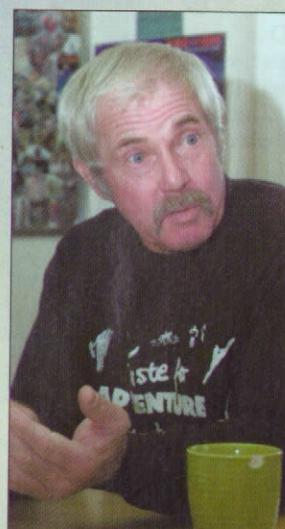
"Doctors told me they had to take out my shattered kneecap and part of my femur. It'll be a wheelchair job for a long time and a stick after that, they said."

But Brummie had different ideas. Not only would he walk again, he would climb to the top of the world. The following year he joined an expedition to Nuptse, in the Himalayas. Four friends died on the mountain and together with Bronco he was buried alive for days in avalanches.

"I never told them about my kneecap because they would not have let me go," he said. The following year, 1976, again teaming up with Bronco, the pair made a successful attempt on Everest. But the elation of the summit was short-lived when the weather closed in and the pair had to spend the night at 28,000ft.

"Several things happened that night," Brummie remembered. "I had gone through the shivering stage and I was feeling warm, drifting in and out of consciousness. I could see white light and I just wanted to go to sleep."

He was saved from death by Bronco punching him awake. "I died on Everest that night," Brummie said. A short while



Inspiring: Brummie Stokes

'Boys, here's your dad. He's broken again'

IN 1991 Brummie Stokes founded the Taste for Adventure Centre, a registered charity for less privileged children, which he runs with his wife Lynn and a team of qualified staff.

His book *Soldiers and Sherpas: A Taste for Adventure* has been re-issued. To order a copy send a cheque for £22 (incl p&p) to Taste for Adventure Centre, The Hafod, Credenhill, Hereford HR4 7DA and include your name and address.

Soldier has a signed copy of the book to give away. To have a chance of winning it, tell us on a postcard the name of the highest peak in the UK. Is it:

a) Scafell Pike b) Ben Nevis c) Snowdon?

First correct entry out of the hat wins and answers should reach us by January 31. Usual rules apply.

later Bronco passed the oxygen mask they were sharing to an invisible friend. "He wants some as well," he said.

"I did not find that funny at all, but later I felt the same thing, as if there was someone else there with us," Brummie said. "I don't believe in ghosts and I know that at altitude without oxygen you hallucinate. But we had oxygen and that was no hallucination. There was something there, a friendly presence."

Somehow they survived the night, without tents, sleeping bags or radios. Brummie went snow-blind, frostbite took some of Bronco's fingers and they both lost their toes. They went up the mountain weighing 12st and came down 4st lighter.

Brummie returned to Everest in 1984. A massive avalanche killed one of the climbers and Brummie broke his neck. When his wife went to visit him with their two young sons she announced:

"Boys, here's your dad. He's broken again."

Doctors read him the riot act and told him it was about time he hanged up his crampons. But not a bit of it. Brummie bounced back and ran the London Marathon. In 1986 the veteran climber returned to Everest to take on the North-East Ridge, the last major unclimbed route to the top. Atrocious weather put paid to a summit attempt.

Two years later he was back at high altitude on the North-East Ridge attempting

Back at altitude: Brummie is still amazingly active despite a life of hard knocks



to become the first Briton to get to the top twice. But it wasn't to be. Although his team-mates made it, Brummie suffered three brain haemorrhages and had to be evacuated.

Sixteen years later Brummie has two more huge obstacles to overcome. He wants to raise £1 million to ensure Taste for Adventure continues to benefit kids with problems (see panel). Doctors have also told him they have discovered he has a rare condition with no known cure: he has between one and three years to live.

For many men such a diagnosis would be crushing. But Brummie has been in tight spots before and he will never, ever quit. Perhaps the benign presence that sat with him that night in the snow-hole at the top of the world is walking with him again.

"It is better to light a few candles," he said, "than complain about the dark."

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In a nest of eagles

Royal Irish find out that the 101st Airborne Division does things on a grand scale

Report: Andrea Frazer

Pictures: Sgt Paul Brownbridge

SOLDIERS serving with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment had the chance to work and play inside one of the biggest military bases in America during an exchange exercise with the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment.

Throughout the month-long Exercise Mill Race, 120 soldiers from C Company, 1 R Irish were based at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, home of the Screaming Eagles – the US Army's distinguished 101st Airborne Division.

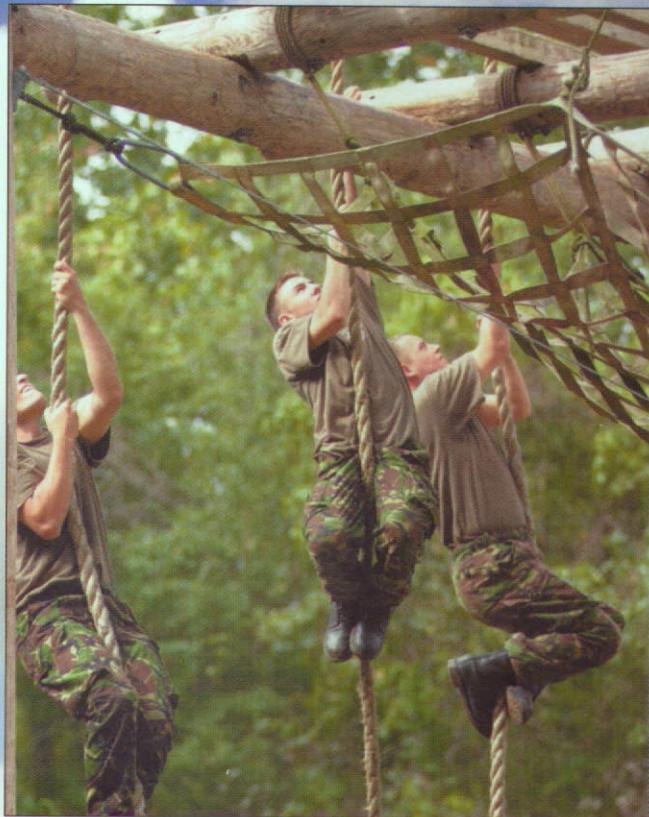
In keeping with the general perception that everything in America is bigger, Fort Campbell did not disappoint. The camp, or post as the Americans call it, ranks as the fifth largest in the US, spans two states and covers an area of 105,000 acres.

The statistics are seriously impressive: Fort Campbell has ten entrance gates, a workforce of 23,000 military and 4,000 civilian personnel, one hospital, 4,000 family living quarters, eight schools, eight churches and more fast food outlets than your average town or city.

Its training facilities are the answer to an infantryman's prayers and include 48 ranges, five major drop-zones, an assault landing strip, a bayonet assault course, a rappel tower, a demo area, 48 manoeuvre areas and 340 artillery firing points.

Maj Colin Marks, OC C Company, explained: "This exchange has allowed us to operate in different climatic conditions, in unfamiliar terrain and has broadened the soldiers' military education."

His troops got to grips with a range of US weapons systems, including the M4



Screaming Eagles: The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) was activated on August 15, 1942. Maj Gen William C Lee, its first commander, told his recruits that the unit had no history, only a rendezvous with destiny.

During the Second World War the 101st led the way in the night drop before D-Day. It was awarded four campaign streamers and two Presidential unit citations.

Testing: R Irish soldiers tackle the feared high-level assault course at Sabalauski Air Assault School

rifle, M203 grenade-launcher and the M249, and communications equipment, while acclimatising to Kentucky's soaring temperatures and humidity.

The legendary Sabalauski Air Assault School, with its high-level assault course, was one of the highlights of the exchange and pushed the Royal Irish troops far out of their comfort zone to gain the much sought-after air assault badge.

They operated as a fully-integrated air assault company, using US weapons, radios and helicopters, during a week-long, 6,000-strong brigade-level field training exercise.

Sgt 1st Class Gerardo Rodriguez of 502 Infantry Regiment said: "This form of training enables soldiers to get a better idea of how they would fare side-by-side in a battle, and how well we would per-

form in combat with each other. From my observations things are looking good."

Maj Marks added: "It makes sense for us to train alongside them tactically. This exercise has shown that at any level we can learn from each other to provide the best service to our countries in the event of a war. The experience has definitely had a motivating and cohesing influence on the soldiers."

Impressive as the scale of resources available to the US Army was, it was actually the scale of patriotism that made the strongest impression on the Royal Irish.

"We experienced such a warm welcome in the area. They really seem to genuinely respect and appreciate their armed forces and ours," said Maj Marks. "The patriotism was just unbelievable, like nothing we've ever seen before."





Eastern promise

British soldiers are in central Asia to help Uzbekistan's army

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

BRITISH military training advisers have visited a central Asian republic this winter to show a former Soviet army how to train non-commissioned officers.

A little more than ten years ago Uzbekistan was part of the old communist regime. Its Army had a role in the war machine of what Ronald Reagan dubbed the "evil empire" and saw action during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Now an independent state, Uzbekistan has dismantled the Soviet military apparatus and is looking to the West for help with training its army.

Specifically it turned to the tri-Service British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) based at Vyskov in the Czech Republic. This move to seek British help sparked interest from nearby Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

The BMATT, which has a staff of 26, deployed a four-man training team to the Uzbek Army NCO training school in the historic city of Samarkand.

BMATT commander Col Christopher Coats, late RA, said it was the first British in-country training team in central Asia.

"The Uzbeks have previously sent students to BMATT in



Commander: Col Christopher Coats



THERE is a broad spectrum of training experience throughout the BMATT team, with expertise from Arctic to jungle warfare, desert to mountains. Ever since *Soldier* published a story about the BMATT based at Vyskov (July 2001) competition for places on the team has grown.

BMATT instructor, Sgt Charlie Marshall, RAF Regt, explained what was involved. "You have to have an experienced background as an instructor and of operations," he said. "I

have been around the world, including the Gulf, Belize and Norway – all areas from where I can put my expertise to good use with BMATT."

Sgt Glen Still added: "We also look for personality, qualifications and experience. Charlie is mountain warfare-trained and I have jungle training. We shape our experience to the requirement of our customer."

"It is the most interesting job I have done and in the last few weeks, as well as Uzbekistan, I gave direct NCO training at the Slovenian NCO School in Lubljana and in Macedo-

nia, where we were teaching them how to run a basic peace support operations course. Those instructors are now running their own training group."

"The most successful scheme, I'd say, was Georgia. In the two years since we have been there, along with Turkish input, they have got uniforms that they didn't have before and the changes in their officers' course at Tbilisi has been remarkable."

"Being part of the BMATT is brilliant. I would never have dreamed that I would have gone to some of the countries I have visited."

Vyskov and ultimately want to progress to the point that they run their own training, using British principles," he explained.

"Our training enables all students to improve their military skills and to share our military culture. They can pass it on to their own people. They will tailor it to their own national ways, and it is important they do that. We are not about putting a British template on the world," he said.

Maj Rob Pavey, 1 RRF, the team leader in Uzbekistan, said the Czech-based BMATT was

very experienced in the region, having previously deployed to Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, the Baltic States, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Georgia.

The Uzbek course for 18 students – all instructors at the NCOs' school – lasted four weeks. They were a mix of officers, many of whom had attended military academy, and NCOs. All were professional soldiers in an Uzbek Army of conscripted private soldiers.



Team leader:
Maj Rob Pavey

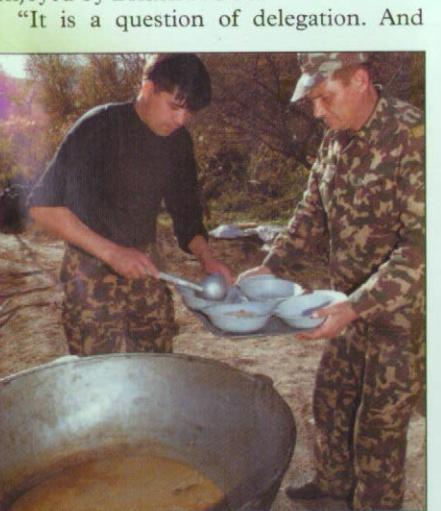


Line-up: Uzbek instructors are briefed by Csgt Leigh Mahoney prior to a field training exercise. Some have found the fitness training hard

basic tactical training is something completely new to them," said Maj Pavey.

"In general the quality of the instructors here was high and would not be out of place in the British Army. It is just that they work to a different system. We have thrown a lot of information at them and they have absorbed most of it, which is good considering the language differences."

The Uzbek Army has a disproportionately high number of officers and as a result a major, for example, may be taking a lesson that a corporal would undertake in the British Army. The Uzbeks were surprised at the level of responsibility enjoyed by British NCOs.



Dinner bell: While Uzbek soldiers are on exercise they are supplied by a field kitchen rather than carrying ration packs

"It is a question of delegation. And because field rations are considered too expensive, Uzbek soldiers have to rely on field kitchens for their meals. This does not make them self-sufficient on operations or exercises. Because each soldier carries a day sack, onto which not much can be strapped, the food truck is critical to keep them supplied."

The BMATT instructors also discovered that fitness levels were poor.

"They look good but actually they are not," said Csgt Leigh Mahoney, 2 Para. "They don't have the same training regime as us and there are problems with health, hygiene and poor diet, all of which can have an effect."

"We have been working on fitness training with them and some have found it very hard. Four British soldiers in four weeks will not change the world, but the seeds have been sown. We will be back and we will come as observers to see how these guys are getting along."

Sergeants' views

Sgt Glen Still, 1 WG: "Things are done differently here but they are responding to our training. No matter which country we go to I find that soldiers are soldiers. How they are trained and what skill level they are at depends on the financing behind them."

"Under the old Soviet system, most effort was put into officer training. Now they are looking towards their NCOs."

"One thing you do realise is that compared with some countries, the British Army is well equipped and financed. For this course, the Uzbeks have pulled in resources from different areas to make sure it works."

Csgt Leigh Mahoney, 2 Para: "We are showing them a different form of fitness training.

We introduced them to the Basic Personal Fitness Assessment (BPFA), the standard Army fitness test, road-running up to 5km, circuit training and battle PT. I get the feeling that they have never before really tried any of the training we have shown them."

"Their endurance is not good and their stamina is nowhere near that of a British soldier."



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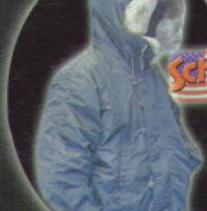
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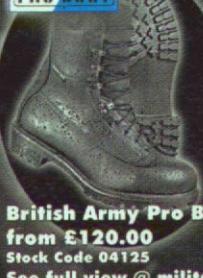


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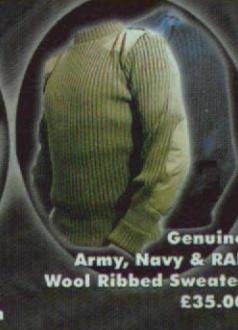
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SOLDIER to soldier

Quality of quarters

ACCEPTABLE accommodation standards for single soldiers was a recurring theme when we asked soldiers based at Bordon to share their New Year resolutions with us (see Vox pop, Page 78).

Our method is completely unscientific: just ask a topical question and report what the lads and lasses say. That several chose to mention their living quarters speaks volumes for the importance of getting this right. It has to be one of the most defining factors in retaining quality personnel.

But one soldier should be easy to please: his dearest wish was to be posted away from Bordon.



THERE was embarrassment for policemen escorting Army firefighters at Pirbright, Surrey. When the first "shout" of the eight-day strike was rung through, it wasn't the venerable old Green Goddesses which failed to respond to the emergency.

The police car had to be push-started down a hill because its radio and security equipment had been left switched on too long and the battery had run flat.

Troops' efforts were not unappreciated. We hear a woman in Northern Ireland who offered firefighters a cup of tea said it was the "first time she had done that since the 1960s".



SEVERAL corners of England (and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) will forever be a part of the Falklands following a pilgrimage to the islands organised by the South Atlantic Medal Association (1982).

Dr Rick Jolly, who led the trip, revealed that when the 200 veterans boarded their chartered Air 2000 Boeing 757 at Gatwick, they took with them 3.5 tonnes of luggage. On their return, there was found to be 4.95 tonnes of luggage in the hold.

What was responsible for the huge difference in weight? Rocks collected by the veterans as they made their way across the battlefields they contested so fiercely 20 years ago.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

What will the year bring us?

WELL, here we are in 2003. A bright and shiny New Year dawns, full of potential – but potential what?

Aye, as not-quite-the-Greatest-Briton W Shakespeare (he wuz robbed!) said, there's the rub.

That's the problem with New Years, you just never know what they might bring, although you can sometimes make a highly-educated guess, especially in the Army's line of work.

Take last year, for example. In addition to existing peacekeeping roles, it brought Afghanistan, Operation Fresco, the Queen Mother's funeral and the



Sue Bonney is Editor of the *AFF Families Journal*

Golden Jubilee. All of which were carried out with the expected superb professionalism, hard graft, tolerance, good humour and great success.

There were costs, not least in separation and cancelled leave. But the job was done. And I have no doubt that the same thing will be true of 2003. The Services will do whatever is asked of them to the best of their ability. But we can only hope the politicians remember that it is their job to ensure that the Forces are not asked to do too much with too little, lest the costs this time prove too great.

Spice with (amazing) attitude

MUCH has been made of a recent Army spouses' Continuous Attitude Survey, announced to the national media in a press release from the Liberal Democrats. Us "spice", it seemed, had had enough – 75 per cent of those surveyed said their own careers would benefit if their partner was not in the Army, and 45 per cent said the effect of Army life on their children's education was unacceptable.

Meanwhile, 29 per cent said their soldier had been away from home for more than 151 nights in a year, and 44 per cent were dissatisfied with the amount of separation.

Not surprising, given the effects of mobility on families, and none of it news to us. But it's interesting what a little spin can do with statistics, especially when you need them to support a point you are making in Parliament.

Readers of *Families Journal* might have gleaned a different picture, as they would have been able to read all, rather than some, of the results.

The surprising thing was that 86 per cent of spouses surveyed thoroughly enjoyed Army life or said it was at least "all right". A further 78 per cent said Army life exceeded or met expectations. And 70 per cent said they had never put pressure on their soldiers to quit.

Despite all the hassle and drawbacks, most spouses – oh dammit, wives – support their soldier, are proud of being an Army spouse, go gooey over parades and those uniforms (or is it just me?), and, yes, basically, enjoy the life.

I think they are amazing, if certifiable. They cope with it, and still have time for each other. They help to make our community the special thing it is.

So how come we're living longer?

I DON'T want to cast a gloom over a bright and shiny New Year, but is it just me, or do you too get the feeling that the world in general is falling apart and we are all going to hell in a handcart (or possibly a supermarket trolley)? And guess who's been nominated to do the honour guard for the handcart?

It's not that I'm a pessimist, but it's hard to retain a sunny outlook when all we get is bad news. So how come we are all living longer?

So how does the immediate future look from here? Well, it depends on which newspaper you read and how optimistic you feel. We might be going to war, but I offer you two positive thoughts:

1. We are very good at doing things, and should remember how well things can go.
2. Fresco – did an excellent job. Look back at 2002 and all the good jobs achieved – Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Bosnia.



I'm gay and feel I have no support

I AM a 20-year-old gay soldier, and have many friends in my unit although only a few know my sexual orientation.

Ask yourself, if you knew I was gay would it change things? All I expect would be to be treated as fairly and justly as I was when you thought I was straight – after all, it does not change the man that I am. Does being gay reduce my professionalism or restrict my ability to do my job? No.

I have been in my post for two years and have done fine so far. So ask yourself, if you knew that a soldier in your unit was gay, how would you treat him or her? Would it change the current relationship you have as friends?

Am I really alone? I feel like I am because there is no support for a soldier in my position. – Serving soldier (name supplied), Northern Ireland.

Safety is the real issue, not single soldiers' privacy

WITH reference to the on-going debate in these pages about the privacy of single soldiers living in barracks, the number of inspections now carried out is greatly reduced and, in general, only used to inspect for barrack damages or fire risks.

The MoD has a duty of care to its employees and a right to inspect its property, including married quarters (my MQ has been inspected for carbon dioxide detectors and smoke alarms).

I wonder how those who bemoan the inspections would feel if a fire broke out in the single-living accommodation and a soldier died because no one had bothered to walk around and ask if there were any problems, or noted hazards such as an excessive number of electrical items plugged into a single socket.

Room inspections are vital to protect our soldiers – they are not used in order to treat them like children. – **Sgt J R Dowle RAMC, Kirton-in-Lindsay**

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of your agenda... but please keep them as short as possible.

The more space you take up to get your point across, the less room there is for other letters, and we are anxious to use as many as we can. E-mails should include your name and location at the bottom (not necessarily for publication).

Anonymous contributions will be binned. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to amend for length, clarity or style.

Please be brief

74

How can I instruct from an out-of-date manual?

'Impractical' to issue latest edition to TA recruits

I AM a permanent staff instructor in a Territorial Army unit and pride myself on being able to arm personnel with up-to-date knowledge. I am one of two NBC instructors within the unit and we use the "Survive To Fight" manual on our course.

As key personnel in our medical unit could well deploy to any Gulf conflict, I recently ordered "Survive to Fight", Edi-



▲ DI Trg Pol(A) responds: "Survive to Fight" (JSP 410) is issued to all recruits when they join the Regular Army, with Edition 4 being the current version. The high turnover means that it is impractical to do likewise for Territorial Army recruits. JSP 410 is a personal aide memoire and is not an instructional pamphlet.

The definitive publication for instruction of NBC practices in the Army is the Army Field Manual Vol 1, Part 5, which is now in the Army Electronic Battle Box on the Army website

tion 3, through the correct chain – Llan-gennech – and was told that we are not entitled to Edition 3 as it is issued only in recruit training establishments.

How am I expected to teach correct procedures from Edition 1 when it is 17 years since I was in a training establishment? – **SSgt Prynne, 204 (Northern Ireland) Field Hospital, BFPO 801.**

www.asei.mod.uk/baebb/baebbcd/default.htm and, as such, is readily available. Students on the NBC Defence Instructor Course at the Defence Nuclear Biological and Chemical Centre are provided with a CD-ROM containing relevant information, pictures and video clips to assist in instructional tasks back in their units.

In addition, a CD-ROM to support Individual Training Directive (Army) 4 is due for publication in the near future and will be available through the British Defence Film Library.

A lot of hard work went into 'flags'

I AM a regimental signals warrant officer in an Army Training and Recruiting Agency school where, until recently, the school's signals instructors were allowed to wear their "crossed flags" badge with pride.

And why not? It took an awful lot of courses and hard work on their part to earn the flags.

The flag badges were worn on the No 8 dress rank slide (obtained through PRIs, which makes money for the unit) and so did not damage the uniform in any way. In times of conflict and on exercise, the slides can be changed in seconds without leaving telltale signs of trade badges (unlike permitted badges such as those for Army pilots). – **WO2 (RSWO) Channell, 2 (Training) Regiment AAC.**



▲ PS12(A) responds: At the Army Dress Committee in July it was agreed by the Chief of the General Staff that any trade badges worn with the No 8 dress were to be restricted to those qualification badges with an operational significance (for example, Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Ammunition Technician/ Ammunition Technician Officer badges).

This decision was made to reduce the number of badges appearing on this operational order of dress. Also, with the Union emblem and divisional or brigade formation badge being worn on the left arm and the regimental or corps badge on the right arm, there was not much space left for other qualification badges.

However, all authorised trade badges can continue to be worn with other orders of dress, such as the working dress. Details of all badges authorised for wear on combat kit will be passed to regiments and corps shortly.

Banned trade badges are a source of pride

YOUR answer to Cpl Honey's legitimate complaint about the tank transporter trade badge (Oct) is a little disingenuous.

Given that Combat Soldier 95 is very much the normal form of dress, and that No2 dress is all but a thing of the past, the award of trade badges has been rendered almost pointless.

If we are being even-handed about this why should any other badges be afforded special status? Surely, as Investors in People and thoroughly modern employers, we should be encouraging pride in trades not hiding them away like a shameful secret.

The tank transporter trade badge is clearly as much a matter of pride to Cpl Honey as Para wings are to the C-in-C. – **Lt Col C Flack, Andover.**

PISCATOR



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Unit can demand the kit you need

Problem lies with failure of contractor to deliver stock

I WRITE regarding the letter (Oct) from a Royal Logistic Corps corporal regarding his inability to exchange a pair of combat assault boots (CAB) at his clothing store.

There is currently a supply problem with CAB. Since June the MoD contractor has failed to deliver stocks as per the agreed contract. Here at Land Command we have been managing the situation with the Defence Clothing IPT (Operational Clothing) to ensure no soldier goes without boots.

Alternative types of boots are available from the stores system if stock of a particular size has run out. Ordnance warrant officers across the command have special instructions on how to ensure no soldier

goes without boots. Land Command has also changed the supply system in unit clothing stores.

We issued policy in July to all units in the command that Clothing Maintenance Limits (CML) were to cease and units were to operate clothing stocks based on actual usage.

Previously, CML only allowed units to demand a set amount of clothing based on unit strength, which clearly did not meet today's high demand for operational clothing. The revised system allows any store in the Army to demand as much clothing as is required to support an individual's immediate needs for exchanges. – WO1 (Cdr) Mark Hammond, HQ Land.

PS...

Duty of discipline

IN response to the prize letter "If cap fits, let's wear it properly in public" (Nov), I believe discipline is not only a personal attribute but one that has to be instilled into the less disciplined among us.

I have experience of similar situations in my own garrison and, as a senior warrant officer, I have taken it upon myself to correct the individuals concerned – in public if necessary.

I see it as my duty to correct those from my own organisation who are behaving in any way which may discredit us as a whole and I would like to think that anyone else would do the same. – WO1 (Cdr) S W Nock, Bicester.

Long-term damage

I AM writing about the Army's non-recognition of long-term relationships.

Although I am a living-in single soldier, my girlfriend and I have our own home, so do not ask for a quarter.

What I object to is the failure of the system to acknowledge that I have needs and obligations.

As a single, I find myself continually open to short-notice taskings, whereas married personnel seem to have something of a shield to protect them. If, for example, I were to require time off work because my girlfriend was ill, the attitude of the chain of command would differ somewhat to the news that a wife was stricken.

Rest and recreation is also an issue as our weekends are very precious. That's when I get to go home to see my girlfriend, whereas married personnel usually see their loved ones each day after work. A little more understanding would go a long way, as I refuse to be shepherded into a mutually unwanted marriage. – Name and unit supplied.

My identity crisis

AS a member of the Ministry of Defence Guard Service, one of my duties is control of entry to the establishment I protect. Recognition is the best form of identification and so, if we know you we let you in – if we don't know you, we ask to see an ID card.

Unfortunately, any request for proof of ID is invariably met with a barrage of abuse. Perhaps your publication could remind readers that control of entry to military establishments is carried out for their protection.

So if you are asked for your MoD 90, please cut out the verbals and thank your lucky stars that the guy on the gate is doing his job properly. Ours is a role with only one aim – the preservation of lives. – Mike Prince, Blandford.





Call-up would mean losing status and pay

AFTER 16 years in the Armed Forces I left two years ago and now work abroad. What happens to my pay if I am called up or volunteer for reserve service? I now earn substantially more than my old military salary.

I left as a signaller following a general court martial, which reduced me from SNCO, and now run a subsidiary company reporting to the theatre chief executive of a group with total sales amounting to £13.7 billion and a workforce of 83,000. I am in charge of more than 300 people.

I want to know if I would be given a signaller's rank and expected to carry out signaller's duties.

I run a logistics/distribution operation having left the Forces as a storeman (after reduction). Before that I was in an electrician's role and served as a motor transport SNCO in the Signals. Would I to revert to my original trade or could I be used in the logistics field, in which I now work? – **Keith Barnard, Chilton, Oxon.**

▲ DM(A) SO2 Res responds: The Compendium of Reservist Regulations and Administrative Instructions for the Army 1997 lays out the rules relating to called-out service. Mr Barnard served in the Regular Army for 16 years and, if enlisted before January 1, 1986, will no longer have a compulsory reserve liability. He would therefore have to have volunteered to serve on Section D of the Regular Reserve to have any liability.

If he were to be called out for permanent service it would be in the substantive rank he holds as a reservist – that of signaller. On permanent service, Mr Barnard would be subject to the normal rules for promotion that apply to officers and soldiers on the Active List and any promotion he was awarded would be retained on returning to the Reserve.

Pay is based on current rates for the Army at the time of call-out. However, the MoD recognises that reservists compulsorily called up may suffer a loss of earnings, company benefits and pension contributions as a result of mobilised service. Therefore Mr Barnard would be eligible for the Reservists Standard and Hardships Awards (RSA/RSH), formerly known as Compensation for Loss of Income (COLI).

The MoD has imposed ceilings on the maximum payment (military salary plus compensation for loss of earnings) to be made according to paid rank (ie, acting or substantive rank). In the case of a signaller, the current ceiling is £22,500.

Mr Barnard has been trained as a signaller and it is in that capacity that he would be recalled. His civilian experience and previous SNCO experience would no doubt mean he would be likely to have a good chance of promotion while on permanent service.

Rules don't help me see my kids

I AM a recently separated soldier and the proud father of four children and I find the way separated and divorced Service personnel are treated in respect of accommodation very annoying.

The rules state that divorced or separated personnel are not entitled to Service Families Accommodation (SFA) unless they have sole custody of children. They may, however, apply for surplus SFA. This is not always possible, probably due to the MoD selling-off properties.

I have joint custody of my children and try to see them most weekends, even though it means two hours' travelling from my duty station to collect them and a further four hours to my mother's two-bedroom house, where we stay – a round trip of 650 miles.

When I arrived at my new duty station I spoke to the families' officer, who told me that even though there were many empty married quarters, none of them were surplus. We wrote to every Defence Housing Executive (DHE) area within an hour's travelling distance only to receive the

same answer. I find it really strange that houses sit empty, with nobody paying rent for them, while there are people in my situation suffering because of the distances we have to travel to spend time with our children.

The Army Welfare Service tries to help by providing houses for use at weekends, but these are few and far between and, if you do manage to find one, it is usually booked up months in advance. This still does not represent a stable home environment for children.

The perfect solution would be for me to buy or rent a house. However, in the current financial climate it is not possible for most soldiers including myself, as the cost is prohibitive, particularly in the south of the country.

All I am asking for is a place I can call home so my children can have some stability in their life and they can grow up with the benefit of spending quality time with me when I am not on exercises or operations. – **Sgt P Sumner, AGC (SPS), Worthy Down.**

▲ PS4(A) responds: Sgt Sumner is right that divorced or separated Service personnel are only entitled to Service Families Accommodation when they retain primary parental responsibility. Because of the significant cost involved we cannot justify providing SFA and associated family allowances for those who do not meet the criteria.

As to why the MoD is selling off surplus properties, the DHE has to pay an annual rent to Annington Homes Ltd (AHL) for every quarter it has on its books. With several thousand empty properties, money would be much better spent on upgrading the remaining stock. All DHE's plans for the return of such properties to AHL are carefully scrutinised to achieve the very best compromise between DHE's funding requirements and the needs of occupants.

As for the empty properties at Worthy Down, some are already earmarked for return to AHL, some are awaiting or undergoing maintenance, some are empty but earmarked for imminent use and most of the remainder are allocated or under offer.

Finally, Sgt Sumner has referred to contact houses, which are managed by the Army Welfare Service. A newly-equipped contact house has just been opened in Winchester and bookings may be made through Maj McCall on (mil) 94271 2694 or (civ) 01962 886989.

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, January 1978: WRVS "demobbed". A sad procession of dedicated ladies made their way back to Britain just before Christmas – after more than three decades, the Women's Royal Volunteer Service was ending its welfare and social role with Rhine Army. WRVS personnel in Hong Kong, Gibraltar and Cyprus are also leaving.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, January 1953: Gunners of the UN forces in Korea are putting down some impressive barrages. Pictured above is a small corner of the "empties" dump. Meanwhile, The Black Watch is a match for the Chinese when it comes to improving on the manual of tactics, as its soldiers demonstrated in the defence of The Hook, an important ridge near Seoul.

Signal service began earlier than 1959

IN the story "Regiment back in business" (Aug) you stated that 10 Signal Regiment was formed in Essex on April 1, 1959.

Unless my memory deceives me (quite possible after 48 years), 10 Signal Regiment ran the Signal Centre in Fayid, Suez Canal Zone during my time with 42

Survey Engineer Regiment (1954-55), which was based across the road. I believe 10 Signal Regiment was still operational when my unit moved to Cyprus in October 1955. Perhaps 10 Signal Regiment was disbanded after Suez and re-formed in 1959? – **M Sharp, Kinnisley.**

PS . . .

Pax peace of mind

I REFER to the article in the December issue over concern by the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards that they had lost their holiday deposits due to leave being stopped (Page 12, Under Big Ben).

All people booking a holiday are advised to take out travel insurance to cover things such as unforeseen medical expenses, cancellation, loss of deposit, travel delays, delayed baggage and so on.

It is probably more important that Service personnel have this cover with events like the fireman's dispute and Iraq dominating the headlines.

They should be aware that the specialist travel insurance products available to them, such as Pax, will cover loss of deposit, cancellation and curtailment due to cancelled leave, march-out orders or exigencies of the service after the date of booking.

Cover can be provided for spouses, partners and children for just a few days or for annual multi-trips.

Service personnel should also be aware that most of the travel insurance offered by their high street holiday provider will not provide this valuable cover and often it costs more than the specialist products. – Jim Griffin, Pax Insurance, Caterham.

£100 for 17 months

I WAS interested in the letter and replies regarding re-enlistment (Nov), my memories being somewhat at variance with the amounts mentioned as bonuses.

Having served from August 1939 to October 1945 with the Royal Artillery (LAA) (TA) – completed by commando service 1944-45, I re-enlisted in October 1946 on the offer to war-time Servicemen of £25 on re-enlistment, with a complimentary £100 at the termination of a four-year short-service engagement.

I departed from Hong Kong for discharge in August 1950, but on my arrival in Woolwich was informed that the Korean War had begun while I was in transit.

The fine print on the enlistment form came into play regarding exigencies of the Service and I served a further 17 months at a training school in Aldershot. I believe all Regulars were retained for a similar period, National Servicemen being retained for a further six months.

I received the £100 agreed upon discharge, but no mention was made of a further £25 for the extra year or the months following. Upon again deciding to re-enlist, I opted for the Australian Army. – W J Sadler, Colchester.



Life's a beach: Protect that deposit

Its against my human rights to retire me at 60

AS a member of the Territorial Army Non-Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS), I find myself in a situation where I am too old to continue in employment with the MoD, yet not old enough to qualify for a Government old age pension.

The European Convention on Human Rights came into force in October 2000, the MoD has a policy on equal opportunities and is signed up to investing in People, so as there should be no discrimination on the grounds of age, it is surely discriminatory, as well as against the law and my human rights, to be retired at 60.

After 42 years of service I am faced with stacking shelves or some similar employment to get by until my state pension at 65. – **N Donald, Aberdeen.**

▲ DM(A)SO2 Plans responds: The Human Rights Act, which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law, grants certain rights but does not create a specific right not to be discriminated against on the grounds of age.

A European Directive establishing equal treatment in employment outlaws discrimination on various grounds, including age, with very limited exceptions. The Armed Forces do have an exemption from this directive on the grounds of age and disability. Therefore, there can be no legal challenge to the age-related policy. However, we are reviewing all

policies where age is a determining factor to ensure that they are appropriate.

Retired officers are not in military service and therefore fall within Civil Service guidelines. NRPS soldiers and officers are within military service and, as such, can be subject to age limitations. These are two distinct groups, one civilian the other military. It is, however, worth noting that the TA Regulations provide for a relaxation of the rule on age. Authority may be granted for personnel to serve up to the age of 65, one year at a time, subject to satisfactory annual and medical reports under exceptional circumstances (Reference: TA Regs 1978 6.046A and 6.107).

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

**Cfn Martin Charles,
4 Bn REME**

My personal New Year resolutions are to give up smoking and to work harder on my fitness. Hopefully the Army's resolutions will be to treat soldiers a bit better and to give us more money.



**Cpl Joe Rothwell,
4 Bn REME**

I want to visit more exotic places with the Army. I went to Nepal on an expedition last year and trekked from the lowlands up into the mountains – it was a fantastic experience and I'd like to get involved with similar projects in 2003.



**SSgt Jez Armitage,
4 Bn REME**

I am not making any New Year resolutions this year because I have never managed to keep any of those that I have made in the past. The Army's resolution should be to forget about recruiting and concentrate more on retention.



**LCpl George Hatt,
4 Bn REME**

My New Year resolution is to try and save more of my wages instead of blowing it all each month. The Army desperately needs to address the issue of single soldier living accommodation in 2003, particularly here in Bordon where it is pretty dire.



**Cpl John Hewitson,
4 Bn REME**

The only New Year resolution I am making this year is to find a way to be posted away from Bordon. It is miles away from any decent nightlife, shops and entertainment. The Army should look more at how to keep its existing soldiers happy as opposed to recruiting.



**LCpl Sarah
Hewitson,
4 Bn REME**

I think the Army should take better care of its soldiers in 2003 and look at giving everyone a better pay increase, especially the technician trades, in a bid to bring wages in line with civvy street.

**Cpl Greg Hunt,
AGC (SPS)**

I would like to see the Army provide a more reliable and up-to-date PC-based administration system in 2003. UNICOM is constantly being upgraded and is not user-friendly at all.



**LCpl Andrew
Rowley,
4 Bn REME**

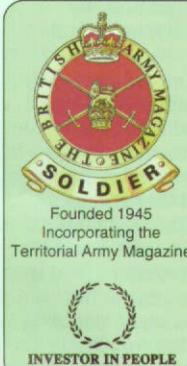
I intend to give up smoking but think that the Army should resolve to improve living accommodation for soldiers. I would like to see more single rooms with en-suite bathrooms.



**LCpl Kate
Harvey,
4 Bn REME**

I'm not making any New Year resolutions myself but the Army's should be to put everyone into Z-type accommodation by the year 2004.

Interviews: Andy Simms Pictures: Graeme Main



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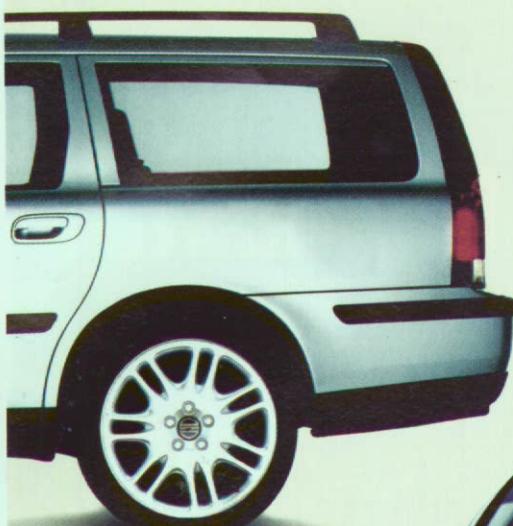
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