

# SOLDIER



MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



NOV 2012  
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# SOLDIER

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# ARMY

# Age shall not weary them

It is a pretty depressing moment in a civvy's life when one realises that, in addition to every single member of the Armed Forces, there also appear to be pigeons that have made bolder contributions to society than you.

Reading the stories behind the latest operational honours and awards (pages 29-37) is, as ever, overwhelming. But the tales behind our ten courageous creatures on pages 46-47 are something of a kick in the teeth if I am honest.

What is it about you serving species? Perhaps this month's remembrance feature (pages 22-26) goes some way to solving the mystery.

By sharing their ancestors' stories with *Soldier* readers, Servicemen have helped to unpick exactly what it means to be part of a military family and how a sense of history can inspire young troops embarking on Operation Herrick.

Age, it seems, really will never weary members of the military family. And the reflections herein have led me to question whether the poignant reality behind the *Ode of Remembrance* can ever truly be understood by people outside the Forces circle. Perhaps not. But we must try.

More than 50 British personnel have given their lives in Afghanistan in the last year and scores of others have been injured. No matter how much of our time we spend talking about "smooth transition" and "non-combat" operations, that is an unquestionably devastating figure; a reminder that we are still very much at war.

Let us hope that the actions behind such sacrifices, along with those of our most recently decorated troops, will be as valued by the Great Britain of tomorrow as they are today. Enjoy the issue. ■



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

**“When the British criticise locals’ laziness we must remember that these guys have been fighting non-stop for six years”**

– Author writes with Afghans in mind (pages 74-75)



S. Goldthorpe.

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Cover picture: Steve Dock

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# 10 COURAGEOUS CREATURES

Author David Long ranks his favourite fluffy recipients of the PDSA Dickin Medal – the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross, awarded for outstanding acts of bravery or devotion to duty

## 1 SGT GANDER

A 12-year-old collie dog took home a PDSA Dickin Medal for his bravery in 1944. He was awarded for saving the lives of Canadian soldiers during the Battle of the Scheldt in Belgium. Gander was found by a Canadian soldier, the Newfoundland dog, who had been wounded. Gander engaged the enemy in his regiment and in the process killed the enemy. Two of his attacks killed the enemy's advance and protected groups of wounded soldiers. It is a feat of bravery, the war dog was killed in action performing a heroic deed.

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## 3 JUDY

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## 9 WHITE VISION

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**"It would seem the military covenant and the values and standards we claim to hold so dear count for nought"**

Pension pain continues for troops recently made redundant

p9

**"I quickly accepted my situation and got on with it"**

Soldier-turned-civvy speaks on life after a British Army career

p50

# Drivers excel in battle of endurance

Report: Richard Long

The British Army's endurance drivers have been put to the test in a grueling 24-hour race. The drivers, who are all volunteers, have been selected from a pool of over 100. The race is a test of endurance and teamwork, as the drivers must take turns driving the car for 24 hours. The car is a modified Nissan GT-R, which is capable of speeds in excess of 150 mph. The race is a challenge for the drivers, as they must stay alert and focused for the entire duration. The winners of the race will receive a PDSA Dickin Medal for their bravery and dedication.

# LEONARD'S CALL

ARMY Major Leonard (L) has been awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal for his bravery in 1944. He was awarded for saving the lives of Canadian soldiers during the Battle of the Scheldt in Belgium. Leonard was found by a Canadian soldier, the Newfoundland dog, who had been wounded. Leonard engaged the enemy in his regiment and in the process killed the enemy. Two of his attacks killed the enemy's advance and protected groups of wounded soldiers. It is a feat of bravery, the war dog was killed in action performing a heroic deed.

# Late charge steers Paras to glory

The Parachute Regiment have been awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal for their bravery in 1944. They were awarded for saving the lives of Canadian soldiers during the Battle of the Scheldt in Belgium. The Paras were found by a Canadian soldier, the Newfoundland dog, who had been wounded. The Paras engaged the enemy in their regiment and in the process killed the enemy. Two of their attacks killed the enemy's advance and protected groups of wounded soldiers. It is a feat of bravery, the war dog was killed in action performing a heroic deed.

# Coaching course boosts Smith's ring return

ARMY Major Smith (S) has been awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal for his bravery in 1944. He was awarded for saving the lives of Canadian soldiers during the Battle of the Scheldt in Belgium. Smith was found by a Canadian soldier, the Newfoundland dog, who had been wounded. Smith engaged the enemy in his regiment and in the process killed the enemy. Two of his attacks killed the enemy's advance and protected groups of wounded soldiers. It is a feat of bravery, the war dog was killed in action performing a heroic deed.



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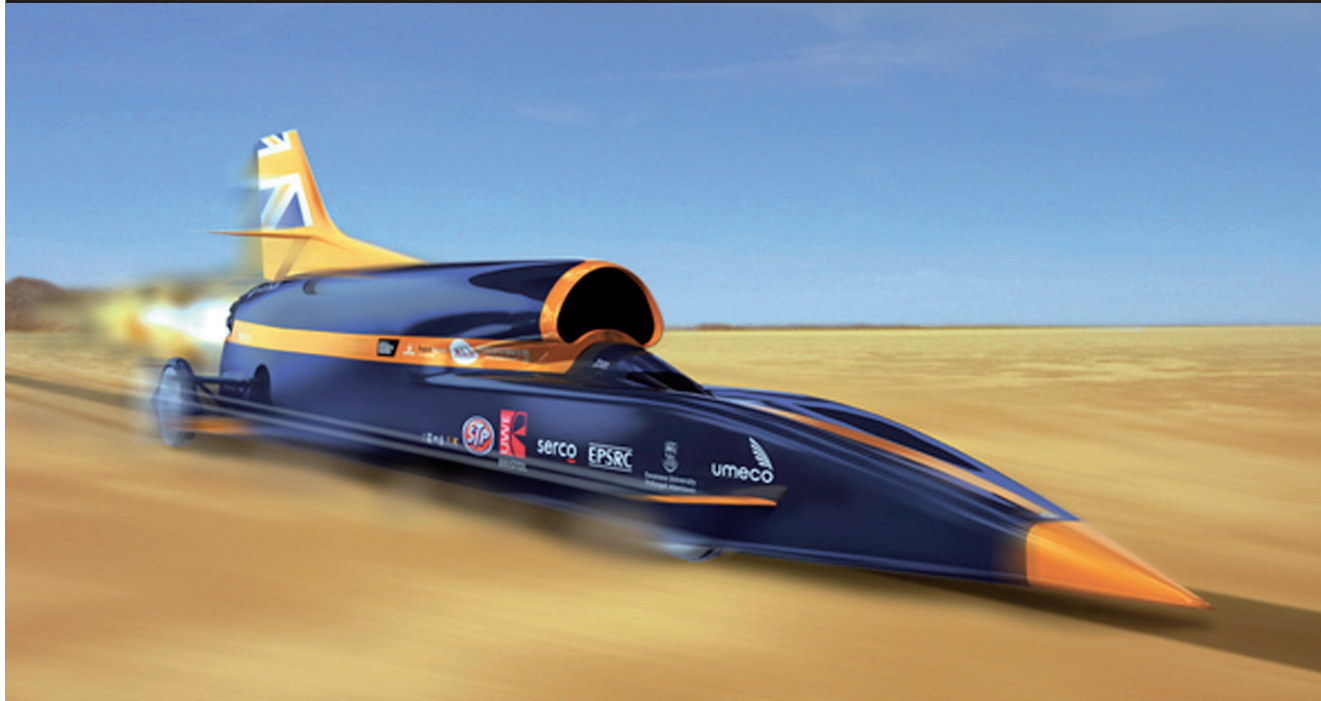


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# THE informer...

BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk)



**Speed machine:** Personnel will play a crucial role in constructing and developing what will hopefully become the world's quickest car

## Soldiers join Bloodhound gang

**A** TEAM of Army experts have been drafted in to boost the Bloodhound SuperSonic Car project in its bid to produce the fastest land vehicle on the planet.

The five soldiers, from the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, will provide in-depth knowledge on the ground-breaking programme, which aims to design and build a car capable of achieving around 1,000mph.

It is hoped the machine will shatter the existing world land speed record of 763mph and the Servicemen will assist in the construction and maintenance stages over the next two years.

They will also play a pivotal role during testing and in the actual record attempts that are being staged in South Africa in 2013 and 2014.

Current land speed record holder and Royal Air Force pilot Wg Cdr Andy Green has been given the honour of driving the car, which will be powered by a Typhoon jet engine along with a hybrid rocket.

The announcement of Army involvement follows the signing of an agreement between the MoD and the Bloodhound initiative by Defence Minister Philip Dunne and project director Richard Noble.



Speaking during the scheme's launch at London's Wellington Barracks, the politician said: "This is an inspirational project that will have a lasting legacy for the UK by inspiring future generations into careers in science, technology, engineering and maths.

"These fields are essential to British industry, particularly within the defence sector, and it is vital that we nurture them. This is also a great opportunity for the Army's mechanical engineers to share experience and develop their skills whilst working on this innovative

technology here in the UK.

"That experience will feed directly back into the front line as they progress through their Service careers."

With REME soldiers providing vital input the Bloodhound team successfully tested its unique hybrid rocket system for the first time on October 3.

The 450kg device – the largest of its kind ever to be designed in Europe and the biggest to be fired in the UK for 20 years – generated 14,000lbs of thrust and sound levels of 185dbs during the experiment at Newquay Aerohub.

Mr Noble added: "Bloodhound is a cutting-edge, high-technology project, operating on a global stage in front of a huge audience.

"We are delighted that the MoD and REME will be joining us and sharing in this unique adventure.

"Their young engineers have great skills and attitude and will make a tremendous contribution to the building and running of the car."

**763** THE WORLD LAND SPEED RECORD  
IN MILES PER HOUR, WHICH THE  
BLOODHOUND TEAM AIMS TO BREAK



**“IT’S NOT ALWAYS ABOUT WHAT YOU FIND, BUT WHAT YOU CAN LEARN FROM THE ARTEFACTS”**

— ARMY ARCHAEOLOGISTS DIG DEEP, PAGES 42-43



**Home improvements:** Responding to criticisms of under-investment from families, the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Peter Wall, told *Soldier* the restructuring of the British Army would not stop ongoing efforts to improve the Service’s housing stock

## Housing headaches heard

**N**OT enough has been done to improve the housing system for military personnel over the past two years, the outgoing chief executive of the Army Families Federation (AFF) has declared.

Addressing the organisation’s biennial conference, Julie McCarthy said Service families accommodation continues to suffer from under-investment.

“We still need to see a credible upgrade programme to improve the condition of quarters for the longer term,” Mrs McCarthy added.

“We still need evidence of the considerable investment in infrastructure needed to support the rebasing from Germany and we need proof that the MoD won’t opt for the cheap option when it comes to the new housing maintenance contract.”

She also described how changes under Army 2020 could affect families, citing pensions, reductions in allowances and redundancies as areas of major uncertainty.

“The Army is a vocation, a way of life for the whole family and redundancy impacts upon the whole family,” the Service wife explained.

“A soldier being made redundant doesn’t just need a new job. They and their family will probably be looking for a new home, probably be moving to a new area, so their children will need new schools and the spouse may also be looking for employment; not easy in these tight economic times.”

Senior figures within the MoD attended the London summit, during which the 300-strong audience were



● Gen Sir Peter Wall



● Julie McCarthy

able to quiz those at the very top in an open forum.

Speaking to *Soldier*, the chief of the general staff said that while he appreciated families’ frustration at the lack of progress on housing, factors relating to the restructuring of the Army would take longer to resolve.

“We don’t have solutions for all the problems; some of them are more intractable and I do get frustrated on those issues that are reoccurring from two years ago and I understand why people find that particularly galling,” Gen Sir Peter Wall said.

“We’re now at the point where we’re implementing the Army 2020 idea and we’ve got a number of matters like redundancies, the basing plan and the new employment model where urgent work is in progress. But these are complex issues and rapid progress isn’t going to be delivered in areas where more strategic investment is needed.

“However, that does not detract from us dealing with what I regard as normal issues such as housing, where we are absolutely determined to keep making it better and respond better to people’s concerns,” he concluded.

## GURKHAS STAND DOWN

■ THE Gurkha Reinforcement Company Three has been disbanded and its personnel redeployed in other roles.

Established in August 2009 due to excess manning in the Brigade of Gurkhas, the unit was based in Munster as C Company, 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment.

During deployment on Op Herrick 15 the formation was involved in developing the Afghan Local Police in the Upper Gereshk Valley, a tour that saw three of the unit killed and five decorated for gallantry.

While most of its soldiers will be reabsorbed into the Brigade of Gurkhas, a number have applied to transfer to The Yorkshire Regiment.

## CAPTAIN COVER STAR

■ AN Army officer has won a competition to become the cover star of October’s *Men’s Health* magazine.

Capt Charlie Powell (R Anglian) was selected above thousands of entrants to front the fitness bible.

“I’ve always been fit; running with your kit and rifle makes sure of that,” the 32-year-old told the publication. “But I started getting bigger while working out with a couple of US marines in their gym in Afghanistan. Those guys are hardcore.”

Picked ahead of 14 other finalists, the officer was found to “epitomise the functional fitness of the modern elite athlete” by the judges.



## PUP ON PARADE

■ THE youngest ever recruit to join 1st Battalion, Irish Guards has begun his basic training at Aldershot’s Mons Barracks.

Three-month-old Irish Wolfhound puppy, Domhnall, will become the regimental mascot once his drill is up to scratch.

His handler, Dmr David Steed, will train him up between now and the pair’s first official appearance on St Patrick’s Day next March.

Domhnall’s appointment follows the retirement on health grounds of his predecessor, Conmael, who has been rehomed with his breeder in Tipperary.





“PEOPLE SAY WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WITH THEM BUT IN OUR AREA THEY WERE SWITCHED ON AND KNEW WHAT THEY WERE DOING”

– RETURNING TROOPS PONDER AFGHAN ALLEGIANCES, PAGE 90



Picture: Cpl Mike O'Neill, RLC

**Light at the end of the tunnel?:** Defence minister Mark Francois agreed to take a fresh look at the “heart-breaking” redundancy of Armed Forces personnel before their immediate pension point during this year’s Army Families Federation conference in London

## New-look pension plan formalised

THE government has confirmed the details of the new Armed Forces pension scheme, which will see a single system for Regulars and Reservists come into force in April 2015.

Outlined by the MoD in July, the plan has now been finalised following additional consultation with Service personnel and organisations such as the Forces’ families federations, the Forces Pension Society and The Royal British Legion.

In line with Lord Hutton’s Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, the normal pension age will increase from 55 to 60 and benefits will be based on career average earnings rather than a soldier’s final salary.

The new scheme will continue to ensure that Servicemen and women do not make personal contributions to their pensions and those leaving the Forces at the age of 40 after more than 20 years of service will qualify for a tax-free lump sum and monthly income.

Accrued pension rights have been protected, so there is no change to the age at which those currently serving can draw the benefits they have amassed in the existing schemes.

Personnel will be automatically enrolled on the new system except those within ten years of their normal pension age on April 1, 2012, who will receive transitional protection and will not be transferred.

Mark Francois, Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, said the government had recognised the “unique commitment made by the

Armed Forces”.

“Military personnel will continue to receive one of the best and most valuable pensions in the public and private sectors, maintaining the non-contributory element, an early pension point at 40 and a lower normal pension age than other public sector employees,” he added.

While confirmation of the plan heralded increased clarity for soldiers wondering what their pensions will be worth in the future, ministers faced growing calls for action over the plight of those made redundant shortly before their immediate pension point (IPP) or early departure pension.

A statement by the Forces Pension Society urged those affected by the “heart-breaking conundrum” to write to their MPs to explain the financial impact the redundancy plan was having on their lives.

While “reluctantly” accepting the MoD’s position that any adjustment to the cut-off date would invariably leave

certain individuals out of pocket, the statement concluded: “At a time when so much is made of the Armed Forces Covenant this looks like a very sad chapter in the care and welfare of those who have served their country.”

As one of those selected for compulsory redundancy close to his IPP, a major told *Soldier* that he and others like him felt betrayed.

“It would seem the military covenant and the values and standards we claim to hold so dear count for nought,” said the officer. “The 16-year IPP is a significant milestone for us and our families; we plan our futures around receiving our pensions. The redundancy package offered leaves us with up to £300,000 less than we would have for serving for a few months extra.”

Confronted at the Army Families Federation conference on the issue of the so-called “unpensionables” by a representative from Pension Justice for Troops, Mr Francois pledged to take a fresh look at the process.

## Soldiers invited to dining debate

**THE COMMANDER** Land Forces has launched a forum for Army personnel to give their views on the pay as you dine system (PAYD).

Gen Sir Nick Parker commissioned a survey on the restricted Army Knowledge Exchange, which is signposted from ArmyNet, to inform the future contract re-let.

**A Service spokesman said:** “Current beliefs are that while the PAYD policy is sound and individuals have choice and only pay for what they eat, some improvements to the delivery may need looking at. Only through engagement with our personnel can we understand what needs addressing to encourage them to use in-barrack facilities.”





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**“I KNEW I HAD TO BE AGGRESSIVE TO PROTECT MY COMRADE, IF HE WAS STILL ALIVE, AND MYSELF. AFTER FIRING ON THE ENEMY I HAD TO GET HIM”**  
**– SERVICEMEN SHED LIGHT ON HELLISH BATTLEFIELD HEROICS, PAGES 29-37**



## SOLDIER LAID TO REST

■ A BRITISH soldier who was killed in action 70 years ago has finally been laid to rest in the Netherlands, nine years after his remains were found.

Pte Lewis Curtis (pictured below) served with 5th Battalion, The Wiltshire Regiment and was buried with full military honours at the Arnhem-Oosterbeek War Cemetery on October 3.



Body parts of the 19-year-old Serviceman, who died during Operation Market

Garden in 1944, were found in an unmarked field grave and after half a decade of scientific tests he was identified using dental records.

The soldier's family, including his 20-year-old great nephew Rfn Richard Edwards who has recently returned from Afghanistan, attended the funeral.

## PRACTICAL POST APP

■ THE British Forces Post Office has launched a new app to help troops get quick and efficient mail information.

Personnel can use the programme to locate all BFPO numbers and calculate the cost of a parcel using details of its size, weight and destination.

The free tool also features a list of all UK retailers able to post products to Forces locations and a reminder of air-cargo restrictions. It is available now via iTunes and an Android version will follow shortly.

## TASTY TRIUMPH

■ TOP Army chefs have scooped gold during the World Culinary Olympics.

Under the inspection of judges from the World Association of Chefs

Society, the Combined Services Culinary Arts Team competed against 42 countries in Erfurt, Germany.

Cooking for Great Britain in the restaurant of the nations and cold buffet categories, the tri-Service team achieved double gold awards for the first time in its history.



## ANNUAL TEST AMEND

■ REGULAR Army units must now enter the results of military annual training tests (MATTs) directly onto soldiers' operational deployability records.

From last month, the Joint Personnel Administration system ceased to be the designated place for MATT and workplace induction programme details.



Picture: Steve Dock

**Prototype:** The “brainy” and adaptable platform has been designed to replace the Scimitar

## Scout gets out and about

**T**HE next generation of specialist combat vehicles has been showcased at Army Headquarters in Andover.

A prototype Scout armoured reconnaissance platform went on display during a demonstration of new developments by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

Due to replace the Scimitar family of tracked light armoured vehicles, the asset will carry three crew members and offer greater protection, firepower and mobility to troops, as well as improved situational awareness.

“The Scout is a pretty revolutionary step change in capability, employing all sorts of new and clever technologies,” said Lt Col Charles Ball, from the Army procurement team at Defence Equipment and Support.

“It can go further through more marginal terrain. Clever engineering gives it low ground pressure but sufficient protection.

“In terms of lethality, it has a new 40mm automatic cannon, which is far better at defeating enemy targets than what we currently have.

“Lastly, it's a reconnaissance platform. We've given it a revolutionary new sight and

acoustic sensors, so it can look further and see more, but it also has a brain, or electronic architecture, which can store all this information, package it together and send it over the data network.”

Currently in its £500 million demonstration phase, the programme will see General Dynamics UK deliver seven prototype Scouts next year, which will then be put through a period of extensive trials.

As well as acting as a reconnaissance platform, the highly flexible vehicle will be able to carry out many other missions including liaison, escort and protected troop carrying when it is rolled out in approximately 2019.

“We've already involved a lot of Service personnel in the initial phase to make sure this will be soldier-friendly,” added Lt Col Ball.

“No one has a crystal ball and anyone who tries to predict who and where we are going to fight in future will probably get it wrong.

“Therefore, you need the most adaptable pieces of kit which allow you to operate in the multitude of potential armed conflicts that we could be involved with over the next 20 years.”

# 2019

**APPROXIMATE YEAR THAT THE SCOUT ARMoured VEHICLE IS EXPECTED TO BE ROLLED OUT**





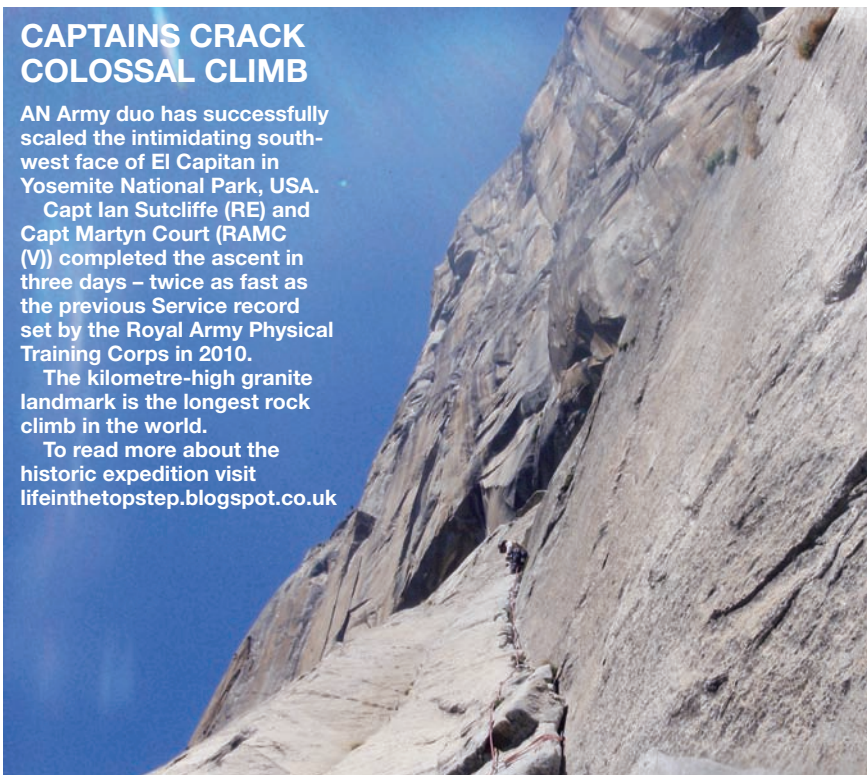
## CAPTAINS CRACK COLOSSAL CLIMB

AN Army duo has successfully scaled the intimidating south-west face of El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, USA.

Capt Ian Sutcliffe (RE) and Capt Martyn Court (RAMC (V)) completed the ascent in three days – twice as fast as the previous Service record set by the Royal Army Physical Training Corps in 2010.

The kilometre-high granite landmark is the longest rock climb in the world.

To read more about the historic expedition visit [lifeinthetopstep.blogspot.co.uk](http://lifeinthetopstep.blogspot.co.uk)



## CALL TO COOK CURRY

■ THE organisation behind the “big curry” fund-raiser is calling on troops to keep cooking all year round.

ABF The Soldiers’ Charity is in its sixth year of asking people to make money by serving up a spicy feast and is aiming to collect £175,000.

To get involved in the initiative visit [www.bigcurry.org/register](http://www.bigcurry.org/register)

## GOVERNOR’S GOODBYE

■ THE outgoing governor of Helmand province has thanked members of the International Security Assistance Force for their service in Afghanistan during his four years in office.

Gulab Mangal (pictured) has been the region’s leader since March 2008 but is being replaced as part of a local government reshuffle.

He said: “I look forward to a future when we won’t be able to hear a single bullet and this will be a peaceful country.”



## Windfall for Wiltshire Service families

JOB and business prospects for Service partners based in Wiltshire have been boosted by a £1.9 million government investment in the local economy.

The county is one of five regions to have been selected for a Rural Growth Network grant, which helps isolated areas overcome the barriers to economic expansion.

The project has a unique military focus and will look to support the partners of Servicemen and women based in the garrison towns of Ludgershall, Tidworth, Amesbury, Bulford and Durrington.

On announcing details of the grant,

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs minister Richard Benyon said: “It should be as easy to run successful businesses in a rural area as in a town.

“But in the past problems like a lack of work premises and poor access to skills training have held entrepreneurs back and it’s often harder if your partner is in the Army.

“This project will tackle those barriers to economic growth, giving spouses of military personnel and those leaving the Armed Forces more job opportunities and the support and workspace they need to set up their own businesses.”

## ARMY BRAND BOOST

■ A MAJOR project is under way to ensure the Army’s corporate brand is consistent across all units.

Official badges and emblems have been digitally redrawn to a common standard and are available for download on a new online portal together with updated guidance.

All troops with an MoD email address can access the resource via [army.mod.uk/brandportal](http://army.mod.uk/brandportal)

A Service library is also being developed to store imagery, videos, illustrations and templates.

Soldiers will be able to search for material on the facility from January.

## EMERALD EXCURSION

THE Band of the Irish Guards undertook a whirlwind tour of their home country last month, giving thousands a chance to hear one of the Army’s most professional and versatile groups in action.

Accompanied by their Pipes and Drums, the musicians played in schools, concert halls and bases across Northern Ireland as well as at a major children’s charity fund-raising event near Dublin.



## ...a hi-tech head torch

LEFT in the dark by our clues to last month’s spine lines competition?

Inspired by October’s civvy street interview with paratrooper-turned-millionaire Tony Banks, the names on the side of the issue had a dosh-related link. (Ernesto and Kirsty) Bertarelli, (Sri and Gopi) Hinduja, (Alisher) Usmanov and (Galen and George) Weston were all named in the latest *Sunday Times* Rich List.

This month we are giving away five Petzl TacTikka XP head torches worth a not-so-stingy £52 each.

Perfect for demanding users, the kit comes in a choice of two colours – camo or desert – and features four interchangeable lenses.

To be in with a chance of winning one, tell us what links the words on the side of this magazine.

Answers, plus your postal address and preferred colour, to the usual place or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by November 30.





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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE





## TRANSLATOR TEST

■ FRONT-LINE soldiers could soon have a new gadget at their disposal to help them overcome the Afghan language barrier.

A programme that translates English phrases into Pashtu or Dari, and vice versa, is being trialled by the technology delivery team at Defence Equipment and Support.

Designed to run on smartphones without the need for any network connection, the tool focuses on words and expressions that are used in force protection.

“This improves communication immeasurably,” said Mike Batty, a member of the delivery team.

“We don’t see it as a way of replacing interpreters in the field, but a way of augmenting our capability on the ground and allowing our guys and girls to understand the locals they are interacting with.

“It has been assessed by the Infantry Trials and Development Unit and the Defence School of Languages so the next stage would be to assess what it could deliver in theatre – initially inside the wire at Camp Bastion and then in a variety of roles as confidence grows.”



Picture: Johnnie Pakington Photography

**Military mission:** The firm plans to increase its talent pool by recruiting more ex-soldiers

## Service leavers to join ranks of BT

TELECOMMUNICATIONS giant BT is set to bolster its workforce by employing a host of Service leavers as engineers.

Openreach, the firm’s local access network business, already has more than 800 ex-military staff on its payroll but a new campaign will offer placements to 250 individuals due to exit the Armed Forces in the next year.

Eligible troops have been contacted by the Ministry of Defence’s Career Transition Partnership (CTP) with an offer to spend three months at the company on a civilian attachment.

At the end of that period, if they meet all criteria, personnel will be offered a

new career choice.

Liv Garfield, Openreach’s chief executive officer, said: “We have had great success in recruiting talented people with Armed Forces experience in the past so we are delighted to be able to offer these roles to those who are set to leave.”

David Duffy, managing director of the CTP, added: “We are pleased to be working with BT on a further campaign that provides a career path for Service leavers. We have gained a real understanding of the needs of the organisation, resulting in a success rate at interview of more than 80 per cent for these individuals.”

## Lobbying claims land former officers in hot water

SIX retired senior officers have been caught boasting about their influence over government to *Sunday Times* journalists posing as defence manufacturers.

During the newspaper’s investigation into the “revolving door” between the Ministry of Defence and private arms firms, it secretly filmed former high ranking personnel appearing to offer their links to ministers and ex-colleagues for substantial sums of money – something that is in breach of official rules.

Lt Gen Sir John Kiszely has since stepped down from his position as president of The Royal British Legion.

In a resignation letter, the Falklands War hero explained: “I have never breached any government rules related to lobbying but I made exaggerated and foolish claims to the contrary, incompatible with my position within the Legion.”

The MoD is now carrying out an investigation to see if it was possible for anyone to secure privileged access and find out whether regulations

were broken.

Following the story, the *Guardian* published Freedom of Information figures showing that more than 3,500 officers and MoD officials have swapped public duties for jobs in private arms companies during the last 16 years.

The veterans deny any wrongdoing and the newspaper did not suggest they had broken laws. Senior personnel are allowed to work for the private sector two years after leaving the military.

**13 TRIES SCORED BY THE ARMY WOMEN’S RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM IN THEIR 64-0 WIN OVER THE ROYAL NAVY, WITH LCPL CAZ ROBERTS (REME) AND CPL TITILIA BANI (RLC) BOTH GETTING HAT-TRICKS (PAGE 79)**

**XF** XJ XK

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\*Price applies to Jaguar XF 2.2D SE 163PS including military concession. Prices shown are the OTR price including VAT. Model shown is a Jaguar XF Sport with Kyanite Blue Metallic Paint priced at £34,147.50 including military concession.

On the road price is the Manufacturer's Recommended Retail Price plus Car Tax, First Registration Fee and Delivery Pack.





Picture: Sgt Rupert Friere, RLC

**Long way from home:** Relatives have said they feel forgotten about when individual TA soldiers are attached to other units on tour

## Isolated families reveal welfare worries

FAMILIES of Territorial Army personnel have voiced concerns over the “limited” welfare support packages they receive during operational deployments.

The issue was highlighted during an open forum at the 2012 Army Families Federation conference, where delegates had the chance to quiz Service chiefs on a variety of topics.

Among the criticisms levelled was a sense that Reservists’ loved ones felt “forgotten about and isolated”, particularly if their soldier was on tour as an individual augmentee attached to another unit. Concerns were also raised about the resourcing of welfare activities.

In her speech Julie McCarthy, the AFF’s outgoing chief executive, suggested such support would become

an increasingly important subject as the Service continues with its plans to recruit more Reservists under Army 2020.

Following the open forum she said she was “reassured” that people felt able to raise the issue.

“We’re the voice of families all the time and it’s really important that the chief of the general staff, the adjutant general and the chain of command actually hear from the families themselves,” Mrs McCarthy told *Soldier*. “I am confident they will look at this and if we can just keep the TA in their minds I think we will have some degree of success.”

While the conference exposed areas where work is still needed, it also highlighted dedication in the ranks with the presentation of the Sodexo Unit Welfare Award.

This year’s winners were Capt Chris Gillespie, SSgt Mel Ripley and Sgt Val Bartlett from Exeter-based 6th Battalion, The Rifles, who were recognised for their tireless support to the unit’s families across the West Country.

“Before mobilisation we get the soldiers and, more importantly, their relations in to explain what to expect,” said Capt Gillespie.

“Our units are spread from Gloucester down to Cornwall so we don’t have a lot of family functions during the deployment. We focus on one main event for the tour, which is usually a day when BFBS come in to record their messages to theatre. In between we write newsletters or send them the AFF magazine and they know we are always on the end of a phone for them.”

● **THE Defence Secretary has publicly confirmed that he would like to change the name of the Territorial Army to the “Army Reserve”.**

Speaking on BBC’s *Andrew Marr Show*, Philip Hammond said: “When the opportunity for legislation comes along, we will change the name.

“In my head they are the Army Reserve and they will be an integral part of the Regular Army.”

The term has not yet been officially replaced by the MoD.

● RESERVE personnel are being invited to give their views on Service issues as part of the 2012 Territorial Army Continuous Attitude Survey.

The confidential document can be found online at [www.armynet.mod.uk/ta](http://www.armynet.mod.uk/ta) or in the current *Army Reserve Quarterly*.

## Medics deliver Bastion boost

A TEAM of 49 medics from 243 Field Hospital (Volunteers) has deployed to Afghanistan on a three-month mission to run the role three medical facility at Camp Bastion.

The soldiers will work alongside Regular and Reservist professionals from the US Army, forming a 250-strong outfit that will staff the world-leading hospital, which is among the most advanced and busiest trauma units in the world.

Just days before leaving for their second tour in the past five years, the TA medics were put through their paces at the Army Medical Services Training Centre at Strensall near York.

The site is the only one of its kind



in the UK and is a replica of the field hospital in Camp Bastion; making it the perfect environment to test personnel before they deploy.

The Strensall exercise was the culmination of two years of preparation for the unit ahead of the tour.





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## IN MEMORIAM



**SGT JONATHAN KUPS (38)**  
ROYAL ELECTRICAL AND  
MECHANICAL ENGINEERS  
DIED SEPTEMBER 21 – AFGHANISTAN

TRIBUTES have been paid to a "technically brilliant" soldier from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers who passed away in southern Afghanistan.

Sgt Jonathan Kups, of 104 Force Support Battalion, died as the result of a non-hostile act in Camp Bastion, Helmand province.

Hailing from Nuneaton in Warwickshire, the senior NCO joined the REME in 1992, where he trained as an electronics technician.

In the early years of his career he specialised in radar and ground-to-air weapons, completing a tour in Northern Ireland.

Turning his expertise to electronic warfare systems, he later made a number of deployments with 14 Signal Regiment.

In 2011, the 38-year-old began an attachment to 4 Close Support Battalion REME ahead of the unit's inclusion on Op Herrick 16, where he commanded the electronic counter measures repair department.

Lt Col Neil Thorpe, CO of the Theatre Equipment Support Battalion, said the unit and corps had lost a very talented Serviceman.

"His enthusiasm was infectious and he cared passionately for the technicians within his team," added the officer. "He was the father figure and his soldiers loved him for it."

Sgt Kups leaves behind his wife and three children. A family statement read: "Jonathan was a wonderful husband and loving father. He was a loyal man with a wide circle of friends."



**CAPT JAMES TOWNLEY (29)**  
28 ENGINEER REGIMENT,  
ROYAL ENGINEERS  
DIED SEPTEMBER 21 – AFGHANISTAN

PERSONNEL from 28 Engineer Regiment are mourning the loss of an "outstanding individual" who was the epitome of a British Army officer.

Capt James Townley passed away at Camp Bastion as a result of a non-hostile act. He died from wounds sustained while serving at FOB Shawqat the day before his 30th birthday.

The avid sportsman, who received a first-class degree in engineering and computer science from Oxford University, worked as a tax associate before passing through Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in January 2007.

He commissioned into the Royal Engineers in December 2007 and joined 28 Engr Regt.

Capt Townley deployed on Op Herrick on September 5 and was serving as the battlegroup

engineer supporting 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment.

Lt Col Chas Story, commanding officer of 28 Engr Regt, said: "He was an outstanding individual and throughout his life he has made a massive difference to all those he encountered. He will never be forgotten."

Capt Luke Wilson (21 Engr Regt) added: "James Townley was the epitome of a British Army officer; fit, reliable, intelligent and absolutely trustworthy. He was always ready and willing to exploit every opportunity and see what was new in the world."

Capt Townley leaves behind his parents, brother and girlfriend. The family said: "He was our guardian angel and our hero."



**CAPT CARL MANLEY (41)**  
THE ROYAL MARINES  
DIED SEPTEMBER 24  
– AFGHANISTAN

MEMBERS of the Royal Marines have paid their respects to a "highly valued" colleague who passed away in Afghanistan on September 24.

Capt Carl Manley died at Bagram Airforce Base in Parwan province from what are believed to have been natural causes.

The marine's commanding officer paid tribute to the 41-year-old, who had dedicated more than two decades of his life to serving his country.

"His combination of ferocious work ethic and humility ensured that he made a sustained contribution to Isaf operations on this and his previous tours of Afghanistan," his colleague said. "He will be missed by all those who worked with him."

Capt Manley leaves behind his wife and three

children. A family statement read: "To us, Carl was the loveliest husband and father. We can't imagine life without him; we are so very proud of him and everything he has achieved, both professionally and for the family."

"Always smiling, he never had a bad word to say about anyone. Everything he did was selfless, at work and at home."

"The world has lost a really special person."

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond said: "I was very saddened to learn of the untimely death of Capt Manley, whose career has been tragically cut short by a fatal medical condition. He served with courage on Afghanistan's front line and his contribution to the campaign, and to Britain's national security, will not be forgotten."

## Theo honoured for Helmand haul

AN Army dog that uncovered 14 bombs and numerous Taliban weapons alongside his handler, LCpl Liam Tasker (RAVC), has been awarded the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross.

Theo, the springer-spaniel cross, will posthumously receive the PDSA Dickin Medal for life-saving bravery in conflict while serving as a military working dog.

The 22-month-old canine died as a result of a seizure just hours after 26-year-old LCpl Tasker was killed by enemy gunfire in March 2011.

In five months together on the front

line the pair uncovered more IEDs and dangerous items than any other dog and handler on Op Herrick.

PDSA director general Jan McLoughlin said: "Theo's exceptional devotion to duty as a military working dog in Afghanistan saved countless human lives. The award serves as a poignant reminder of the loyal companionship and dedication of man's best friend."

● **Ranked: Courageous creatures – pages 46-47**











THE BIGGER PICTURE

MEMBERS of the Afghan National Army and 2nd Battalion, The Rifles stand shoulder-to-shoulder to mark their respect for fallen soldiers ahead of Remembrance Sunday. This image was named runner-up in the professional portfolio category of the Army Photographic Competition 2012. Read our December issue for the full results. Picture: Sgt Steve Blake



# REMEMBRANCE REFLECTIONS

WHEN MILITARY HISTORY IS  
FAR MORE THAN NAMES  
ON A WALL...

Interviews: Becky Clark  
Pictures: Steve Dock

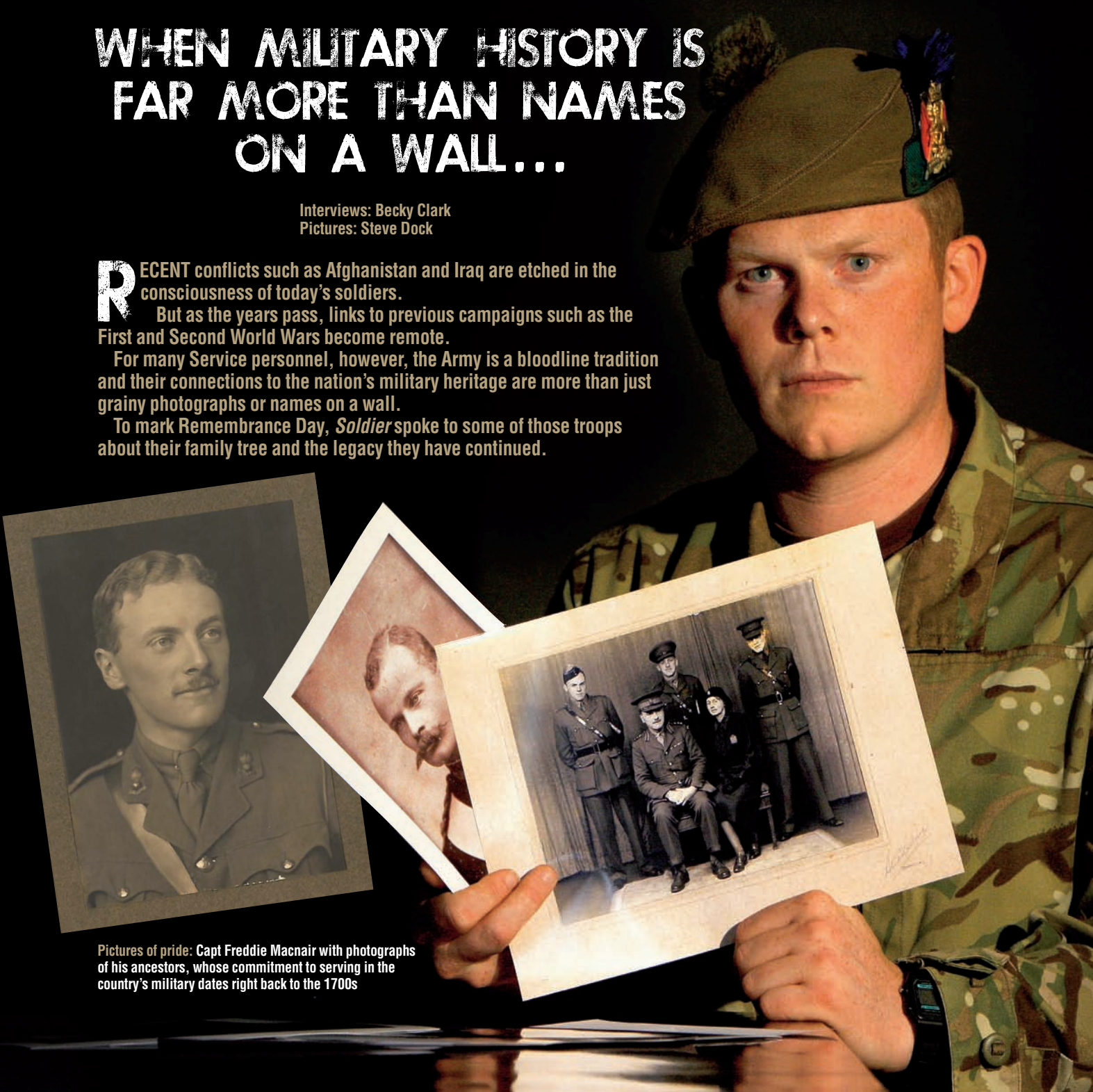
**R**ECENT conflicts such as Afghanistan and Iraq are etched in the consciousness of today's soldiers.

But as the years pass, links to previous campaigns such as the First and Second World Wars become remote.

For many Service personnel, however, the Army is a bloodline tradition and their connections to the nation's military heritage are more than just grainy photographs or names on a wall.

To mark Remembrance Day, *Soldier* spoke to some of those troops about their family tree and the legacy they have continued.

Pictures of pride: Capt Freddie Macnair with photographs of his ancestors, whose commitment to serving in the country's military dates right back to the 1700s





# AWESOME ANCESTORS

CAPT Freddie Macnair (Scots) is the latest serving member of a family whose military ancestry can be traced back to the 1700s.

Almost 40 direct relations on both his mother and father's sides have served in every major conflict and many of the minor campaigns of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Among this cast of colourful historic characters is Sir William Cameron (pictured below), who served as Wellington's aide-de-camp at Waterloo and whose reputation for deviousness led the duke to dub him "the odious Colonel C".

One of Col Cameron's sons, Aylmer Cameron, won the Victoria Cross in 1858 during the Indian Mutiny, while another son, also called William, was wounded at Sevastopol.

Despite the passage of time, Capt Macnair explained why he still feels connected to the past.

"Lots of interesting stories and heirlooms have been passed down. William Cameron was shot in the arm in the Crimea and the X-ray they performed was one of the first ever taken," he said. "My grandmother still has it – you can clearly see the ball lodged there."

"I also have the sword of Neville Cameron, my dad's grandfather, which was sharpened for one of the battles in the Sudan campaign of 1898."

"He was fighting in the 1890s with swords and pistols and by the First World War would have seen the big difference in technology that allowed you to kill a lot of people at once."

"He would have been used to losing comrades but not on that scale."

Although the Cameron line ended in 1944 when Neville's son, William, was killed in Italy, his sister continued the military link when she married Maj James Macnair.

Awarded a Military Cross for repeated acts of bravery on March 24, 1945, the artilleryman survived the war but only shared limited details of his service with his grandson.

"When I went to Sandhurst he started speaking a bit more about his training and time in the Army in general but never really about the MC," said the 31-year-old.

"It was only after he died in 2008 that my cousin got the citation from the national archives."

"He was awarded an immediate MC for his actions at Rees during the crossing of the Rhine. It was signed off within days by Montgomery, so that was interesting to see."

Commenting on the personal dimension that the family's history gives remembrance, the officer added: "There's a lot of emphasis on the First and Second World Wars for very good reason but there are all sorts of members of the family who have died in weird and wonderful places."

"Who they were and what they did will soon be forgotten, unlike the famous battles, so you do think about them on Remembrance Day."



Like father like sons: Capt Shaun Mallinson came face-to-face with his offspring, SSgt James Mallinson and Cpl Brett Mallinson, during Operation Herrick earlier in the year

## PARENTAL PRIDE

"THE day that both my sons followed me into the Army was a really proud moment and one to cherish as a parent," said Capt Shaun Mallinson (Yorks).

The 53-year-old enlisted after hearing his own father's stories of national service, so he was thrilled when SSgt James Mallinson (RA) and Cpl Brett Mallinson (LD) kept the tradition going.

"I'm very proud of my family's military history," explained the officer. "My grandmother was an ambulance driver in the Auxiliary Territorial Service during the Second World War and my father,

David, was in 7 Medium Wireless Troop, 201 Signal Regiment in Malaya from 1950 to 1953. "Dad was always the storyteller. When I reached

18, I wanted to join the Army and experience some of these great adventures for myself."

Earlier this year, all three Mallinsons found themselves briefly united in Helmand when Shaun and James' tour of Herrick 15 overlapped with Brett's deployment on Herrick 16, a moment the father described as a "monumental occasion".

"Serving together on operations for the first time was the icing on the cake; an achievement of which I'm immensely proud," he said.

"It was a special moment to share with my sons."

The captain added that experiencing Afghanistan both as a father of

serving soldiers and officer in charge of troops had given him a new perspective on November 11.

"Last Remembrance Day was difficult as James and I were on Herrick 15 and we'd had a soldier from 4th Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment killed just before November 11 and one from our company group shortly after, so it was an emotional time."

"I'm an older soldier now and to be in theatre during remembrance, realising that young troops' dads would be thinking of them was surreal but very rewarding and at times awesome."

"Watching them do their work in difficult conditions was inspirational; they were a truly professional band of brothers."







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# BIBLE BOND

**C**APTAINS Duncan and Dougie Fraser (AGC (ETS) and RE) recently returned from a tour of Afghanistan, where the experiences of their ancestors during the last century took on a new level of poignancy.

Their great-grandfather, Thomas Eckford, fought at Ypres in 1915 as part of the Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment). The Bible he carried with him during the conflict remains in the family today and the brothers' parents kept it on their bedside table until their sons' safe return from Op Herrick 16.

"The text is a tangible link to the past; to a conflict so very different to the one Dougie and I have experienced 97 years later," explained Duncan.

"On the inside cover of the Bible he wrote the words 'Arrived in trench 73, Ypres on the morning of April 11, 1915'. I was amazed when I first read that."

Dougie added: "It's nice to see because it's exactly the same as what the lads would write in their diaries today: 'Arrived Camp Bastion. It was hot and dusty'."

The brothers know little about their ancestor other than the fact he was gassed while fighting for Hill 60 and later joined the Royal Naval Reserve and Merchant Navy.

A generation later, their grandparents both saw action during the Second World War.

Maj Richard Bell was an officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He served in West Africa and Burma, where he experienced the horrors of Japanese prisoner of war camps.

Sgt Jeffrey Fraser, their paternal grandfather, was a Gordon Highlander, who received a Mention in Dispatches at Monte Cassino.

"It was good to find out about dad's father and all his adventures," said 29-year-old Dougie. "We don't know that much about the circumstances of his award but I believe it was during a rear-guard action. He took some shrapnel to the lung but recovered and went on to fight in Java, where he got pneumonia. After the war he ran a tea plantation in India."

Reflecting on the changes in combat since then, Duncan said: "In 1917 and 1943 we fought to win with sheer volume of manpower but now battle-winning technology dictates the conflict."

"We don't leave the security of our patrol bases without wearing full body armour, eye protection and gloves, and we move on the ground in the Army's heavily armoured protected mobility fleet."

"In previous wars no body protection was worn and they moved in soft-skinned Land Rovers."

Despite the differences, the 27-year-old said that in many ways he could relate directly to what his forefathers experienced.

"At the grass-roots level I can imagine I am walking in their footsteps," he added.

"I regularly wrote to my family, girlfriend and friends. I sat and shared a brew with comrades in the evenings as we cleaned our rifles."

"The camaraderie remains, as does the common aim to do as good a job as we can to make our family, friends and country proud."



**Spiritual connection:** The Fraser brothers look over images of their various courageous ancestors



*"Arrived in trench 73, Ypres on the morning of April 11, 1915"*



# TIMELESS TAGS

Picture: Sgt Andy Reddy, RLC

**A**S a tank commander in The Royal Dragoon Guards during the Second World War, Angus Edmondson had little idea that his grandson would one day continue the family's military history in a very different conflict.

However, 70 years later LCpl Andy Edmondson (KRH) has been wearing the identification tags handed down to him from his grandfather during Herrick 16; a reminder of the actions of a previous generation of cavalrymen.

"Although I didn't know him well, wearing his dog tags along with my own does make me feel close to him in some way," said the junior NCO.

"He died when I was young so I never got to talk to him about his experiences but my dad has told me he was a great man.

"I do know he was blown up and everyone in his crew was killed. After that he was a prisoner of war for six years.

"From what I understand the casualty rate was massive and the British tanks were not a match for the German Tigers.

**'WEARING HIS DOG TAGS ALONG WITH MY OWN DOES MAKE ME FEEL CLOSE TO HIM'**

"At the time they were told that they had the best kit in the world, however, with our vehicles now, I certainly believe we do."

Part of his regiment's Warthog Squadron, the 22-year-old described how his time in Helmand province has gone some

way to heightening his understanding of what his grandfather went through.

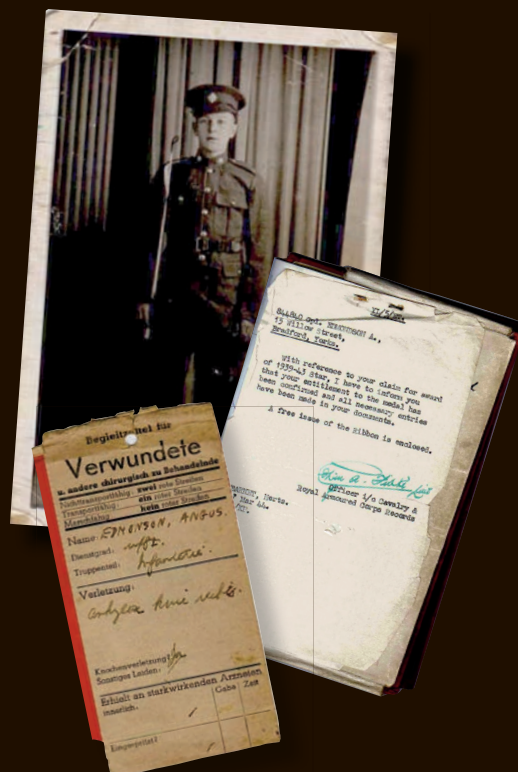
"My dad told me he also fought in North Africa, so I can appreciate how

unpleasant the conditions must have been for him after my own experiences of living in my Warthog in Afghanistan – where temperatures reach in excess of 50 in the day and then drop away to freezing at night.

"For me, though, it doesn't matter whether you had family in the Armed Forces or not.

"So many people have given their lives for this country that Remembrance Day should be important to everyone." ■

**Above and opposite, Special bond: The ID tags and memorabilia handed down to LCpl Andy Edmondson by his grandfather Angus (pictured inset)**





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# GUYS WITH GUTS

**Rescuing children, saving  
wounded comrades,  
returning to the field after  
serious injury...  
all in a day's work for  
the latest operational  
award recipients**

**W**HEN it comes to demonstrating true pluck, the British soldiers who deployed on Op Herrick 15 have certainly got their fair share of stories to tell.

From the bold serjeant who oversaw a daring counter-attack to the private who risked life and limb to save his colleagues, those who served in Afghanistan between September 2011 and April this year have been commended in the latest operational honours and awards list.

On announcement of the recipients behind the various tales of courage and selflessness, Philip Hammond paid tribute to those who had been singled out.

"These awards show the UK's Armed Forces at their most excellent," the defence secretary said.

"The circumstances in which they were earned and the levels of gallantry recognised are, in many cases, difficult to comprehend.

"Quite rightly, Britain is a country which holds its military in the highest regard and these honours reinforce that sense of pride." >>

**Helmand heroics: Troops from 3 Scots assess the ground close to Patrol Base Kalang in Nad e-Ali**

Picture: Shane Wilkinson



# COMRADE COVER

For those at the forefront of Op Herrick, taking care of your muckers is part and parcel of the everyday job. But these Servicemen have been singled out for the extraordinary courage they demonstrated while saving colleagues from the most perilous of situations...

Got your back: Soldiers from the Brigade Reconnaissance Force take cover on Herrick 15

Picture: Sgt Wes Calder, RLC





● MAJ Justin Stenhouse (ODG), squadron leader of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF), threw himself into harm's way to save those in his unit – a move that has earned him the Distinguished Service Order.

When his men came under heavy fire during a mission to recover weaponry from insurgents, the officer ran forward to take momentum away from the enemy.

His actions shocked the Taliban fighters so much they withdrew from the attack.

Spearheading many further assaults on enemy positions,

under intense fire and with complete disregard for his own safety, the 36-year-old father of two set the conditions for operational success.

Throughout his tour, the BRF removed 29 insurgents from the battlefield, seized 1.6 tonnes of home-made explosives and captured 21 weapons.

"I just did my job," the officer recalled modestly. "The planning that we did, plus nine months of mission-specific training, prepared us so that when we were faced with the enemy, we reacted automatically."

Maj Stenhouse's citation



Maj Justin Stenhouse

states: "His relentless drive, inspired leadership, personal courage, tactical acumen and flawless judgement mark him out as extraordinary."



● FOR Cpl Scott Dyson (1 Yorks), looking after your comrades means doing everything you can for the fallen as well as the living.

The Serviceman was on a joint patrol with the Afghan National Army in the village of Llara Kalay when the partner force's platoon was showered by small arms fire and rifle-launched grenades.

While marshalling his counterparts in an effort to suppress the attack, another patrol struck a large IED that critically wounded two British personnel. The scene was chaotic but ignoring the risk to himself, Cpl Dyson ran through enemy fire, across

uncleared ground and along a ditch to administer first aid to his stricken colleagues.

"I decided I had to help," the 29-year-old said. "There were four guys involved. I went to the one who had initiated the IED first but there was nothing I could do to assist him.

"Two others were dazed and a third was out cold and had serious injuries to the back of his legs. The first two regained their senses and we got the unconscious guy on a stretcher and extracted him.

"I went back to the soldier who had been killed and via the crater caused by the IED, pulled him across to me.

"I got him onto a stretcher and covered him up."

The Serviceman praised Afghan colleagues for their role at the scene.

"I take my hat off to them," he commented. "They suppressed the enemy enough to allow the extraction."

Cpl Dyson has been awarded a Mention in Dispatches.

The NCO's citation concludes: "His actions had a galvanising effect on the other personnel involved and saved the life of another soldier."

● THE belief that a colleague was dead did not stop Pte Morales Matthews (1 PWRR) from risking life and limb.

On patrol in one of the last remaining insurgent strongholds in Nad-e Ali, the Serviceman's formation was ambushed from several positions.

As bullets landed all around them, one of the soldiers fell to the floor.

But rather than seek the safety of the wall ahead, Pte Matthews vaulted it and raced to the casualty's aid.

"My first thought was that he was dead," recalled the 33-year-old father of one.

"I called out his name three or four times but he didn't respond. "I knew I had to be aggressive to protect my comrade – if he was still alive – and myself.

"After firing on the enemy, I had to get to him.

"He was conscious so I felt relief and my focus then was to get him to safety."

Under constant attack, Pte Matthews adopted a position close to his colleague and neutralised the threat.

This allowed a second soldier to run forward and extract their dazed but

unhurt comrade.

For this gallantry, the Serviceman has been awarded a Mention in Dispatches.

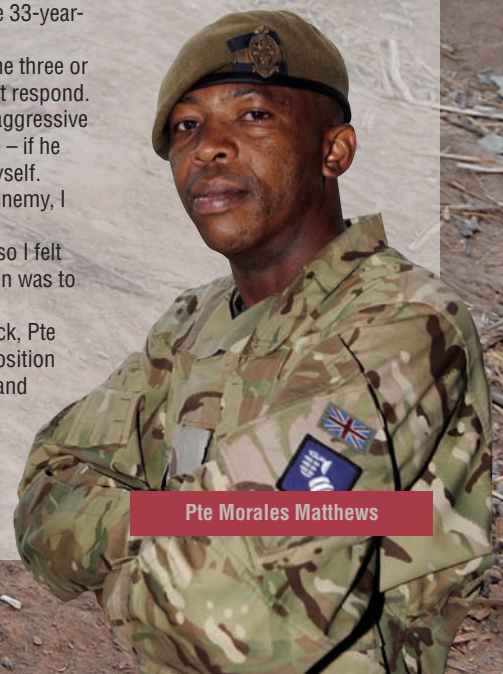
His citation states: "Matthews' actions were without regard for his own safety and were carried out in the face of extreme danger to save his friend.

"He knowingly exposed himself to the enemy and, perhaps of more significance, remained calm.

"These actions effectively saved [his] colleague from wounding or death."



Cpl Scott Dyson



Pte Morales Matthews



## SECOND SALUTES

**The Mention in Dispatches is one of the oldest forms of recognition for gallantry in the Armed Forces and for these Op Herrick 15 Servicemen the accolade forms the second honour they have received for acts of bravery on the front line**

● **WHEN** machine-gun fire and grenades ripped through the air during a patrol in Nad-e Ali, Sgt Steven Leslie (3 Scots) risked his own life to save two colleagues who were left stranded by the enemy attack.

As shrapnel sprayed the area, the British troops pressed hard into the ground to seek what protection they could.

With insurgents firing directly on the patrol, Sgt Leslie leapt to his feet and ran around the sprawled personnel to rally them to cover – leading his men across 50 metres of open ground so they could escape.

However, two soldiers remained trapped on the far side of the battlefield and the 30-year-old fired on the aggressors to create cover for his colleagues to reach relative safety.

The group eventually withdrew but the enemy maintained its attack until the troops reached a known area of improvised explosive devices.

As the unit negotiated the deadly terrain the assault continued and they were targeted from five different positions.

Sgt Leslie controlled the counter-attack from an exposed location and, believing the

● **A BRITISH** officer who took the fight to insurgent forces during a complex enemy ambush has been praised for saving the lives of coalition personnel.

Capt Mark Cripps (2 Rifles) was part of a joint patrol with the Afghan National Army that became pinned down in a compound surrounded by open ground to the north of Lashkar Gah.

Realising they faced the risk of becoming outmanoeuvred, the 30-year-old led a small team under heavy fire along a shallow drainage ditch to a



Sgt Steven Leslie

Taliban had been neutralised, started an extraction.

But his gunners, deafened by the noise of battle, had not heard the orders to withdraw and soon became a target for further insurgent rounds.

In an incredible act of bravery, the Dundee-native covered 150-metres of open ground, grabbed the soldiers and led them out of danger – all while under fire.

“You don’t think about it at the time, you just know you have to go and get them,” said Sgt Leslie, who was awarded a Queen’s Commendation for Bravery in 2004 for going to the aid of soldiers injured by an IED in southern Iraq.

“If it wasn’t me then it would have been someone else – I just took the instant to run out and grab them. You don’t have time to reflect really,” he added.

neighbouring building as bullets zipped over their heads.

From his new position he was able to fire on the enemy to halt the attack and allow the rest of his patrol to escape.

Capt Cripps’ actions earned him the second Mention in Dispatches of his Service career.

“Your best chance of survival is to react,” he explained. “If you just stay in the ditch and don’t do anything then it’s probably going to go horribly wrong and you are going to take casualties.

“So you need to change it and get the situation to your advantage. The insurgents don’t like getting close to us because they know we are good and when we get close they just want to melt away, so actually the best way to break an engagement is to advance on it. That’s what we tried to do.”

## ROADSIDE RESOLVE

● **HIS** meticulous work to uncover roadside bombs in one of the most dangerous areas of Helmand has earned Spr Matthew Garey (RE) the only Queen’s Gallantry Medal on the latest operational honours list.

The 24-year-old, who also deployed to Afghanistan in 2009, was awarded the decoration after an intense five-hour operation to find hidden roadside bombs in one of the most dangerous areas of theatre.

Tasked with clearing a vital supply route to a patrol base in Gereshk, the lead searcher had seen a colleague lose both his legs to an improvised explosive device in the same region just six days before.

“It wasn’t a nice job to work on – there was an aura around it that we didn’t feel on other missions because of the incidents that had happened,” the committed Serviceman recalled.

“Seeing another team injured was a real reality check.

“One slip in concentration, accident or freak coincidence can lead to casualties and death and



Spr Matthew Garey

we were very aware of that.

“But when you step out on to the ground you have to put what has happened before to the back of your mind.”

Despite there being limited visual signs of bombs – and a number of false alarms – Spr Garey negotiated the ground successfully, inch by inch.

“You are concentrating so hard you forget about the time,” the Royal Engineer explained.

The detailed search led to the discovery of a deeply buried IED command wire.

“To us, finding that was a life saved,” the soldier added.

His citation states: “This single tale of his Herculean efforts personifies his astonishing and exemplary level of gallantry.”

## RISKY CHILD RESCUE

● **AN** Army engineer who saved the life of an Afghan child has been awarded a Queen’s Commendation for Bravery.

Spr Ryan Pavey (RE) was the lead explosive ordnance disposal searcher for a team tasked with clearing the infamous Route 611 when a local minibus bypassed a military cordon and hit a roadside bomb.

Eighteen civilians were killed, the majority of which were women and young children, and five others left critically injured.

Despite the destruction of two heavily armoured platforms on the same road in the previous two weeks, the 24-year-old immediately began to clear a safe route for the survivors.

With progress hampered by vehicle remnants that created false readings on his metal detector, the soldier reached the casualties and immediately started to give treatment.

One of those he attended to was a four-year-old boy who had lost his leg in the blast.

“Your senses get heightened as obviously there is a lot

going through your mind but you have to keep focused,” the soldier recalled.

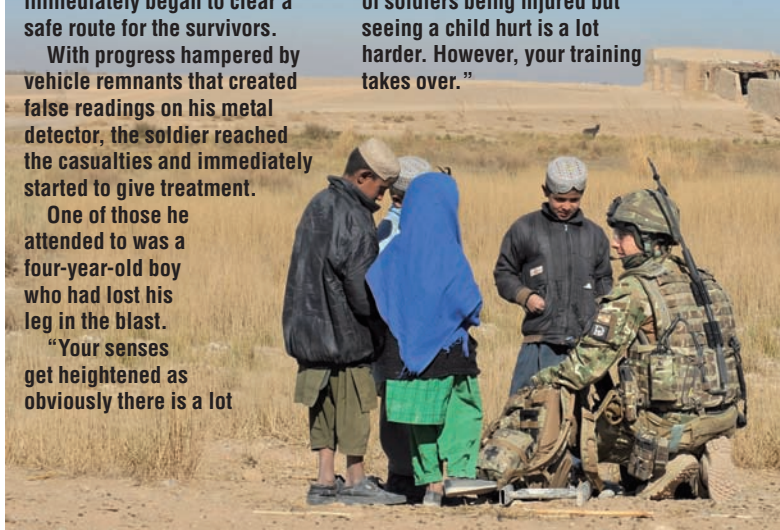
The Serviceman’s commendation citation praises his courage during the incident and over six “psychologically gruelling” months.

It states: “As the first responder, Pavey’s treatment was outstanding, stemming the bleed, reassuring [the child] and extracting him to a waiting Afghan police vehicle for evacuation; without doubt saving the boy’s life.”

Spr Pavey, who was on his second tour of Afghanistan, said: “When you deploy you have to ready yourself for the possibility of soldiers being injured but seeing a child hurt is a lot harder. However, your training takes over.”



Capt Mark Cripps







## PURVEYORS OF PROGRESS

**The path towards transition is one of the key objectives for the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan and these British soldiers have been honoured for their efforts in helping to achieve this goal during Operation Herrick 15**

● **AS COMMANDER** of the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG), Lt Col James Coote (1 PWRR, pictured above) was tasked with supporting local officers at provisional and district level and aiding institutional development.

The 41-year-old excelled in this role and was singled out as the principle architect for an extraordinary momentum of transition in security operations.

During the deployment, the 400-strong PMAG was responsible for more than 3,000 Afghan Uniformed Police, 160 checkpoints, the Police Regional Training Centre and operational coordination hubs.

Lt Col Coote ensured these sites advocated Afghan-led missions and during his time in theatre the home-grown police took the lead for security in

more than half of Task Force Helmand's area of operations.

This remarkable rate of progress saw the commander made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

"Op Herrick 15 was when we saw the first momentum for change in the Afghan National Police becoming a police force rather than a security force," he said.

"We were able to achieve that momentum in the transition because of the work our predecessors did to develop the Afghan police – just as I hope the transition we achieved will be the legacy of our tour.

"I am very proud of this OBE, which reflects the work of every one of the men and women in the PMAG and what they achieved during 2011 and 2012," he added.

● **A NON-COMMISSIONED** officer who developed and mentored a new Afghan Local Police force in a previously lawless area of Helmand province has been awarded a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service.

Sjt Matthew Perry (2 Rifles) was tasked with forming the unit in a region of Nahr-e Saraj where one soldier had been killed and five seriously injured during the first three months of his tour.

The 28-year-old lived alongside the recruits, ate with them and trained with them to give continual mentoring. He was responsible for everything from weapons handling and detention training to overseeing their pay, clothing issue and personal conduct.

"We began by training eight locals to be a police force," Sjt Perry explained.

"This included how to deal with civilians, vehicle checkpoints, protecting themselves in contact with the enemy and basic military tactics. We went on one or two patrols a day, interacting



Sjt Matthew Perry

with people and building a rapport. This led to more villagers coming forward with information to help us."

The next step saw the force leading their own patrols with support from the Afghan National Army and Afghan Uniformed Police.

Sjt Perry's citation states: "The village's only school, previously empty due to security fears, is now educating 140 children.

"Local councillors now enter the village without fear, allowing people to connect with governance figures, resolve disputes and gain access to services. These improvements would not have been possible without Sjt Perry's extraordinary patience, empathy and professionalism."



● **THE bold and inspirational** leadership of CSjt Tony Bramham (5 Rifles) during a daring counter-attack on an insurgent position has seen the soldier Mentioned in Dispatches.

After arriving in Babaji – an area known as the Devil's Doorstep due to the ferocious fighting that has unfolded there – the 32-year-old soon discovered how determined the enemy was when his platoon patrolled the nearby village of Sukmunda.

Working in two small sub-units the British troops advanced under cover, but when they were just 100 metres away from a Taliban position, gunfire erupted. Unable to retaliate because they could not see their foes, CSjt Bramham rallied his men and led them forwards. His idea was to become more visible so the second patrol could identify and target the enemy firing points.

The plan worked but the ensuing firefight stopped them in their tracks. Faced with unfamiliar ground and the threat of improvised explosive devices, the father-of-one decided to charge the insurgent fighters.

Under the partial cover of a smoke grenade, he led his

men towards the Taliban. Shocked, the aggressors initially ran away, but within moments they counter-attacked, before finally being defeated.

CSjt Bramham's citation states: "His determination to close with the enemy and engage in close combat that day had a dramatic effect on the situation in the area – having defeated the insurgents in the village, the initiative passed to his platoon.

The enemy never fully recovered and this set the conditions for their complete defeat over the coming weeks and the subsequent transfer of security responsibility to the Afghan police."



CSjt Tony Bramham



● **DESPITE** having promised his wife he wouldn't do anything brave in Afghanistan, Sgt Mark Moffitt (1 PWRR) has been Mentioned in Dispatches after he stayed in the line of fire for 30 minutes to foil an enemy ambush.

The 33-year-old, then a corporal, was withdrawing from a company-level operation near Lashkar Gah when the discovery of an improvised explosive device halted his men's progress.

Irrigation ditches to the side of the roads meant they were effectively trapped so the soldiers established a cordon and waited for the counter-IED team to destroy the bomb.

As they moved off again, the Taliban launched an attack. Sgt Moffitt, in the rear vehicle, was ambushed from three separate firing points but ordered his colleagues to take cover and remained as the gunner.

He targeted enemy positions with return fire and helped other patrol vehicles identify the insurgents, leaving himself



Sgt Mark Moffitt

exposed to the rear.

"I had the heavier weapons system – the noise of it alone is enough to make anyone get their head down," he said. "I was in a better position to see the firing points rather than the other guys in the vehicles having to stand up and make more of a target of themselves.

"I was just doing my job. You look after those next to you and I had the better weapons system so that day it was my job to look after the guys."

Throughout the attack, Sgt Moffitt never left his crew position, creating time and space for remaining vehicles to escape the enemy's reach.

● **THE** immense courage shown by Lt Thomas Onion (2 Mercian) as he helped save gravely injured comrades in the face of enemy fire has seen the officer Mentioned in Dispatches.

Based at Checkpoint Zarawar in south Nahr-e Saraj, the 25-year-old found himself in an area with a high concentration of improvised explosive devices.

In the first of three attacks detailed in his citation, Lt Onion was described as being central to the swift extraction of one of his soldiers who lost both legs and suffered severe damage to an arm in a bomb blast.

Six days later, he again reacted with speed and compassion when another IED detonated during a patrol.

The explosion hit a Serviceman who had been providing fire support, amputating both legs and inflicting massive injuries to his torso. Together with a colleague, Lt Onion dragged the casualty to safety and administered first-aid while organising evacuation.



Lt Thomas Onion

With little time to recover, he was on patrol again four days later when he came under attack from insurgents.

As rounds flew past him a soldier was hit in the arm and the young officer screamed orders to advance on the enemy.

A second man was injured in the firefight but Lt Onion put himself in full view of the Taliban as he assessed the casualty before dragging him to safety and extracting the patrol.

His citation reads: "His gallantry shone through when in the face of the enemy and his well of courage has remained undiminished throughout his numerous contacts. His conduct was inspirational."



**UNDER FIRE**  
Acting with a cool head while under attack, the following troops demonstrated the British Infantry at its best during Herrick 15

● A NON-COMMISSIONED officer who led a bayonet charge over 80 metres of open ground through enemy fire has been awarded the Military Cross.

Cpl Sean Jones (1 PWRR) made the tactical decision after his men became pinned down in a water-filled ditch during a well-executed ambush.

The patrol had been operating in the village of Kakaran, where insurgents were enforcing a curfew on residents so they could plant deadly improvised explosive devices under the cover of darkness.

As the troops moved through a field they came under fire. Unable to advance further, they withdrew to the safety of a ditch but became trapped as the Taliban moved in on their location.

After firing a rocket at one of the enemy positions, Cpl Jones ordered three of his men to fix bayonets before breaking cover and leading them across open ground raked by bullets.

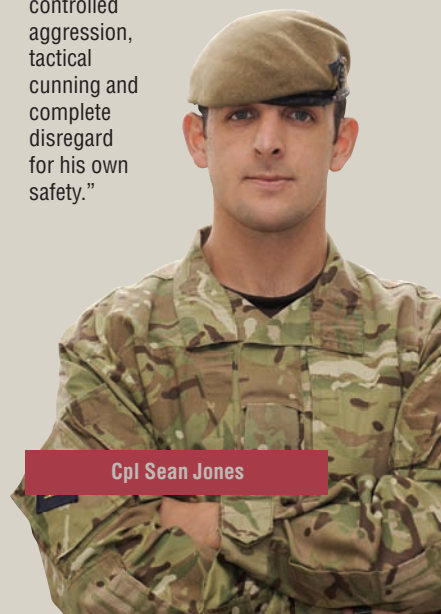
While two of the soldiers provided fire support, the NCO prepared a hand grenade for the final assault. He raced towards an alley and was about to throw the device but realised the buildings were occupied so put it away.

But the speed, aggression and

audacity of his response caused the insurgent fighters to fall back in disarray.

The 25-year-old father of two said: "We always said we want to pick our fight. We knew this was the time to do it. Before this, the locals were wary of us but this showed they could trust us to protect them from the enemy and that we wouldn't endanger them while doing it."

Cpl Jones' citation states: "Fighting a determined enemy force, on ground of their own choosing, he epitomised the best qualities of the British Infantry – gritty determination, controlled aggression, tactical cunning and complete disregard for his own safety."



Cpl Sean Jones







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# [INJURY OVERCOME]

● HE may have almost died during his last operational tour, but that did not stop Capt Nick Garland (QDG) undertaking more than 50 high-intensity battles during Op Herrick 15.

Such persistent bravery has earned the 29-year-old officer a Mention in Dispatches.

"I wanted to go back so I wasn't nervous. But I was a little apprehensive," admitted the Serviceman, who lost six-and-a-half pints of blood and slipped into a month-long coma after his patrol base was attacked three years earlier.

During the assault, burning slices of shrapnel were sent flying into his neck, down his windpipe and through his thyroid, artery and lung.

After multiple operations to repair the collapsed artery, months of rehabilitation were required to restore the soldier's mobility.

But back on the front line, he again found himself under fire as a troop leader of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force.

"I don't really remember my injury," Capt Garland recalled.

"But I wanted to get over that first contact. I knew it would be the big moment for me but once I had done that it was just normal jogging really."

During one of the incidents, the Serviceman and his troops

came under heavy fire from four enemy positions. Insurgents, some just 100 metres away, attacked with machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. The officer reacted immediately, crossing 300 metres of open ground to direct his lead sections into a defensive formation.

His heroism came to the fore again in the Arghandab river valley when he stepped into the enemy firing line to suppress fighters and allow an IED factory to be searched.

Weeks later, north of Patrol Base Rahim, he pursued

insurgents over 300 metres of complex terrain that bore the scars of previous explosions.

The officer's citation commends his "selfless actions" during his battlefield return. "Despite being very seriously injured

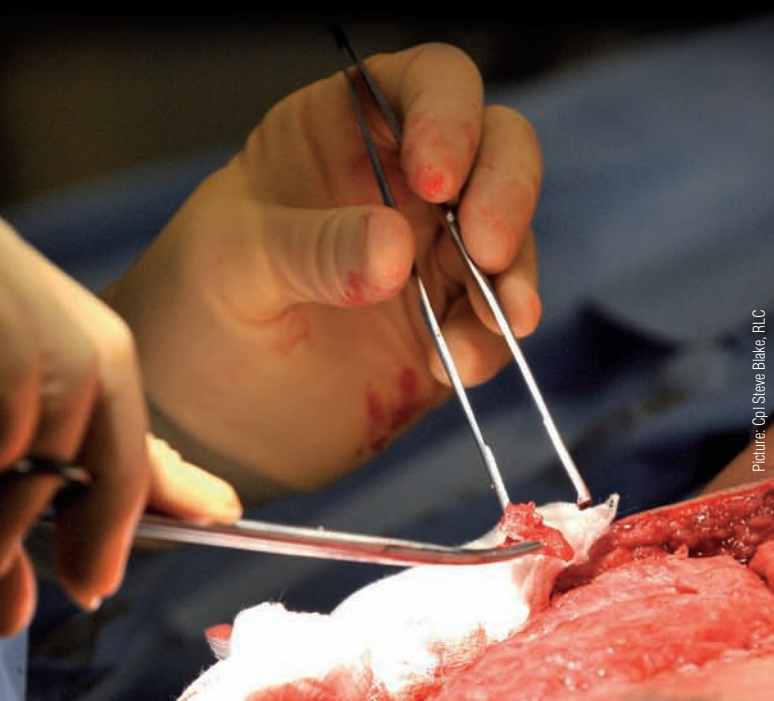
on a previous deployment to Afghanistan, his gallantry has been unquestionable," it states.

Reflecting on the operational tour, Capt Garland added: "It was harder for my family and my wife Katie with the injuries I had sustained before.

"But all through Sandhurst you are taught that an officer leads from the front.

"What better way to do that than to come back from injury and go back on the front line?"

**DESPITE BEING VERY SERIOUSLY INJURED ON A PREVIOUS DEPLOYMENT TO AFGHANISTAN HIS GALLANTRY HAS BEEN UNQUESTIONABLE**



Picture: Cpl Steve Blake, RLC

# [OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS]

## AFGHANISTAN

### Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Maj Gen Timothy Paul EVANS, late LI; Brig Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad SANDERS, late Rifles.

### Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Lt Col James Chenevix COOTE, PWRR; Col Tom Richardson COPINGER-SYMES, late Rifles; Lt Col Kevin Mark COPSEY, RE.

### Member of the Order of the British Empire

Lt Col Ash Giles ALEXANDER-COOPER, RGR; Lt Col Christopher Antony BISSET, AAC; Capt Nathan James BLENCOWE, RE; Lt Col Ben James CATERMOLE, Scots DG; Capt Wayne Edward James OWERS, RLC.

### Distinguished Service Order

Lt Col Edward Anthony FENTON, Scots; Maj Justin George Edward STENHOUSE, QDG.

### Conspicuous Gallantry Cross

SSgt Scott Allan COUZENS, Para.

### Military Cross

A/Sjt James Andrew DAVIES, Rifles; Cpl Sean Lee JONES, PWRR; LCpl Liam Kane MCNULTY, Rifles; WO2 Terry RAFFERTY, Rifles; Rfn Matthew James WILSON, Rifles.

### Queen's Gallantry Medal

Spr Matthew Jon GAREY, RE.

### Mention in Dispatches

Cpl Benjamin Dale ATHERTON, Mercian; Pte Joe John BLAKEY, Mercian; CSjt Tony John BRAMHAM, Rifles; A/CSgt Daniel BUIST, Scots; Capt James Alexander CARROLL, QDG; Lt Robert Andrew COATES, PWRR; Capt Mark Alexander CRIPPS, Rifles; Cpl Gwyn Michael DAVIS, Mercian; Sjt Richard Iain DUGGAN, Rifles; Sgt Scott Richard DYSON, Yorks; Capt Nicholas Simon GARLAND, QDG; Cpl Dhanbahadur GURUNG, RGR; CSgt Lakhbahadur GURUNG, RGR; Pte Liam Colin HOWMAN, Yorks; Cpl Jamie Robin KENNEDY, PWRR; Sgt Steven LESLIE, Scots; Cpl Adam LEWIS, Para; Maj Spiro Christopher

MARCANDONATOS, RGR; Pte Morales Vaughn MATTHEWS, PWRR; Cpl Julie Elizabeth MAY, RAMC; Cpl Jonathan Alfred MCEWAN, Mercian; A/Sgt Mark Anthony MOFFITT, PWRR; Lt Thomas Paul ONION, Mercian; Rfn Suman RANA MAGAR, RGR; CSgt Ian Bathgate SMITH, Scots.

### Queen's Commendation for Bravery

A/Sjt Suren BALL, Rifles; Cpl Ryan HONE, Rifles; Spr Lee OGDEN, RE; Spr Ryan Michael PAVEY, RE; Capt Matthew John TENNANT, RLC.

### Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

LCpl Richard Edward James AGIUS, Int Corps; Maj Matthew Richard BAKER, Rifles; LCpl Ian Michael BELL, REME; Maj John Charles BELL, QARANC; Maj Richard James BREDIN, PWRR; Lt Col Richard Hamilton BROWN, RE; Maj Nathan CREW, RLC; WO2 Lee Stuart CRONIAN, QRH; Sgt Mark Graham HARLE, R Signals; Brig Andrew Timothy JACKSON, late Yorks; Lt Col Henry Ramsay Duncan John JOYNSON, KRH; Lt Col Timothy Francis LAW, RA; Lt Col Colin Robert MARKS, Mercian; A/WO2 Gareth Jason Thomas MEDLOCK, RLC; Col Ian Stuart MORTIMER, late QRH; Maj Marcus Paul Cobbe MYLES, PWRR; Cpl Mathew David PERRY, Rifles; Lt Col Jason Charles RHODES, RE; A/Lt Col Mark Christopher SHAWYER, Rifles; A/Cpl Michael Robert SKARRATTS, Para; A/Lt Col Alexander James SMITH, R Signals; A/Sgt Lee Antony TOPLISS, RLC; Maj Jay Arthur TRAISNEL, RLC; SSgt Mark Rodney WALKER, REME; Brig Nicholas WELCH, late RGBW.

## REST OF THE WORLD

### Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George

Maj Gen Adrian John FOSTER, late RA.

### Member of the Order of the British Empire

SSgt Shaun CUMMINGS, PWRR.

### Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Maj Anthony Brian PHILLIPS, RA; Sgt Jonathan Charles Eli TRUETT, Para.







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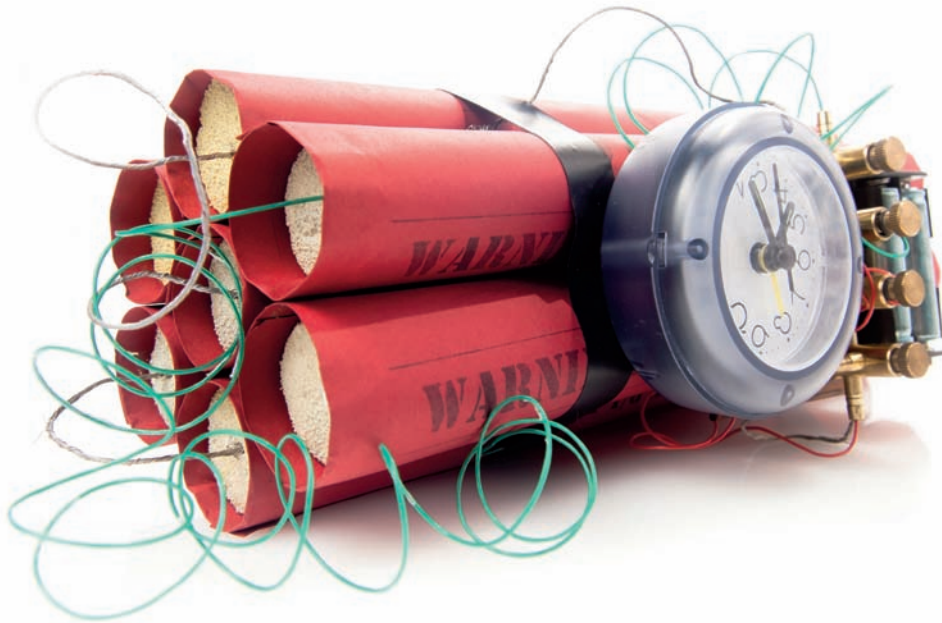
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# DEFUSING THE DISORDER

## WE QUIZ EXPERT ON BATTLE TO DISARM MENTAL MENACE

**A** ONE-OFF programme about the devastating impact of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) will air on Sky 1 on November 12.

Here, *Soldier* quizzes the Ministry of Defence's consultant adviser in psychiatry, Col Peter McAllister, about the Ross Kemp documentary and what is being done to improve treatment of hidden battlefield injuries.

**Q.** Are shows such as *Invisible Wounded* useful for soldiers?

**A.** Troops still serving are given lots of information about mental health and where to get help but documentaries can bring this to the attention of guys and girls out of the Service and those who aren't reached by traditional means such as the chain of command.

**Q.** The show focuses on the help available for veterans suffering with PTSD. What is being done?

**A.** At the moment help for veterans is a bit patchy. Some places have bespoke services but some do not. The government is now looking to meet the needs of patients and as a result of the Strategic Defence and Security Review military mental health has received millions of pounds.

**Q.** Is the mental health of soldiers a growing problem in the Army?

**A.** The rate of mental health problems has remained fairly standard – not going up or down – but in recent years we have been

**3-4** Percentage of serving military personnel known to suffer with PTSD

**3** Percentage of adults in private households in England battling PTSD, according to a 2007 NHS survey



Col Peter McAllister

deploying to more hostile environments so the risk of becoming unwell has gone up.

**Q.** Is it fair to say that many soldiers are reluctant to admit they are suffering?

**A.** Yes. The lads will happily say they've got diarrhoea but if their head isn't quite right they find it much harder to come forward and talk about it.

**Q.** Why might someone develop a mental health problem?

**A.** Different people are affected in different ways but being involved in an incident where you see individuals die, or where you could have become injured or killed, may cause mental health issues. Sometimes there is an element of guilt when people think it should have been them.

**Q.** So is it inevitable that some soldiers will become mentally ill after or during an operational tour?

**A.** Those in combat are going to see terrible, horrifying things but that is nothing new and different people react

to incidents in different ways. There is a rigorous selection process and personnel will only deploy on operations if they are physically and mentally prepared.

**Q.** Is there a ticking time bomb of PTSD cases waiting to go off in the Afghanistan generation?

**A.** All the studies we have done of Op Herrick veterans show there is no rise in mental health problems and we are engaging with these soldiers now. The time-bomb argument makes good headlines but there is no evidence to support it.

**Q.** What is the main focus for the MoD as it looks to help those with mental health problems?

**A.** There are a good deal of services out there but it's making people aware that is our challenge. We plan to tie together NHS and military information systems, which will flag up someone as being ex-Forces and should speed up the help process.

**Q.** What is available to military personnel in difficulty?

**A.** The trauma risk management system is the first place for signposting people. Wherever there is a group of soldiers, there is also a department of community mental health nearby. Sometimes you have to be brave to come forward.

● [www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23239.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23239.aspx)



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# RECRUITMENT REVOLUTION

ARMY ADVANCES ON DIGITAL WORLD TO TARGET TROOPS OF TOMORROW

Report: Joe Clapson

**E**FFORTS to draw the very best young talent into the ranks of the British Army are about to enter a new dimension.

Following the announcement that the MoD has struck a deal with outsourcing firm Capita to bring military staffing into the 21st century, those behind the plan have revealed that social media will be the tool of choice for targeting 16- to 25-year-olds.

And according to Maj Gen Dickie Davis, director general of the Army Recruiting and Training Division (pictured inset), the campaign will allow 1,100 troops to return to field operations.

"This project sets out to modernise the way we recruit, to make it fit to engage today's youth," the senior officer explained to *Soldier*. "It is a really exciting opportunity to do things more effectively and efficiently because Capita brings experience and intelligence in this area that the Army just does not have."

The recruiting partnering programme will see civilian specialists brought in to promote Service life via websites such as YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Capita will inject fresh ideas but around 70 per cent of the workforce will continue to be serving troops, with personnel based at Army career offices and selection centres.

New tools will be introduced to guide youngsters through the joining process, including a smartphone fitness app to help individuals prepare for the selection test.

"Projected costs show that the programme will bring £300 million worth of benefits over a ten-year period," Maj Gen Davis added.

"Money not spent on this will be freed up to spend elsewhere – the front line."

But the officer, who has undertaken five tours of Afghanistan, stressed that the initiative would not mean loss of control to a private company.

"We set the selection standard and Capita is responsible for helping us," he emphasised.

"This is cost effective for the Army and brings us into the 21st century."

The arrangements will see the MoD's IT system overhauled to create a national recruitment centre and the

firm will invest more than £50 million in building the administrative hub at Upavon.

Shaun King, the project's managing director at Capita, explained: "The new process will automate things as opposed to people filling in forms over and over again."

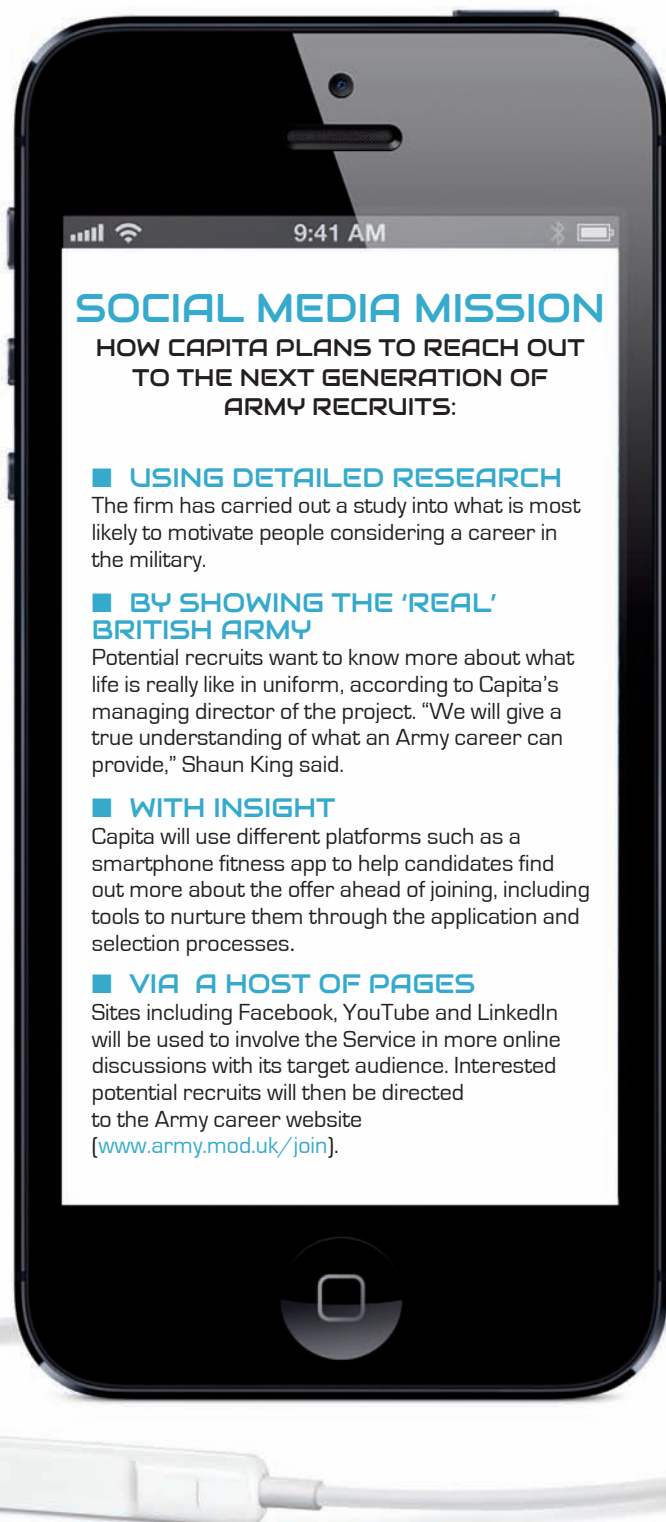
"There will be facilities for on-site medical assessments which will save visitors going elsewhere and reduce the risk of people arriving unprepared for

physical tests."

He added: "We are building a capability to interact online because everybody nowadays connects on social media via iPhones, laptops and the like."

"Sometimes it takes someone to have a fresh look from the outside. We believe something world class will come out of this partnership." ■

**1,100**  
Number of  
soldiers  
returning  
to field  
operations  
thanks to  
new project







# DIGGING DEEP



**ARMY ARCHAEOLOGISTS OFFER  
EXPERT ADVICE IN SEARCH FOR  
DOWNED BOMBER**

**Report: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main**

**H**AVING sampled overwhelming success during excavation work on Salisbury Plain, the Op Nightingale archaeological project is revelling in its winning run.

The scheme was recently honoured by leading academics for its innovative approach in helping wounded personnel and the programme has been building on these impressive foundations at its latest dig in the Wiltshire countryside.

Working alongside colleagues from the Royal Air Force, Op Nightingale's soldiers have been searching for the wreckage of a Liberator bomber that crashed into a field on the outskirts of Lyneham in November 1942.

All five crew members were killed in the incident but the exact cause of the disaster remains a mystery.

A/Sgt Graham Moore, of RAF Brize Norton, learned of the airmen's fate through conversations with a local farmer and researched the story further while carrying out a basic search of the site.

With the landowner's consent, a detailed survey was conducted before the Op Nightingale team were invited to offer their growing expertise





on a week-long excavation.

"Being an absolute novice I didn't have a clue what I was doing," A/Sgt Moore told *Soldier*.

"I was put in touch with Richard Osgood, of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, who was working with the soldiers on the Salisbury Plain dig.

"They were asked if this was something they might be interested in and they couldn't wait to get involved.

"The guys are absolutely superb. They have so much information and know all the techniques of how to record different finds.

"We would not have been able to do this without their help."

Initial searches unearthed a host of relatively minor items, such as ammunition casings and parachute buckles, before a 12-foot section of fuselage was recovered.

But the discovery of a Royal Australian Air Force cap badge proved to be the most surprising find.

The Liberator had been manned by a British

crew but further investigations revealed that an Oxford II trainer had crashed at the same location a year earlier.

Op Nightingale gives soldiers the opportunity to learn excavation, land survey, drawing and mapping techniques, while enhancing their ability to deliver presentations.

It also helps build a sense of worth and purpose for those taking part as they pick up new skills in a team environment.

For Rfn Rowan Kendrick (5 Rifles), who is studying for an archaeology degree at Leicester University, the scheme has been the perfect distraction from the problems he has faced in recent times.

"Before I deployed to Afghanistan I suffered a mental breakdown," he explained. "I had counselling and psychiatric therapy and a friend in the education centre told me about this.

"I have always been interested in history and archaeology so this was the next step.

"It is an excellent project and there are so many discoveries to make. But it is not just military based, we have worked on Roman villas and cemeteries and we look to do something new every time.

"It helps me take my mind off things. When I'm on a dig I concentrate on that, I'm not stressing out or feeling anxious in any way."

Prior to arriving at Lyneham, the Servicemen made a spectacular discovery at Barrow Clump, which sits on Salisbury Plain.

The team unearthed a sixth-century burial site that featured 27 bodies – including Anglo-Saxon warriors – along with a range of artefacts such as shield bosses, brooches, spearheads, glass beads and a silver ring.

The exciting nature of the finds has been a real highlight for Rfn Michael Kelly (1 Rifles, pictured below), who joined Op Nightingale last year and formed an instant connection with the subject matter.

He said: "I got involved in a Bronze Age dig and I fell in love with archaeology.

"We were pulling up pottery that was 2,000 years old. I was the first person to touch it in all that time and that was really special.

"It's not always about what you find, but what you can learn from the artefacts. They show how people lived their lives and it is a fascinating subject to study.

"All of the guys here are injured. I was partially blinded in Afghanistan; we are all in the same boat. We know how each other is feeling and we can relate to one another.

"I went through a hard time and this is

## LIBERATOR BOMBER THE STORY



✶ The AL 595 B24 Liberator rolled off the production line in San Diego, California, and was delivered to Prestwick, Scotland, on April 20, 1942.

✶ The aircraft underwent a full modification upgrade on its main defensive armaments, including the fitting of new Browning-Colt machine guns and power turrets.

✶ On the evening of November 6, 1942, the plane took off from Prestwick en-route to RAF Lyneham.

✶ In harsh winter conditions, the pilot fought for control of the Liberator as it approached its final destination but it nosedived at high speed and hit the ground before an explosion enveloped the crash site.

✶ All five British crew members were killed instantly.

therapeutic and relaxing. To know the people you are working with are going through the same thing really helps.

"I have excavated a Stirling bomber as part of a programme for the Discovery Channel and the project was completely different to anything I had done before.

"Coming to Lyneham was a chance to do that again. I will get on any dig I can – it is better than sitting at home doing nothing." 🇬🇧





# Reindeer's Hoof makes waves

## AUSTERE TIMES FAIL TO DAMPEN SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY AS *SOLDIER* EMBARKS ON FOURTH FESTIVE GIVEAWAY

WITH Christmas just weeks away, *Soldier* HQ has once again embarked on our annual prize-gathering efforts.

The competition, named Operation Reindeer's Hoof, is in its fourth year and already the office has been inundated with thousands of pounds' worth of donations.

From a state-of-the-art lawnmower

to a Butlins holiday for four, the goodies up for grabs by serving personnel and their families next month certainly serve to impress.

"We are delighted to be running our popular Facebook competition once again in 2012," Editor Sarah Goldthorpe commented.

"With Service redundancies continuing and the operational tempo still high, we hope the generous

donations made by UK businesses will bring a small dose of festive cheer to our courageous military personnel at the end of a very difficult year."

To donate a prize to Reindeer's Hoof 4, email [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk) or call the team today on 01252 787105.

● Read our December issue for full details on how to enter.

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- ❄ DVDs
- ❄ Food and drink

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## 1 'SGT' GANDER

**ALTHOUGH** this 60kg black bear of a dog (left) was decorated many decades after his death, his citation leaves little doubt as to the animal's courage. "The medal was awarded for saving the lives of Canadian infantrymen during the Battle of Lye Mun on Hong Kong Island in December 1941," it reads. "On three documented occasions Gander, the Newfoundland mascot of the Royal Rifles of Canada, engaged the enemy as his regiment helped to courageously defend the island. Twice his attacks halted the opposition's advance and protected groups of wounded soldiers." In a final act of bravery, the war dog was killed in action gathering a grenade. Without his intervention, many more lives would have been lost.



## 2 THEO

**ONLY** the 64th medal recipient in nearly 70 years, this spaniel cross was teamed with LCpl Liam Tasker (RAVC) and sent to Afghanistan in September 2010. In their first five months of duty the pair made 14 confirmed operational finds – the most to date of any arms explosive search dog. Serving in every district of Helmand, Theo provided crucial support until his 26-year-old comrade's death in March last year. On being returned to Camp Bastion, the animal died of an undiagnosed seizure.

# 10 COURAGEOUS CREATURES

Author David Long ranks his favourite fluffy recipients of the PDSA Dickin Medal – the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross, awarded for outstanding acts of bravery or devotion to duty

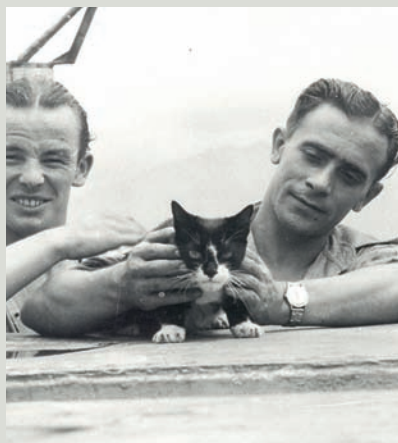


## 3 JUDY

**THE** only creature to be officially classified as an Allied prisoner of war, this English pointer faced death on numerous occasions. Despite coming close to starvation, her magnificent courage in several Japanese prison camps is credited with maintaining morale and saving lives. Caught up in the fall of Singapore, Judy also served as a ship's dog on HMS *Gnat* and then HMS *Grasshopper*. When the latter was sunk and the crew washed up on a deserted island, she located the only source of fresh water. Following the castaways' capture, the creature shared several years of torture. Her unbroken spirit earned the hatred of her captors while delighting comrades.

## 4 'ABLE SEAMAN' SIMON

**DURING** the little known Yangtze Incident of 1949, British frigate HMS *Amethyst* became caught up in the struggle between nationalist and communist forces in China. The ship, its crew and cat had been badly harmed by shelling but with the vessel unable to move for ten weeks, Simon recovered from serious injury and worked hard to keep rats at bay. With supplies at dangerously low levels, this was vitally important work. In addition, the black and white creature comforted badly injured sailors laid up in the sickbay. To date, Simon remains the only cat to be awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal.



## 5 MARY OF EXETER

**THOUSANDS** of carrier pigeons were parachuted behind enemy lines during the Second World War to help transport military messages. Among the tiny percentage who returned safely was Mary of Exeter, remembered today as the "bird who would not give up" – although details of her operations are still shrouded in secrecy. During five years of service she made at least four flights back from occupied France, sustaining serious injuries on three of them and losing part of a wing to enemy gunfire. As well as having her home loft in the west country bombed, she was shot and attacked by a hawk. In all, the bird received 22 stitches which pigeon fanciers claim is equivalent to more than 4,000 on a human.



## 6 TICH

THIS black Egyptian mongrel was awarded for loyalty, courage and devotion to duty between 1941 and 1945 while serving with 1st Battalion, The King's Rifle Corps in North Africa and Italy. Nicknamed "the desert rat", she was adopted by the unit in the earlier campaign and remained with them until the end of the war. Mostly terrier with a bit of daschund thrown in, her fortitude saw her bring in wounded personnel under heavy fire and, according to one soldier, "put heart in the men as she refused to leave her post".



## 8 SHEILA

ONE of few "civilian" Dickin Medal recipients, this collie helped to rescue crew from an American Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress after it crashed near the Scottish border in 1944. Shepherd John Dagg heard the impact and set off in atrocious conditions to look for survivors with Sheila leading him to the site. In near-zero visibility she located four airmen who, dazed and frozen, had managed to put some distance between themselves and the highly-dangerous wreckage. Her dogged perseverance allowed all four men to be led to safety.



## 9 WHITE VISION

IN October 1942 a carrier pigeon known as White Vision was released from a stricken aircraft with an SOS message. Flying for nine hours across open water and through appalling weather, she arrived home battered, exhausted and with much of her plumage missing. Her safe delivery of the message led to the rescue of the entire 11-man crew of a Consolidated PBY Catalina, an American flying boat, off Scotland.



## 10 RIP

ADOPTED by a wartime Air Raid Precautions squad in the East End of London, this scruffy little stray demonstrated an instinctive ability to locate casualties trapped beneath bomb-damaged buildings. With a lively nature and terrier-like determination to get the job done, the mongrel worked wonders for morale among wardens and Blitz victims. In five years of service he proved utterly fearless in the face of heavy gunfire and incendiary raids. Credited with saving more than 100 lives, it was Rip's natural talents that eventually persuaded the top brass to recruit the first dogs specifically trained in urban search and rescue techniques.



David Long is the author of *The Animals' VC: For Gallantry or Devotion*

## 7 RICKY

A SHAGGY Welsh collie volunteered by his owners for service in 1944, Ricky (below) was assigned to the 279th Field Company of the 15th (Scottish) Infantry Division. The dog and his handler were engaged in clearing the banks of a strategically-important canal at Nederweert in Holland. With the Germans employing 16 types of anti-tank mine, ten different anti-personnel devices and various booby traps, Ricky searched deep gravel, undergrowth and mud. An explosion left him with a bad wound to the head but the courageous creature remained calm and kept working, providing invaluable aid.





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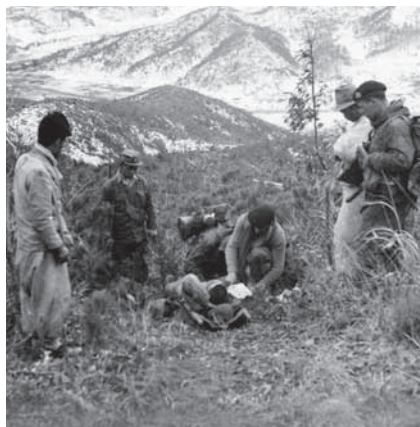
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## ANOTHER UNFAIR FIGHT

■ IN reponse to the rundown of greatest military victories against the odds, "Unfair fight" (October), what about the challenge faced by the men of 29th Infantry Brigade on the Imjin River in "South Korea"?

They were confronted by soldiers of the Chinese 63rd Army.

For days the battle against the three divisions comprising the opposition was fought up and down the bordering valleys.

The units who played a major role in events there included 1st Battalion, Royal Belgian Regiment; 1st Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment; 1st Battalion, The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers; 1st Battalion, The Royal Ulster Rifles and 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars.

The Royal Artillery also contributed to both the main attack and covering the retreat of Infantry and tank formations, not forgetting the corp units who gave a good account of themselves "when the drums began to roll".

I just thought I'd write to give my eight pennies' worth. – Ray Taylor, former 1st Battalion, King's Own Royal Regiment.

## Bin barrack dress to boost morale

DESPITE the difficult financial times that the Armed Forces are facing in this era of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), most commanders on the ground are failing to do enough to lessen the burden and change the fortunes of the few who remain serving.

Recently there has been a rise in these officers asking more and more of their soldiers to wear barrack dress.

There would be nothing wrong with this practice if it were taking place a few years ago when defence spending was not under as much scrutiny and budget allocation was far more generous.



But the idea of the SDSR is to cut back on unnecessary purchases and the requirement to wear barrack dress is another money-wasting exercise bearing in mind the price of maintaining such clothing.

It would be ideal to shelve this costly practice and instead put more cash into the pockets of deserving Service personnel who have had to go several years without pay rises.

The British Army has just had a change of uniform, having seen various versions previously, and I suppose there is more to come.

It is about time that morale is livened up again since it is at an all-time low.

Just a thought I had, anyway. – Sgt Tatenda Mavhera.

## Why only partial help for heroes?

I LIVE in Northern Ireland and am dismayed to discover that the young amputee Andy Allen (pictured), who was severely wounded in Afghanistan, has been forced to set up his own charity ([www.aavsnri.com](http://www.aavsnri.com)) to raise funds for a rehabilitation and respite centre for injured ex-Servicemen living here.

In media articles he relays how he has been forced down this road because no other organisation will assist.

Am I missing something here?

Is this not the remit of Help For Heroes and should they and The Royal British Legion not be funding this rehabilitation centre?

It seems so unfair that a severely injured young man is forced to struggle to raise this money, particularly when Help For Heroes have used his profile for their own fund-raising. – Name and address supplied.



of our country deserves the best possible support – for life.

We are committed to making sure this happens and we spend every penny possible on providing direct, practical help for our wounded.

This could be via individual grants, direct assistance or through funding other charities that in turn offer specialist support.

We review every request to see how best we can help and are working hard to develop a network of UK recovery centres that offer world-class residential and day

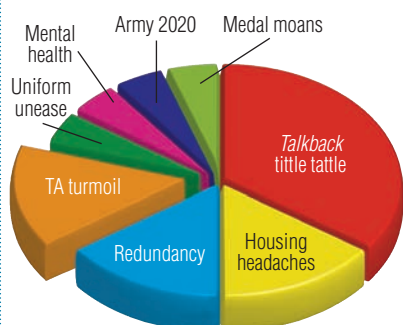
facilities to the injured; both while serving and when they become veterans.

The hubs have been positioned near to garrison towns where they are closest to the majority of people who need them.

We recognise that not everyone will live close to one but we still want personnel to use them whenever they want so we provide funding for these individuals to travel there.

## Slice of Service life

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



**A Help for Heroes spokesman responds:**  
We believe that everybody who has been wounded, injured or sick in the service

■ THE family of WO2 Perran "Pez" Thomas (R Signals, pictured right) would like to thank everyone who has shared such wonderful tributes to him and supported us on the day of his funeral – "In memoriam" (August).

It gave us all much comfort to know how respected and loved he was by his military

colleagues and wider field of friends. We would also like to thank the British Army for their support and for respecting our dignity and privacy at all times.

– The Thomas family.





# 'Military personnel will ride again'

**H**AVING read the interviews with ex-Servicemen in your October edition ("Soldier to civvy"), I am writing to endorse the feedback given to the ranks by those featured – there is life after the Army.

Albeit under different circumstances to those currently facing redundancy, I had my military career cut short in 2004 as a result of a back injury.

While I'd be lying if I said the prospect of becoming a civilian didn't seem daunting at the time, my previous 20 years' service with the Royal Tank Regiment and Royal Armoured Corps gave me a pragmatic approach to the transition.

I quickly accepted my situation and got on with it.

Whether it was



**Civvy street success:** Soldier-turned-motorsport writer John Hogan featured in last month's issue

because I left the Army before what I considered to be my time or not, I decided to explore opportunities within the civilian side of defence and was fortunate enough to pick up a contractor role with AgustaWestland, working in support of Bowman training.

Since then I've bounced through a number of related jobs and am now head of marketing and future business at NSC, best known to military personnel for delivering the Joint Combat Operations Virtual

Environment.

It is a source of considerable satisfaction that my role has enabled me to remain in close contact with the military community and I am proud to work for an organisation that directly supports the UK Armed Forces on operations.

A job in defence may be the last thing on the minds of those leaving but there are opportunities across all sectors for ex-soldiers.

I, and those interviewed in October's issue, are not the exception and troops seeking a second career on civvy street should

do so with confidence. It has been well stated elsewhere that a Service leaver represents someone who is disciplined, motivated, trustworthy, reliable and has an appetite to do the best they can.

To any potential employer those traits have got to be of real benefit and value. – **Darrin Abbott** (late RTR).



"I rather thought that a career in redundancy advice might have a future?"

■ **I TOO** have just left the military after 24 years in the Royal Military Police.

I recently trained to become an equine dentist – a new profession completely different to my role in the British Army – and have since opened my own practice in the Netherlands.

I wonder what other weird and wacky jobs people have gone on to do? – **Brendan McMahon** (late RMP).

## Reader pipes up over music promotion rules

THE promotion board for the Corps of Army Music (CAMUS) needs revising: why should someone automatically be put forward?

I have recently left a band and there are people up for advancement just because they have served more than three years.

I was attached from the Infantry, where if I wanted to progress I had to do a seven-week course to learn skills and demonstrate that I was capable of being an NCO.

Shouldn't there be tests put in place to show that people are good enough to be promoted in CAMUS – i.e. that they can actually play a musical instrument?

During my time I knew of people who kept failing their basic mile-and-half, but because they passed it once were up for promotion. This causes a lot of unrest within bands.

Similarly, why should military musicians wait three years before they are even considered for progression?

I have known some individuals come out of basic training and get promoted within six months.

This problem desperately needs sorting out by the corps as people are getting fed up with it happening year after year. – **Name and address supplied.**

**Maj P Stredwick, Army Personnel Centre, responds:** In line with the rest of the Army, individuals have to be recommended by their reporting officers to be filtered in for promotion to lance corporal.

The potential-NCO course is undertaken if musicians are selected for this and personnel will only have their acting rank substantiated if they pass.

Similar cadres are also required at higher levels in line with Service command, leadership and

management requirements.

With regards to trade and military competences, CAMUS personnel do not get exemptions from fitness or other military annual training tests.

Musically, there are technical examinations to pass as well.

The trade employment qualification class two is required to be considered for promotion to lance corporal and class one for corporal.

Fitness and technical (musical) competence are just two areas that reporting officers will consider before deciding whether to recommend an individual for promotion.

In regards to having to wait for eligibility, it is CAMUS policy which requires a minimum of three years' service in each rank.

The majority of troops in this corps have the benefit of careers which are longer than many others (beyond 24 years) so promoting someone too quickly would cause structural blockages – ultimately making promotion slower for those personnel who follow.







Picture: Graeme Main

## 'Service job market must be level playing field'

**A**FTER viewing the Reserve assignments opportunities list recently I applied for a post as a permanent staff admin officer on full-time Reserve service (home commitment).

I thought it would suit me as I had everything on the job specification and experience with the Territorial Army.

But on submitting my paperwork I was informed that I was not eligible to be considered because I was neither in my last year nor had terminated my service on Joint Personnel Administration (JPA).

The application instructions warned not to jeopardise any civilian employment that you may have until this post was offered so I am dumbstruck to think that we are not saying the same to serving personnel.

It appears that for me to apply I am expected to resign and hope I get the job and if not, be left unemployed. Why?

Being on open engagement, I consider myself to be in my last year of service every year – not to mention the fact that I have been shortlisted for

redundancy twice.

Troops like myself should have the right to apply for these positions and the best applicant chosen. It is up to us whether we take the job.

What is ironic is that had I been successful, I would have resigned and therefore cost the Service nothing in redundancy while at the same time helping towards reducing Regular manning.

The British Army prides itself on values, standards, equality and diversity – yet it appears at times we are not on a level playing field.

I have been educated within a system that promotes loyalty – to crown, colleagues, unit and cap badge.

But for the first time I question the loyalty given to me. – Name and address supplied.

**Maj Emma Ainsworth, S02 Reserves DM(A), responds:** The correspondent raises an interesting point; they are correct that individuals will not be considered for full-time Reserve service posts unless they are in their last year or

have terminated their service on JPA.

This is because the priority is to fill the post they are currently in.

The Army does not wish to encourage soldiers to prematurely terminate their Regular career unless they have been selected for redundancy.

Neither would we wish to denude the Regular cohort by actively encouraging transition to full-time Reserve service (home commitment).

Personnel may apply for the early release scheme once they have submitted their notice to terminate in order to take up an appointment.

The reason for the instruction to Reservists not to jeopardise civilian posts is to ensure that they do not prematurely leave their jobs until selection for full-time Reserve service has been confirmed – we would not wish to see them give up their employment and then, for instance, fail the medical.



### NARK OVER NEIGHBOUR

■ I HAVE one simple question to ask: why do I as an officer pay more for my married accommodation than the soldier living next to me on the same road and in the same type of house?

Please try not to palm me off with gradings and suchlike. – Name and address supplied.

**Andrew Leonard, Defence Personnel Secretariat, responds:** Without more details it is difficult to provide a precise answer to this question. Therefore, this

response is taken from the joint service publication covering the allocation of Service families accommodation (SFA).

It is possible that your neighbour is living in housing above their normal entitlement for Service reasons.

In order not to disadvantage personnel when this happens, the charge is that related to a grade one SFA of the type to which the individual is normally entitled – unless the grading of the dwelling occupied is lower, in which case the lesser rate must be billed.

I hope this response helps to explain the situation.



# SO HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TELL THE FAMILY...

THAT YOU ARE BEING DISCHARGED AFTER PROVIDING A POSITIVE SAMPLE AT CDT



A moment of madness - a lifetime of shattered memories





Picture: Graeme Main

**Trouble brewing:** A reader argues that soldiers who are not at the sharp end of operations should stop complaining about the Personal Clothing System

## 'Costa crew should shut up and carry on'

**I**N regards to the Personal Clothing System (PCS) and combat boot issues, never has so much utter insignificance been debated by so few who influence so much.

I have decided to put finger to keyboard as I am sure the "trousers tucked in up to the armpit brigade" will eventually get away with their evil plans.

I am in the twilight of my career and will be given a chit to legally wear blue jeans in public at the end of 2013.

After 22 years I consider myself fairly experienced in the ways of the modern British Army and, whilst I do shine my seat more than I used to, I still have the benefit of leaving the office and getting my hands dirty.

This means putting the PCS uniform through more than just a left flanking of a Costa coffee shop.

In my day-to-day work I talk to young soldiers, some now sergeants.

Most have considerably more operational experience than I had at the same point in my career and I see their anger and frustration at a proportion of the military who consider it their right to influence and dumb down the



"Dammit Jenkins, they're giving up the scarlet jackets... it'll be the horses next!"

biggest change in the Army uniform since the move from battle dress in the 1960s.

New camouflage – whinge. Jacket not tucked in – whinge. Iron a different way – whinge. I can't roll my sleeves up – whinge. Brown boots – cue monocles falling out and moustaches twitching.

This whinging is not predominantly coming from the junior ranks' club.

From my experience, most soldiers and

officers who don't work in an office all the time are more than happy with the PCS and how it's worn.

The "train how we fight" ethos, like so much else, seems to be doomed by the debaters and policy-writers in the comfort of air-conditioned offices or web forums.

An opinion is a crucial thing and the ability to listen is even more crucial, however, an animal who cannot change with its environment will become extinct.

I am not saying the new kit is perfect and I think it does have a few quality issues, as did Combat Soldier 95 uniform when we trialled it in 1993. But these will be sorted out.

The team who developed and brought PCS into service should be commended for a forward-thinking, common sense approach to the current Army and if I were them I would be extremely angry at the dinosaurs trying to change it.

The influence needs to come from the young officer and soldier who will ultimately be using this equipment whilst the dinosaurs and I talk a good battle over a pint. – [Name and address supplied](#).

**I** RECENTLY completed the MoD Your Say survey because I feel it is critically important that instead of just dripping like a broken tap, soldiers et al should actually stand up and be counted when presented with the opportunity to do so.

However, I was – to put it mildly – utterly disgusted when I came across a question asking what grade I was. As a warrant officer of 22 years' service to Her Majesty, I believe that I have gathered a significant amount of experience. But

on reaching this page I found that this contribution, along with circa 100,000 warrant officers, senior and junior NCOs and private soldiers (or tri-Service equivalents), was tacked on with the "and all other ranks" category at the end of a list [of 14 different bands].

Really? Is that how significant and important around one third of the workforce is?

"Have your say because your views count," the document says. My backside.

Whoever designed this document has revealed who they really consider to be important in giving their opinion – the civvies, followed by the stars. The actual workers (soldiers at the operational sharp end) are clearly nothing more than an embarrassing addendum.

Is it any wonder that morale within the "all other ranks" is quite so low? Or that the "all other ranks" rarely believe their views and opinions to count for anything? – [WO2 Woolfitt, PJHQ](#).



## DIGITAL DOSSIER

THIS MONTH'S ELITE TWEETS

#OP HONOURS (P 29)

### @Scotsbluebird

**@BritishArmy** And to think that athletes are looking for a knighthood for winning a race! Makes you think, doesn't it?

### @EricBurrows

**@BritishArmy** These guys are amazing at the job they do.

#FELIX FEAT

### @Stirles

I give it one year 'til we have a sci-fi action film in which soldiers jump out of dropships Felix-style.

### @JackABennett

**#edgeofspace** Felix: big balls, amazing jump, great achievement. Is he really the bravest man alive when our soldiers are shot at every day?!

#BLOODHOUND (P 7)

### @creditplumber

Courage of one man diving from the edge of space at 700+mph will be matched in '13 by another driving at 1000mph. Exciting times. **#Bloodhound**

### @PaulMarks12

**#Livejump** and the **#Bloodhound** rocket test sure show the value of live streaming...

### @JonesGK

Have just seen the stunning **@BLOODHOUND\_SSC** in The City. I wonder if the congestion charge applies?

#ANIMAL ALLIES (P 46)

### @DarkJoo77

The Dickin Medal is awarded to animals for bravery. The species with the most? Pigeons.

#DODGY DEPICTION

### @GarrisonGirls

Arh using his mobile?! From Afghan! **#BasicFactsWrong #HomeFront**

#AND FINALLY...

### @Pundamentalism

Can someone tell me the abbreviation for the Territorial Army? TA.

### @DrunkenHistory

1820 Englishman Ed Dyer starts the first Asian brewery in the Himalayas for thirsty British soldiers stationed in India.

## @soldiermagazine



Picture: Graeme Main

**Inner-city injustice:** Troops commuting out of central London are being disadvantaged, a reader says

## London allowance 'laughable'

HOW come I am not entitled to the London allowance if I reside in the capital but don't work there? This rule is a joke.

I live in the London District mess and work in Croydon but why should I be out of pocket because of that?

It seems to me that if I was some high ranking officer I would be able to claim perks. Lower ranks are getting bent over a barrel yet again. — *A very unhappy NCO.*

**Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), responds:** The recruitment and retention allowance (London) is paid to all personnel of the rank of corporal and below who work within five miles of Charing Cross (i.e. inner London), in Cavalry Barracks (Hounslow) or in Woolwich Station.

It is designed to counter reluctance to serve in designated locations by contributing to the higher costs and additional pressures encountered.

Previously all ranks were eligible, however, the allowance was removed from sergeants and above from April 1 this year as a Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) savings measure.



"He lives in our mess. It's how he supplements his cost of living."

I can understand your frustration but entitlement is based on where you work, not where you live. As a consequence of SDSR it was removed from the more senior ranks who were better able to absorb the higher costs of living in the designated areas.

The allowance is being reviewed by the Armed Forces pay review body as I write and we expect it to announce its findings in March 2013.

## Helmet humour was below the belt

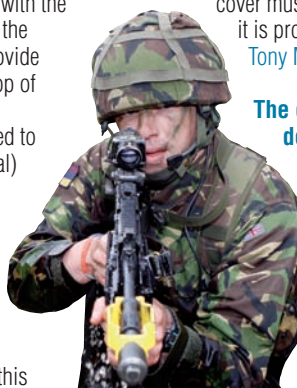
WHILST fully applauding Cfn Smithson's keen eye for detail ("Blunder blows Reservist's helmet cover") in October's issue, I have to question whether this letter was in tandem with the first line of your editorial blurb at the top of *Talkback* — "your letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas".

Surely a Reserve being prepared to suspend his civilian (and principal) career and leave his home and family for potentially 12 months in order to support the Army's efforts in Helmand is the main agenda here, not that his helmet cover has been tied on at the side?

I feel your decision to include this

article was inappropriate, derisory and a bit of a cheap shot.

Anyway, where does it say that the helmet cover must be secured at the rear? Granted, it is probably not best at the front. — *WO2 Tony Mansfield, 254 Medical Regiment.*



**The editor, checking the definition of "banter" in the Oxford English Dictionary, responds:** Point taken. And you are right to highlight *Talkback's* mission statement. However, we certainly do not exclude the more light-hearted submissions from our letters pages.





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## COMPETITIONS

**The Lucky One winners:** J Russell, Stanley, Co Durham; L Walsh, Fleet, Hampshire; P Gilby, Gravesend, Kent; C Hynde, Dudley, West Midlands; M Cunningham, Lincoln.

**Spine line winner:** F Johnstone, Worcester, Worcestershire.



## DIARY

**November 5-16: Hugh Beattie's Half Life Exhibition** at The Frameless Gallery, 20 Clerkenwell Green, Farringdon, London EC1R 0DP.

**November 11: Remembrance Sunday.**

**November 12: Descend from 417 feet at the National Abseil Centre to raise money for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.** All kit is provided but there are only 50 places available. Minimum sponsorship is £150. For full details and to book call 01604 770606 or email [david@edoneinvestments.com](mailto:david@edoneinvestments.com)

**November 15-16: A military music spectacular** featuring the regimental bands of The Household Division at Central Hall, Westminster. To book tickets visit [www.theguardianmuseum.com](http://www.theguardianmuseum.com) and follow the link to the box office or call 08448 717605.

**November 30-December 2: The Regimental Slipper** – a pantomime based on *Cinderella* but given an Army twist by a cast comprising members of **Larkhill Garrison**. For information on how to book tickets (priced £5 for adults and £2 for children) call Caroline on 07729 583679 or join the Larkhill Panto page on Facebook.

**December 1: Rockin' Down** at the Rose and Crown, Wendover, in support of SSAFA Forces Help. Rock band **The Copycats** will play a **one-off charity reunion gig**, covering classic and contemporary hits starting at 1900. Tickets cost £10 but only 100 are available. Visit [facebook.com/rockindown](http://facebook.com/rockindown) for more information.

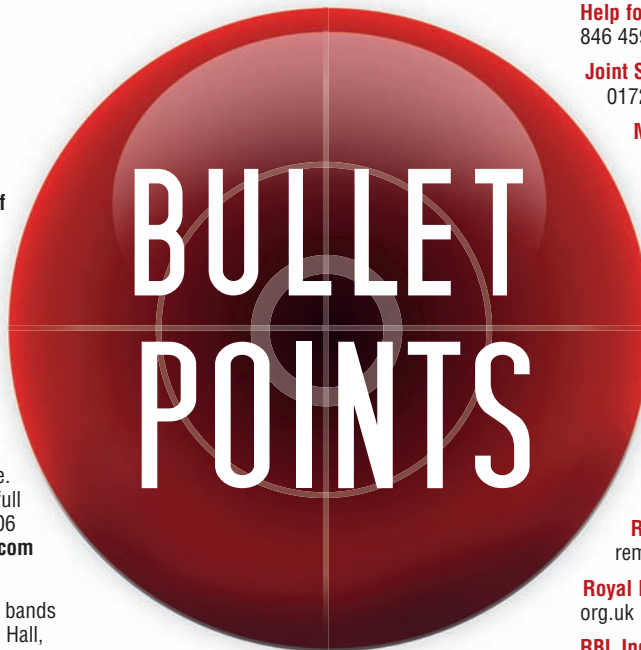
**December 8-9: British Military Tournament.** To mark the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of 2012, this year's event will celebrate the life and times of Her Majesty The Queen. At London's Earls Court, the programme will include more than 600 participants, 150 horses, massed bands and commentary from celebrities. For ticketing details visit [www.britishmilitarytournament.com](http://www.britishmilitarytournament.com)

**Until January 2013: Warriors of the Plains: 200 Years of Native North American Honour and Ritual.** A new display at Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum offering visitors a contemporary insight into warrior societies of the past. Visit [www.exeter.gov.uk/ramm](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/ramm) for more information.

**Until further notice: Exhibition of War Correspondents** – reporting under fire since 1914. Featuring some of the people whose words, images, voices and faces bring the story from the front line to those at home,

sometimes at considerable risk to themselves. Imperial War Museum North, The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ. For more information visit [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

**Until further notice: The Lord Ashcroft Gallery – Extraordinary Heroes.** The world's largest collection of Victoria and George Crosses. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ.



**Until further notice: Other ranks** – honouring the fallen. A new multi-sensory, sound-based exhibition to mark a month of remembrance and bringing to life the role of "squaddies" serving in the British Army. Royal Armouries, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 1LT. For more information visit [www.royalarmouries.org/newsletter](http://www.royalarmouries.org/newsletter)



## DIRECTORY

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

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

**Armed Forces Humanist Association:** [www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk](http://www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk)

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

**Army Welfare Service:** 01980 615975; [www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx)

**Army Families Federation:** 01264 382324; [mil.94391.2324;www.aff.org.uk](http://mil.94391.2324;www.aff.org.uk)

**Blind Veterans UK:** (formerly St Dunstan's) [www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk); 0207 7235021

**British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association:** 0208 590 1124; [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Career Transition Partnership:** 0207 766 8020

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

**Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society:** 01372 841600; [www.combatstress.com](http://www.combatstress.com)

**Family Escort Service:** 0207 463 9249

**Forcesline:** UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services \*201; from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854.

**Forces Pension Society:** 0207 820 9988

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Service Personnel and Veterans Agency:** 0800 169 2277 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

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

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

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



## INTELLIGENCE

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

**ABN 82/12:** Changes to JOLP 3 programme

**ABN 83/12:** 2012 Armed Forces continuous attitude survey and families continuous attitude survey – Army report

**ABN 84/12:** CGS's briefing team report (April-July)

**ABN 85/12:** Traumatic brain injury – concussion

**ABN 86/12:** Army operating model

**ABN 87/12:** TA/Army Reserve communication channels

**ABN 88/12:** Armed Forces compensation scheme – publication of JSP 765



**ABN 89/12:** Future Armed Forces pension scheme – end of consultation period

**ABN 90/12:** Recording literacy and numeracy qualifications on JPA

**ABN 91/12:** MoD Your Say 2012 Survey

**ABN 92/12:** British Army branding identity instructions

**ABN 93/12:** Disestablishment of Gurkha Reinforcement Company 3

**ABN 94/12:** Revised higher command and staff course filter criteria

**ABN 95/12:** The British Army electronic battle box

**DIN 2012DIN01-213:** Relocation of the Ministry of Defence medical assessment programme

**DIN 2012DIN01-206:** Tactical unmanned air system pilot – soldier transfer scheme

**DIN 2012DIN01-205:** Armed Forces Buddhist development day

**DIN 2012DIN01-204:** Tri-Service policy for training return of service

**DIN 2012DIN01-203:** Eid-ul-Adha 2012 – The Festival of Sacrifice

**DIN 2012DIN01-202:** Senior Officers' Course 122 – Nato Defence College Rome

**DIN 2012DIN01-201:** MoD non-industrial and industrial 2012 pay award for grades represented by FDA, Prospect, PCS, ROA, JIPC and line managers

**DIN 2012DIN01-200:** Service Life Insurance

**DIN 2012DIN01-199:** Non-Regular permanent staff compulsory redundancy scheme

**DIN 2012DIN01-198:** MoD NHS/Agenda for Change grades pay award 2012

**DIN 2012DIN01-197:** Changes to Criminal

Records Bureau and safeguarding arrangements

**DIN 2012DIN01-196:** The future of Personal Accident (PAX) and Service Life Insurance

**DIN 2012DIN01-195:** Permanent transfer overseas – school allowances

**DIN 2012DIN01-194:** The Army Dependents' Trust – annual report

**DIN 2012DIN01-193:** Introduction of a nuclear competence framework and removal of the nuclear propulsion and nuclear weapon FCFs

**DIN 2012DIN01-192:** Utilisation of defence travel

**DIN 2012DIN01-191:** Change to treatment for pension and redundancy purposes of statutory maternity pay after exit from service

**DIN 2012DIN01-190:** Job seekers' allowance condition changes for spouses/civil partners of Service personnel returning from overseas assignment

**DIN 2012DIN01-189:** Release of JSP 838 version 2 incorporating changes to the Armed Forces legal aid scheme

**DIN 2012DIN02-015:** *The Defence Manual of Security* (JSP 440) – publication of issue 4.2.0

**DIN 2012DIN02-013:** Volunteers for specialist HUMINT duties – Op Samson

**DIN 2012DIN02-012:** Selection of personnel for tactical questioning duties

**DIN 2012DIN03-031:** Operations Directorate restructure

**DIN 2012DIN04-136:** Charge demolition Bangalore Torpedo L26A1

**DIN 2012DIN04-135:** Update to contract arrangements for the supply of equipment in support of military working dogs

**DIN 2012DIN04-134:** LUCIE night-vision goggle and head-mounted night-vision system complete equipment schedules

**DIN 2012DIN04-133:** Water safety equipment management – the selection of life jackets and buoyancy aids

**DIN 2012DIN04-132:** The operational support update – platform configuration validation report

**DIN 2012DIN04-131:** Policy and procedures for the use of mandated enabling contracts and frameworks

**DIN 2012DIN04-130:** Portable radiation detection and monitoring equipment operating information

**DIN 2012DIN04-129:** Declaration of obsolete – Bowman subscriber interface unit

**DIN 2012DIN04-128:** Applying capability management to operational medical support

**DIN 2012DIN04-127:** Supply of halon and refrigerant gas cylinders

**DIN 2012DIN04-126:** Period of notification required for the provision of fuels, lubricants and gases in support of exercises

**DIN 2012DIN05-038:** British Army branding identity instructions

**DIN 2012DIN05-037:** Formation of the Defence College of Technical Training

**DIN 2012DIN05-036:** Defence munitions customer complaints procedure

**DIN 2012DIN05-035:** 4626 (AE) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force – notification of change of location

**DIN 2012DIN06-036:** Health and Safety Executive introduction of fee for intervention

**DIN 2012DIN06-035:** Release of Joint Service Publication 317 – edition 5 AL 1 – Joint Service safety regulations for the storage and handling of fuels and lubricants

Continued on page 58

NO. 852

## JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

WIN  
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TEN details have been changed on this photograph of Operation Nightingale during the team's latest archaeological dig on the outskirts of Lyneham in Wiltshire (pages 42-43).

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 852, Soldier,**

Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by November 30. A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers. The

results will be announced in the January issue. Usual rules apply.

**September's winner:** First correct entry drawn at random was Miss J A Ineson, Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire. **Runners-up:** A Harking, Northwood, Middlesex and LCpl Kirwan, Salisbury, Wiltshire.





**DIN 2012DIN06-034:** *Don't Gamble with Ammo*

**DIN 2012DIN06-033:** Joint Service Publication 403, volume 2, change 6, amendment 1 and RSN 5/12

**DIN 2012DIN06-032:** Joint Service Publication 375 – health and safety handbook – volume 2, revision updates

**DIN 2012DIN07-143:** Herrick cultural awareness briefings for individual augmentees

**DIN 2012DIN07-142:** Joint Services adventurous training Nordic ski scheme 1

**DIN 2012DIN07-141:** Exemption from taxation for payments made to Service leavers under the enhanced learning credits scheme

**DIN 2012DIN07-137:** Educational assessments for potential officers serving in the ranks

**DIN 2012DIN07-136:** Instructions for the use of Service obstacle courses, aerial slides and trainasiums

**DIN 2012DIN07-135:** MoD civilian pre-deployment training process

**DIN 2012DIN08-009:** Insurance brokerage advice and assistance

**DIN 2012DIN08-008:** Claims for loss of, or damage to, personal property (regulation claims)

**DIN 2012DIN09-021:** Royal Garden Parties 2013 – civilian staff

**DIN 2012DIN09-020:** Nato non-article 5 medal with clasp OUP-Libya/Libye

**DIN 2012DIN10-037:** Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund

**DIN 2012DIN10-036:** Army overseas sport tour

**DIN 2012DIN10-035:** Army Telemark Ski Association Championships – Ex Telemark Titan 2013

**DIB 49/12:** Reminder – outstanding civilian performance and development reports to be completed

**DIB 50/12:** Defence ministerial team

**DIB 51/12:** New Armed Forces pension

scheme – end of consultation

**DIB 52/12:** Public support for our deployed personnel and sending gifts at Christmas

**DIB 53/12:** Performance awards for reporting year 2011-12 for MoD civilian staff below the senior civil service

**DIB 54/12:** *Leading defence – a guide to the work of the Defence Board*

**DIB 55/12:** 2012 MoD Your Say Survey now open

**DIB 56/12:** Government to give civil servants a minimum of ten days' special paid leave a year for Reserves training

**DIB 57/12:** Eligibility for Service pupil premium and increase in funding level for 2013-14

**DIB 58/12:** MoD launches a new defence discount service



## REUNIONS

**South Notts Hussars Association:** The annual reunion and remembrance dinner will take place at the TA Centre, Hucknall Lane, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 8AQ on Saturday, November 10. Tickets at £20 are available from the Association Secretary at the centre.



## ROADSHOWS

The Army Engagement Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a drinks reception, is followed by a presentation, questions and culminates with refreshments. There will be a range of military personnel on hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 417000 or email your name and address to [apt.mod@btconnect.com](mailto:apt.mod@btconnect.com) with the event you are interested in attending.

**November:** 1, Woking; 20, Hackney; 21, Westminster.

**December:** No presentations.

**January:** Blackpool; Blackburn; Manchester.



## SEARCHLINE

After nearly 50 years of loyal service, **The Princess Mary's Hospital, RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus closed its doors to all patients with effect from October 31.** Throughout this time a number of presentations have been made to the hospital by individuals and units which now need to be rehomed. If you would like your gift returned please contact Maj Nick Nicholson on military 94120 5586 with all the relevant details before December 31.

Holocaust survivor Agnes Grunwald-Spier, author of *The Other Schindlers*, is seeking help with three topics. **Research for her next book on betrayals in the Holocaust has led her to the word "Ratweek".** Can anyone explain the origin of this term? Those with personal information on the Belgian traitor Prosper de Zitter – or Desitter – or with stories of betrayal of Jews in the Holocaust are also asked to get in touch. Email [agnesgrunwaldspier@gmail.com](mailto:agnesgrunwaldspier@gmail.com)

A private investigator is seeking **Russell Cooke or Thomas Thaw** on behalf of a client. The individuals are believed to have served with the British Army in Kuala Lumpur until 1961 before returning to the UK. Anyone with information is asked to contact [steph@scisco.org](mailto:steph@scisco.org) or 07538 829340.

Ex-Serviceman John Halsted is cycling the route of one of the **1945 death marches** – from Sagan in Poland to Bad Orb near Frankfurt in Germany. He is looking for UK soldiers and veterans, including those who have been injured or discharged, to take part and a charity to be the willing recipient of funds raised during the 640km trip. Anyone interested should email him via [books@abelpublishing.com](mailto:books@abelpublishing.com)

The Rotary Club of Upper Eden is inviting Service personnel to take part in the **Yomp Mountain Challenge** on June 2, 2013. The charity fund-raising event features a choice of three courses (6.5 miles, 11.5 miles or 23 miles) across the fells of Kirkby Stephen in Cumbria. Visit [www.yomp.org](http://www.yomp.org) for more information or to register.

Information is sought on **Col Dick Morrison, who was born before 1919 – probably in Wales.** He served in the Regular Army during the Second World War and afterwards. His last known address was in Dover, Kent. Anyone with details is asked to contact [dshaw980@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dshaw980@yahoo.co.uk)

Gilbert Van Hecke would like to trace some **soldiers who helped to liberate the village of Vlissegem in Belgium during the Second World War.** The first names are Jim, Tom and Ralf. If anyone has any information please contact Mr Van Hecke, Residentie, Casa Lucca, Felix Timmeranslan 12/aap. 00-02, 8421 De Haan, Belgium.

Tony Levy, ex-Royal Signals (1972-1981), is trying to locate the **commemorative wall plaque** he was presented with in recognition of his time served as a permanent staff instructor on Exercise Snow Queen. The former sapper is happy to pay any reasonable expenses incurred in returning the item to him. Contact **07860 715603.**

# WEB WATCH

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# HOME TRUTHS

A PERSONAL view from Catherine Spencer, chief executive of the Army Families Federation. Log on to [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk) for more information



## Families find a friend in Francois

THE 30th anniversary conference of the Army Families Federation was, even if we think so ourselves, a huge success, giving soldiers and their loved ones an opportunity to raise issues in the presence of the chief of the general staff and the adjutant general.

Mark Francois, the new minister for defence personnel, welfare and veterans, also addressed the audience and to the delight of assembled delegates (but despair of his special advisers) prolonged his stay on the panel for over an hour to hear more of the issues affecting Army families.

The afternoon debate, ably compered by Kate Silverton, saw Jayne Bullock from Pension Justice for Troops put a well prepared question on the "unpensionable" issue – those affected by redundancy just prior to their immediate pension point – to the minister and he agreed to re-examine it with new information to see if a more acceptable settlement can be found.

A serving soldier gave an honest appraisal of the Service families accommodation he had moved into in Aldershot, which saw an amusing exchange between the BBC newsreader and the MP. Since the conference, Mr Francois has



Genuinely interested: Minister Mark Francois

made a special trip to the garrison to see the shoddy quarter for himself and when I saw him afterwards it was clear that housing was very high on his agenda.

He is candid that there is little money to resolve the issues in defence. It is too early to constructively judge his achievements but his empathy and zeal have persuaded me that he is genuinely interested in doing his best. ■

## Communication is the key

A LACK of communication from the Army to TA families was highlighted at the conference. We are well aware that exchanging information with all Service families can be difficult regardless of whether the individual is a Regular or Reservist. Military families come in all shapes and sizes and much of the communication from the Army relies on the soldier making sure that his/her relatives know how to find the relevant material. This will be particularly true in the future as more personnel live in their own homes outside the Armed Forces community. Improving communication is a challenge that Army command understands it must develop and one which the AFF is at the heart of. We'll assist anyone who has a soldier as an important person in their life but you can help by making sure that your important people know how to find us.



Picture: Sgt Andy Maitthouse, RAF

**On the right track:** Although work is still to be done, the Armed Forces Covenant has created the backdrop for positive change within the Service community

## Covenant makes pleasing progress

THE military report into the Armed Forces Covenant is to be released soon and, along with the other families federations, I attended a meeting in the Cabinet Office to discuss it. When I read through the extensive aims of the document I found myself both surprised and impressed. While I still believe that there is much to be done to improve pay, pensions

and housing, I think it's important to see the progress that has been made in setting down expectations of fair service and provision to our personnel, families and veterans through the covenant. It may not alter the pay in your pocket and the value of your pension but it has dramatically improved the communication across government departments and established

a culture of accepting that the Service community should not be disadvantaged. Of course there is still work to be done but the agreement has created an ordered approach to positive change that will ensure that many of the irritations of military life will be ironed out – and if you know of any which still need attention please let the AFF know.



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# reviews

## SNEAK PEAK:

### NOVEMBER'S SPARKLERS

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# VIVACIOUS VIEWING



## CHERNOBYL DIARIES out now

IN this tense thriller a group of tourists are persuaded to go on a tour of the ghost town of Prypiat, next to the infamous Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Their guide – a former member of the Special Forces – reassures them that after 25 years it is safe to enter the area. Perhaps predictably, their van breaks down on arrival and they end up trying to escape from starving dogs and bald-headed mutants. Disappointingly, we are left having to imagine their terror because the film's makers only use fleeting images of the terrifying creatures.

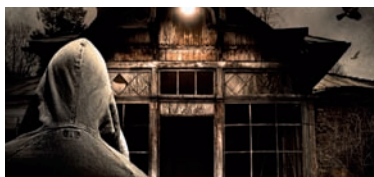
**Prakash Prema, civvy**



## THE PACT out now

ESSENTIALLY this is a haunted-house movie about a tough biker chick who returns to her childhood home for the funeral of her mother. If you enjoy being frightened and are willing to try movies of dubious quality to indulge the hobby, you should give this a chance. Production wise it's nice looking and the plot – paranormal events spliced with a string of unresolved brutal murders – is more intriguing than your average horror. If you don't cheat and keep the lights off you will be extremely tense throughout.

**Kieran Rafter, civvy**



## ROSEWOOD LANE out now

DR Sonny Blake, a radio talk-show psychiatrist, returns to her home town after the accidental death of her father. She soon attracts the unwanted interest of the paperboy whose strange behaviour becomes more and more sinister. This very routine thriller unsuccessfully attempts to introduce a supernatural element into a tired formula. Crucially, the movie is not scary at any point. Any tension quickly evaporates due to poor direction and editing. The acting is uniformly substandard and the plot makes no sense whatsoever.

**Cpl Jools Finch, MPGS**



## TWENTY8K out now

THIS tale of dirty underground dealings, corruption and murder attempts to extend beyond standard London gang fodder to the top of the police force. However, the plot – which follows Deeva (**Pariminder Nagra**) trying to uncover the truth behind a fatal nightclub shooting – is thin and predictable. It is engaging to watch this character attempt to clear her brother's name while being thwarted at every turn by an unseen enemy, but the film should have been a TV mini-series. Its stellar cast could have been used more productively that way.

**Sgt Brian Morris, AGC (SPS)**



## SEEKING A FRIEND out November 5

AS cutesy as a puppy wrapped in milk chocolate, this is an enjoyable and rather odd comedy. With 21 days until a meteorite smashes into Earth, American society unravels as the countdown to Armageddon begins. People act strangely, marriage vows are forgotten, scores are settled and suicides take place amid rioting. Orgies and people doing pull-ups in gas masks also feature. Stepping back from the schmaltzy weirdness, the movie achieves its aim of asking the question "how would you choose to spend your final days?"

**Maj Neil Johnson, AAC**



## THE HOUSE out now

THIS subtitled Thai horror film begins as a ghost story but slowly evolves into a more in-the-flesh affair. The movie centres on an investigative news reporter called Shaline who is tasked to work on a murder case. As she delves into the past, she uncovers further crimes which seem to link a group of doctors from a specific house. The journalist is warned off, but as viewers might expect she presses on and all hell eventually breaks loose. There are plenty of scares and gore throughout this title, along with a pretty bizarre ending.

**Rodge Tapply, ex-RE**

**Review: Joe Clapson**

THE 50th anniversary Bond movie brings a more flawed, rough-edged 007 to the screen – and one of the finest villains of the entire series.

From the outset, *Skyfall* is a high-octane affair with Daniel Craig's sharp-suited character marauding masterfully through an Istanbul bazaar in pursuit of a terrorist.

After a stint driving a CAT truck over a train's roof, the pouting protagonist is deemed "agent down" before Adele's signature track kicks in over the traditional credits sequence.

From thereon in, director Sam Mendes takes the legendary spy back to basics while keeping him apace of all the expected 21st century threats.

The plot centres on the search for a stolen hard drive containing the names of Nato agents operating within terrorist organisations.

The finger of blame is pointing at M (Judi Dench) and, as if back from the dead, a dishevelled Bond returns to assist his boss while battling injury and psychological demons.

His quest to recover the encrypted data takes him to Shanghai and a deserted island off the coast of Macao. But it is on his return to Britain that this feature really comes into its own.

The inclusion of Komodo dragons and William Tell-esque shootings are quintessentially "007" but the use of iconic London scenery proves to be a fresh stroke of genius.

From a major attack on MI6 to spectacular stunts involving the city's underground system, there is a real domestic feel to proceedings.

A focus on computer hacking and government investigations represents a further nod to UK current affairs; Wikileaks and the Leveson Inquiry in particular spring to mind.

However, it is Javier Bardem's unhinged and truly odious villain who emerges as the overall highlight of this movie. With dyed blonde hair and a decidedly camp manner, ex-spy Raoul Silva makes for an unconventional bad guy but his calm viciousness, reminiscent of Hannibal Lecter, is enchanting.

In one particularly memorable scene we see him dominate Bond as his nonplussed victim is tied spread-legged to a chair.

Meanwhile, those craving the more traditional 007 are catered for with plenty of references to the past – most notably with the inclusion of an Aston Martin DB5 and an exploding pen.

As Bond girls go, MI6 newbie Naomie Harris (*28 Days Later*) and femme fatale Berenice Marlohe serve a distinct purpose but their performances are far from astounding.

However, there can be little doubt that collectively this cast has delivered one of the best 007 films in history. The British institution is in safe hands. ■





PICK OF THE MONTH:  
SKYFALL

# BACK IN BUSINESS

007 RETURNS TO HIS  
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# games



NOVEMBER'S  
CONSOLE  
CONSTELLATION

PICK OF THE MONTH:

## BOND BLASTS OFF

007 TAKES A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE IN  
ANNIVERSARY SHOOT-OUT



Review: Richard Long

**S**UPER spy James Bond is engaged in a hectic year of celebration as the famed franchise reaches its 50th anniversary on the big screen.

While the British hero will undoubtedly prove his credentials once again in new film *Skyfall* (pages 68-69), fans are also being offered the chance to relive his past glories in the latest console spin-off.

*007 Legends* boasts campaigns from *Goldfinger*, *Moonraker*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *Licence to Kill* and *Die Another Day* as well as an impressive arsenal of weapons, gadgets and exotic locations that have become the trademark of the top agent.

To add to the action the game comes complete with instructions on how to download free missions from the latest Daniel Craig-fronted adventure.

The premise for this title certainly sounds promising but a lack of clear narrative only serves to create confusion as Bond is dropped into different scenarios with little in the way of background.

Players have to rely on their knowledge of each movie for a greater understanding of the objectives, but if you struggle to recall the plot intricacies it is difficult to fully focus on the game.

Stars from previous movies have been recalled for voice-over duties, with Carey Lowell as *Licence to Kill's* Pam Bouvier and Toby Stephens as Gustav Graves among the cast. But those hoping for an A-list turn from Craig himself will be left disappointed and his stand-in delivers a monotone performance that becomes increasingly annoying as the story unravels.

Control-wise, the game is easy to play and with the standard *Call of Duty* configuration being employed once again there is no need for familiarisation.

Weapons ranging from Bond's signature Walther PPK to shotguns and AK47s offer a brutal option for achieving one's aims, but the introduction of stealth attacks creates an extra dimension.

On the one hand this proves to be a true test of cunning and guile, but it can also be frustrating. As soon as cover is broken the henchmen raise the alarm, leaving 007 to defend himself in a gun battle.

In the end it is more entertaining to thwart your foes in a mass shoot-out, rather than sneak around in the cover of darkness.

The enemy AI is another weak point, as guards seem to run aimlessly across the battle space. There are also a few technical glitches and the sight of a goon stuck in a doorway comes as a nice homage to the classic *Goldeneye* title on Nintendo 64.

The campaign mode stretches for five to six hours but the split-screen multiplayer action is where this game's true strength lies as it boasts maps, weapons and characters from Bond's 50-year legacy.

On the whole, *007 Legends* does not fully deliver on its immense promise. While there are highs to enjoy it fails to escape the sense that this is nothing more than an afterthought to the film's release and it will leave fans neither shaken nor stirred. ■

# VIRTUAL PLAYGROUND

## PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2013

for Xbox/PS3/Wii/PC

ONCE considered the pinnacle of football games, *Pro Evolution Soccer* has been playing catch-up to the *Fifa* series in recent times. At its best, this title has always excelled in the technical side of the sport and this year's instalment is no exception. It boasts a variety of outstanding gameplay features including clever AI, an enjoyable career mode and great controls, but the graphics and sound need a polish and the lack of licensed teams count against it. For fans wanting the ultimate in footballing realism there's *Pro Evolution Soccer 2013*, for everyone else there's *Fifa*.



Stephen Smith, MoD Corsham

## ROCKSMITH

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

SMASHING all other music games that have come before it, *Rocksmith* uses real-life guitars to strike a chord in the console world. Like other rock-inspired releases, you have to hit the correct notes in sequence while maintaining the steady rhythm of the track as you progress towards complex chords at your own pace. With more than 50 classic anthems and a series of mini-games on hand you'll be wailing like guitar hero *Slash* before you know it. Rock legends may find it a little simple at the start, but it is worth persevering with.



Graeme Main, *Soldier*

## BORDERLANDS 2

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

THIS title combines loot hunting, character building and a first-person shooter. With fun graphics and a host of redneck in-game lunatics guiding you along the way this is a must-have release. *Borderlands 2* is set around the tale of a vault hunter on a planet called Pandora, where he is pitted against various clans, rebels and mutants who are all egged on by the promise of cash from rival Handsome Jack. This is superb fun and there are hundreds of bonus side quests to complete as you go, while the online co-op mode creates the setting for further havoc.



Sgt Lee Gibbs, REME

## F1 2012

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

FROM the outset of *F1 2012* you can tell developers Codemasters have a passion for the sport. This release has a generous amount of content in the career and championship modes to keep newcomers and veterans entertained. If you're serious about your high-speed driving titles and want to know exactly what it feels like to burn down the straight at Monza then this is the way to do it. While die-hards will no doubt spot inaccuracies or missed opportunities, as a casual fan I was impressed. Race fanatics will be pleased to know that *F1 2012* won't steer them wrong.



SSgt Graeme Russell, Scottish Tpt Regt

## WRC 3

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

BANG – within five minutes of loading this game I am in the thick of the action. For the first play of a new PS3 title, that's pretty quick. And I am not wasting time learning the controls, they're so simple and obvious I can get straight into the race. That's not to say it's a basic game; the courses are tough and there are so many variations you can make to your car it is bewildering. If you're a real gear head, this is for you. The graphics are at the top end of the PS3 spectrum and it's also darn tough. If you're into driving games you'll love this one.



Capt Nick Mazzei, AGC (ETS)

## FIFA 13

for Xbox/PS3/Wii/PC

THE latest edition in the *Fifa* series captures all the drama of real world football. You get a true battle for possession and experience the freedom and control to be more creative in attack. Revolutionised artificial intelligence makes players more dangerous in one-on-one situations but it can be a very unpredictable game, making it outstanding but also frustrating at times. There are glitches that can be exploited, such as tugging opponents, and the referees are inconsistent. However, the online play is very good and all in all this is an enjoyable addition to the franchise.



LCpl John Murphy, QARANC





PICK OF THE MONTH:

# BACK IN THE GROOVE

TRIO PLOT NEW CHART ASSAULT

NOVEMBER'S  
MUSICAL MASTERY







Interviews: Richard Long

**H**AVING clocked up more than a million record sales in the UK, singing Servicemen The Soldiers have established themselves as a firm fixture in the musical mainstream.

Their efforts have generated vast sums for an array of military charities and the chart-storming run is about to continue with the release of their fourth studio album.

The self-titled offering features the usual mix of cover versions and original tracks but band member WO2 Gary Chilton (CAMUS) said fans could look forward to a few surprises in their new material.

"It is a little more poppy compared to what we have done in the past," he told *Soldier*. "We are great believers in the mantra 'if it's not broken, don't fix it'. But at the same time it is nice to put a few lively tracks on there to mix it up, otherwise it gets too solemn."

"We have done a great version of the Elton John track *Healing Hands*, which almost has a Scissor Sisters feel to it. We are very pleased with the final result and I think this is our best album since *Coming Home*."

The record features special guests Charles Aznavour and Genesis and Mike and The Mechanics star Mike Rutherford, who plays lead guitar on *The Living Years*.

A cover of the Bee Gees' classic *How Deep Is Your Love* has also been included as a tribute to the late Robin Gibb, who worked with the band last year.

"It was surreal to be in the studio with him but it was an amazing experience," said LCpl Ryan Idzi (QDG).

"When we started out we never thought we would record four albums, it is a shock, but hopefully we can carry on with a few more."

"We always look for songs with meaning. For example, the words on *Mothers Pride* are very poignant as they relate to soldiers leaving for war."

"But we've also recorded *It's Saturday Night*, which is a more upbeat song that is different to what we have done before. There are a few more tweaks in our music now."

And as the success continues Chilton has been quick to praise the support received within Service circles.

"The Army and my bosses have been brilliant," he said. "The Corps of Army Music is on a bit of a recruiting drive and is now going down a more contemporary route. This proves to youngsters that by joining the military as a musician you can go on to have a pop career like us." ■

# TUNES FOR THE TROOPS

## Ora by Rita Ora

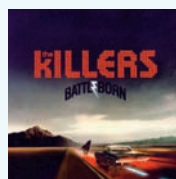
FOR me, **Rita Ora** is the new **Rihanna**. With a soulful and unique voice, this debut album is a must have and the songs are very much in the here and now, expressing emotions ranging from love to hurt. Artists such as **Tinie Tempah** and **Will.i.am** appear on a host of collaborations, offering a mix of rap and RnB that adds to the different styles of music. *How We Do* and *RIP* are superb and Ora's voice and feelings are amazing — she can sound sad in one track and upbeat in another, making her very versatile. I'd rate the album a nine out of ten for its individuality and expressive vocals.



## Kim Cresswell, Army wife

## Battle Born by The Killers

NEVADA natives **The Killers** add to their catalogue of stadium anthems with this collection of sing-along hits that are sure to appear on a set list near you in the not-too-distant future. *Battle Born* rarely strays from what has gone before as the big guitar riffs and synth-driven style are persevered with. Single *Runaways* is the best example of this but a certain degree of diversity can be found on tracks such as *Deadlines and Commitments* and *Miss Atomic Bomb*. This album is exactly what we've come to expect from a band that has carved a successful niche in the congested soft rock market.



## Richard Long, Soldier

## The Fire by Matt Cardle

THIS follow-up to 2011 smash *Letters* sees **Matt Cardle** assuming a producer's role while also playing most of the instruments himself. Considering *The X Factor* winner is one of a very elite group of male solo artists with a platinum-selling debut, I found the bulk of *The Fire* to be fairly uninspiring. Admittedly he does have a strong and powerful voice, however, nothing seems to jump out at you and although the album starts off in an upbeat mood, it ends very downcast and just fades out into the background. His fans will love this, but I don't think he's going to attract many newcomers on the strength of this offering.



## Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

## XX by HIM

CELEBRATING 20 years on the music scene, **XX** is a compilation of **HIM's** prized pieces. With sobbing vocals overlaying ballad-like melodies, they still have a sense of heaviness welcomed by the metal community. *Strange World* is a new release with catchy riffs and wah-wah strewn guitar, whereas *Join Me* is a tender ballad with haunting piano and a hard chorus. But it is the cover of **Chris Isaac's** *Wicked Game*, which captures the love of the track with added metal, that may sway the undecided. This album has all the tenderness of a kiss, but with vampire bite.



## Capt Matt Walpole, PWRR

## Think Bigger by Cosmo Jarvis

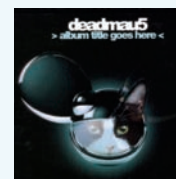
TO be honest I wanted to dislike this album after the first track. It fuses folk and light rock with a mixture of Brazilian bossa nova and incorporates a blend of scepticism and enthusiasm that is paralleled by banjo, mandolin and a string quartet. But to be fair, **Cosmo Jarvis** is pretty damn good. No matter what he does it is achieved successfully and with the ability to put a smile on the face. Even *Hopeless Bay*, which talks of a rainy, dreary place where suicide is always near, is delivered with tongue in cheek. Some people seem to have it all, so learn to love/hate this artist.



## Sgt Brian Morris, AGC (SPS)

## Album Title Goes Here by Deadmau5

THE sixth album from Canadian producer **Joel Zimmerman**, better known as **Deadmau5**, proves to be a decidedly hit and miss affair. When on form, as with the superb lead single *The Veldt* and *Telemiscommunication*, the Toronto-based star is capable of creating true dance classics that tick all the right boxes. However, he can also fall short on occasions and repetitive efforts such as *There Might be Coffee* and *Maths* prove to be tough listening and make you doubt the talent of the man. *Album Title Goes Here* may well hold great appeal to true electro aficionados, but for casual fans it is something of a struggle.



## Richard Long, Soldier

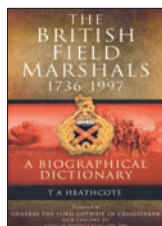


# RECONNOITRING READING

## The British Field Marshals 1736-1997

by T Heathcote

ALL those interested in the British Army's history will want this invaluable work on their shelves. A short introduction sketches the background and there are useful appendices and a bibliography. Biographies of our 138 field marshals form most of the book; the famous, the not-so-famous and the unexpected – the Kaiser and Franz Josef of Austria, our enemies in 1914, and Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. The title also details Sir John Ligonier, whose four mistresses had a combined age that was less than his. Vigour was essential for a field marshal!

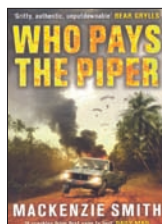


## Dr Rodney Atwood, military historian

### Who Pays the Piper

by Mackenzie Smith

BUILDING on events surrounding Op Barras in Sierra Leone, this cracking novel sees an SAS officer, Christi McKie, left behind by his team and captured by a terrorist group.



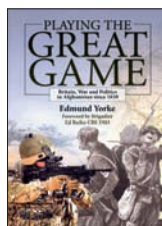
The writing is good, the characters strong and the plot plausible, if improbable. The author's military knowledge is very apparent in the story, with explicit and accurate action scenes. The plot moves from Sierra Leone to Mauritania to Hereford without skipping a beat and the almost evil but satisfying conclusion is sublime. I would recommend this to anyone who likes a good thriller.

## Andy Kay, ex-RS

### Playing the Great Game

by Edmund Yorke

ENCAPSULATING Britain's four greatest wars in Afghanistan over the past 170 years, **Edmund Yorke** argues that political frictions have created a lack of understanding of the situation there, contributing to consistent military failures. Combining first-hand accounts and historical sources, the author delivers his ideas in an easy going and interesting manner. Maps, pictures and photographs accompany the text superbly. It is easy to see why Yorke advocates unity among geo-political players in Afghanistan and counter insurgency in general.

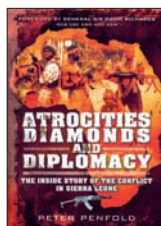


## Maj Jim Vincent, RLC

## Atrocities, Diamonds and Diplomacy

by Peter Penfold

THIS book by the former High Commissioner to Sierra Leone is a must read for anyone interested in African affairs. Covering the period of civil war in the country, it serves as an attempt to set the record straight over the events that led to the author's fall from grace through illegal arms dealing; a political scandal that came to be known as the Sandline affair. The title highlights his close relationship with the president and his passion for a state that ultimately cost him his job. This is a well informed and well written memoir.



## Sgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps

### Beat the Drums Slowly

by Adrian Goldsworthy

BILLED by the author as a novel "firmly grounded in fact", this second offering in a series of books paints an evocative picture of the British redcoats as they retreat through the Pyrenees. **Adrian Goldsworthy's** status as a historian creates a realistic portrait of life during the Napoleonic Wars. Dialogue based on actual letters and memoirs renders the speech faithful. Aside from the historical detail, the characters are authentic and easy to relate to, the events a solid portrayal of the hardships suffered and the plot captivating and enthralling.

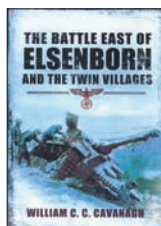


## James Alston, civvy

### The Battle East of Elsenborn

by William Cavanagh

THE Battle of the Bulge continues to fascinate academics, soldiers and battlefield tourists alike. This well written volume follows the Sixth Panzer Army, led by Gen Josef "Sepp" Dietrich, through the Ardennes. The narrative charts the campaign chronologically, viewing the fighting through the eyes of American units in the path of the German advance. The combination of the author's intimate knowledge of the ground and the operation make this an ideal introduction to Hitler's last throw of the dice in the West.



## Maj Mike Peters, AAC



Interview: Joe Clapson

ON the back of his gung-ho bestseller *The Junior Officers' Reading Club*, Patrick Hennessey's second title takes a new approach to recounting lesser-known battlefield experiences.

In a genre saturated with first-hand accounts of life in uniform and Op Herrick, *Kandak: Fighting with Afghans* offers a fresh focus, examining Afghan soldiers working with Isaf.

Speaking to *Soldier* about his change in tack, the former Grenadier Guard (pictured above) explained: "In this title I've tried to be more thoughtful and reflective, which means it doesn't necessarily offer firm conclusions but might provoke questions that others can answer better than me."

The ex-captain decided to pick up his pen again after meeting old Afghan comrades on a trip to FOB Shawqat in 2009.

"When showing them my first book I couldn't find enough material about local troops and felt genuinely guilty so I said I would write something that focused on them," he said.

Given this year's rise in "green on blue" attacks – which have so far claimed the lives of 51 Nato troops – publication of this title seems particularly timely.

Its chapters reveal how cultural differences can lead to "major dramas" on operations.

"The British military way is that we have thick skin," said Hennessey. "In the heat of an ambush you're going to get screamed at in robust language. A section commander isn't going to say 'dear old chap, would you mind fetching some ammunition?'."

"But we've found that such behaviour is not tolerated or appreciated in Afghan military culture – a local non-commissioned officer being shouted at by a Brit in front of his men has created serious problems."

Hennessey's keen eye for facts may make the tome awkward reading for official types.

"In the book I contrast criticisms of the Afghan National Army with some of the things that we brush under the carpet," the Oxford-educated author added.

One such example is that Afghan tours are considerably longer than those of their British and American counterparts.

"When the British criticise locals' laziness we must remember that these guys have been fighting non-stop for six years, away from their families," Hennessey emphasised.

"When we condemn these military counterparts for smoking pot we should think about how many British guys would get caught sneaking a quick pint on a two-year tour."

"I've tried to make people stop and think."

As strides continue towards transition, this book may also serve to demonstrate that a soldier's tolerance can be as crucial to the cause as their combat skills. ■

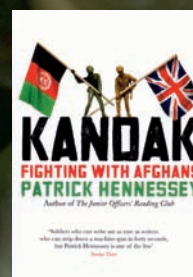


# books

PICK OF THE MONTH:

## THE AFGHAN EXPERIENCE

FORMER GRENADIER GUARD SHINES LIGHT ON  
PROVINCE PARTNERS



**Brothers in battle:**  
Patrick Hennessey's  
*Kandak: Fighting with  
Afghans* is out now  
in hardback priced  
£16.99 (Viking)

Main picture: Mike Weston





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# SOLDIER SPORT

SERVICE FOOTBALL RETURNS WITH CHALLENGING TRIALS WEEK FOR ARMY STARS

PICTURE: GRAEME MAIN







**Down and out:** The Army Rugby League team returned empty-handed from this season's Inter-Services contest following a 32-6 defeat against the Navy

# Reds routed in title defence

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Roger Thompson**

**A** THUMPING 32-6 defeat at the hands of the Royal Navy saw a below-par Army senior side relinquish its grip on the Inter-Services Rugby League crown.

The heavy loss handed the Royal Air Force its first title since 2009 as the Reds were left counting the cost of a disastrous penalty count on a night of ill-discipline in Aldershot.

Having battled their way to a 22-22 draw with the airmen in their opening fixture, the defending champions knew a win by nine points or more would be enough to secure a third successive tournament triumph.

But the victory charge failed to materialise as the team conceded 12 penalties and saw two players sin-binned – which allowed the Senior Service to run in six tries in what proved to be a distinctly one-sided contest.

Darren Bamford set the visitors on their way with a well-struck kick from distance before the Army scored their only points of the contest to take a surprise lead.

**“WE HAVE EIGHT NEW PLAYERS WHO CAN LEARN FROM THIS AND COME BACK STRONGER”**

Cpl Ceri Cummings (REME) created the opportunity for LBdr Ben Naiyaga (RA) and the speedster slipped through the gears, as well as the opposition's lines, to score under the posts.

However, the lead was short-lived as Mike Haldenby crashed through the home defence to level the match before Kev Botwood tipped the balance in the Navy's favour.

Bamford piled on the misery with a try and penalty in the dying embers of the half and with Cpl Andy Parkin (204 Sigs Sqn LAD) sent for a ten-minute spell in the stands, the points continued to flow after the interval.

Haldenby rounded off a superb cross-field passing move to score in the corner and Bamford profited from a sustained period of pressure deep in Army territory to touch down under the posts.

Steve Locton completed the rout when he collected a smart offload following

a surging run from the outstanding Bamford in the 67th minute.

Loose forward Cpl Casey Shaw (REME) became the second Reds player to be sin-binned just moments later but with the result secured the scoreboard was not troubled further.

Despite celebrating a convincing win, the challengers saw the RAF lift the Inter-Services trophy courtesy of their 19-10 success against the Navy in Portsmouth.

Speaking at full-time, Army first team manager WO2 Jay Oie (RA) said the Senior Service squad was simply too strong on what was a disappointing evening for his players.

“We were beaten by the better side,” he told *SoldierSport*.

“If you do the basics right it sets the standards for the rest of the game but there is not much you can do with two sin-bins, seven penalties in the first half and five in the second.

“That meant we always faced an uphill struggle. The momentum was with the Navy in the first period and they brought it again after the break.

“I think some of our guys were a little overzealous, they were perhaps trying too hard to force the errors and were





looking for an inspirational moment to raise the team.

"In the Challenge Cup and warm-up games we showed we are better than this. We were 20-6 down against the RAF at half-time and fought back superbly to take a draw.

"We were hoping that courage would be the catalyst for a comeback here but it wasn't to be.

"Although we are gutted with the result there are a number of positives we can take into next season.

"We had three new caps tonight and five in our clash with the RAF. Army Rugby League has a bright future; we have eight new players who can learn from this experience and come back stronger in 2013."

The Army's academy side suffered a similar fate as they slipped to a 26-14 defeat against the same opposition.

Despite taking the lead with an early penalty, the young guns conceded two tries to trail 12-2 at the interval.

The Navy notched two further scores in the opening 20 minutes of the second period before the hosts finally found their way to the line to reduce the arrears.

However, a pulsating counter-attacking move saw the visitors stretch their advantage and a late consolation from the Army completed the scoring.

The result meant the Navy were crowned Inter-Services champions. ■



**Big hitters:** The Army women crushed the Senior Service with a dominant 64-0 win at Aldershot

## Try blitz sinks Navy

WHILE the men were made to suffer in their Inter-Services decider, the Army women had no such difficulties in seeing off the challenge posed by the Royal Navy.

The Reds crossed for 13 tries in an emphatic 64-0 win as they retained their title in scintillating style.

LCpl Caz Roberts (REME) and Cpl Titilia Bani (RLC, pictured right) scored hat-tricks, while Cpl Rae Metters (REME) and Cpl Sarah Mitchelson (RLC) posted braces as the Army ran riot against a shell-shocked Senior Service side that rarely troubled the home defence.

"We came in knowing we were favourites to win so we set our standards beforehand in terms of how we wanted to perform," head coach WO2 Jason

Grant (RDG) told *SoldierSport*.

"The girls stuck to the plan, they wanted to win well and they have done that.

"At half-time we talked about keeping a clean sheet and that became an additional goal for us as the game unfolded.

"We were determined to keep them out, they had a chance to score late on but we showed how resolute we are and they couldn't get through our defence.

"It is easy going into a match as favourites, but it is difficult to go out on the pitch and win well.

"I thought Sarah Mitchelson was

outstanding but we had eight Inter-Services debutants involved in this game and that

keeps us rolling over quite nicely as we look ahead to next year." ■







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Mr & Mrs Allen (39 Regt RA) presenting the Winners Trophy at the Royal Artillery Gold Cup

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# Trial date for new-look Reds

Report: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

**A** HOST of up-and-coming players were welcomed into the Army senior set-up during a week of mixed fortunes at the team's pre-season trials.

The Reds recorded a 2-0 win over Camberley Town in their opening friendly match before slumping to a comprehensive 4-1 defeat against the Prison Service.

Head coach Capt Joe Collins (R Signals) used the fixtures as an opportunity to blood a raft of young talent ahead of this year's Southern Counties and Inter-Services campaigns and believes the experience will stand them in good stead for the challenges to come.

"We only had four first-team players involved against the Prison Service and it was a chance for us to see what the other lads are like," he told *SoldierSport*.

"We've also been looking at different systems and have tried a 4-4-2 formation, which we don't normally use.

"As a team we hate losing games but we have picked up five or six new

players during the trials week and are trying to develop the youth. To do that these guys need to come in and play."

Goals from SSgt James Lavelle (RAPTC, pictured above) and Sig Miles Gorey (R Signals) fired the Army to victory against Camberley but the team were second best to a physical Prison Service outfit two days later.

After a quiet opening period the Reds fell behind to a penalty from opposition skipper Jamie Davis before some slack defending from a free kick allowed the visitors to double their advantage.

The ball was swung into the area from wide on the right and an unmarked Robbie Masters had the simple task of tapping home at the far post.

The setback sparked the Army into life and striker Pte Callum Wilkinson (RLC) saw a close-range effort hit the post following good work from LCpl Jay Bates (R Signals) on the wing.

Lavelle brought the hosts back into the contest on the stroke of half-time when he collected a through ball from

the lively Rfn Ashley Griffiths (4 Rifles) and calmly slotted past the onrushing goalkeeper into the bottom corner.

But any hopes of a comeback were ended in the second period as Pete Stubley fired into the roof of the net before Andy Howarth unleashed

a spectacular 20-yard effort to complete the scoring.

"The first half was quite even," Collins said. "We played some

good football at times but gave away two soft goals.

"We had four men around the ball for the penalty and should have dealt with it and then a free kick round the back caught us out.

"Our attention now turns to the Southern Counties Cup and we will use the youth again so we can develop players for the Inter-Services.

"It is our turn to win that tournament this year and the team is never a closed shop."

The Army were in action against Middlesex in their opening Southern Counties Cup match as this issue went to press. ■

**"AS A TEAM WE HATE LOSING GAMES BUT WE HAVE PICKED UP FIVE OR SIX NEW PLAYERS"**





**Hot shots:** The women's team hit top gear during trials week with a 2-0 win over Aldershot Town Ladies

## Army find winning formula

**Report:** Richard Long  
**Pictures:** Graeme Main

**T**HE Army women made a winning start to the new football season with a comfortable 2-0 victory over Aldershot Town Ladies.

Goals from Pte Kaley Oliver (RLC) and Cfn Bianca Ross (REME) fired the Reds to glory in a game that saw coach Capt Sandra Hodgson (RLC) field two separate teams in each half.

The friendly fixture formed part of a productive trials week for the squad, which was bolstered by a host of new players progressing from a flourishing corps scene.

On a damp night at the Army Military Stadium the Service stars produced some slick passing and attacking play that proved too strong for their rivals.

Striker Oliver was a constant threat in a dominant first-half showing and she gave her side a deserved lead in the 20th minute, when she fired home from the

edge of the area.

The Aldershot keeper remained in the thick of the action but the Reds had to wait until midway through the second period to extend their lead.

Skipper Ross pounced on a loose ball in midfield and rifled a shot into the top corner from 20 yards.

With both teams making a raft of changes the game lost momentum but Hodgson was delighted with the overall performance and result.

"We had 30 players turn up for trials week and two thirds of them are new faces," she told *SoldierSport*.

"The corps teams are doing a great job in developing new talent and that makes selection very difficult.

"I was expecting a patchy performance as we haven't really worked on our patterns of play so it is nice to walk away with a win. Aldershot are having a great season and are top of their league so I am sure they were expecting to come here and do well." ■

## Hanbury looks at youth stars

NEW Under-23 coach Cpl Kevin Hanbury (RLC) is targeting Inter-Services glory in his first season in charge of the Army's young guns.

The Reds slipped to a 2-0 home defeat against Uxbridge in their season opener but the friendly fixture saw a raft of emerging players given their first taste of representative football.

While some will return to their regimental and corps sides as the campaign progresses, Hanbury believes the newcomers will supplement the more experienced footballers that steered the side to glory last year.

"We fielded completely different teams in each half against Uxbridge and those guys had never played at this level before," the coach told *SoldierSport*.

"The result wasn't really important; we wanted to know if they can perform on this stage. It is a really young group and this was a good run out for them.

"There is still some work to be done in the final third and they need to take their time and hold on to the ball, but there were a lot of encouraging signs.

"We are still getting to know the new faces and 11 players from last year will come back in. Others have moved up to the senior squad, so from the development side it is looking good.

"The Inter-Services is our goal but we also want to see individuals progress to the next stage and represent the full Army team."





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**Downhill star:** Capt Anna Poole (AGC (SPS)) is hoping to push for a place at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi after joining the Combined Services set-up

# Skiers dream of Games glory

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**T**HE Combined Services Disabled Ski Team is preparing for another busy season on the piste as the push towards the 2014 Winter Paralympics continues at pace.

Ex-soldier Mick Brennan and former Royal Marine Pete Dunning are already in the British squad ahead of the Games and a number of military athletes hope to join them over the coming months.

A host of Service and international competitions have been included on the schedule for this year and the team's newcomers are looking forward to pushing themselves on the slopes.

Capt Anna Poole (AGC (SPS)) is a former British luge team member and was challenging for a place at the 2006 Winter Olympics before injury scuppered her hopes.

The officer cut her foot on a piece of ice during a training run in Latvia and after failing to make a full recovery she decided to have her leg amputated at the knee last June.

"Having my leg cut off sounds so awful but it had to be done for me to move on," the 35-year-old told *SoldierSport*.

"I was skiing within five months of the operation and joined the team in March. I've done a full programme of summer training and am looking at the possibility of competing at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi.

"I broke myself trying to get to the

Olympics so to go full circle would be an amazing experience.

"I have skied all my life. I used to compete in Army events but my last one was in 2002. It will be a decade between races, things have changed but I'm really looking forward to it.

"This has given me a focus for my rehabilitation and I have got the drive and determination to succeed."

Poole admitted that Sochi is a distant target at this stage and said her immediate goal is to reacquaint herself with the sport.

"I don't know where I stand in terms of international competition but at the

moment it's just about getting into racing again," she added.

"I have got an amazing coach in SSgt Mark Scorgie (RE) and he dedicates so much time and effort to what we do. I want to do well for him, he is the driving force for us."

Sgt Grant Harvey (AGC (RMP)), who is assigned to 145 Brigade Personnel Recovery Unit in Aldershot, is another athlete embarking on his debut campaign after he was introduced to the team through Battle Back.

He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in November 2011 but was determined to pursue his passion for the winter sport.

"It is now about stepping away from leisure skiing to become a downhill racer," said Harvey (pictured left), who served with 111 Provost Company, 1st Regiment, Royal Military Police.

"That is why I have joined the team. Skiing was something I wanted to carry on with; I did not want this condition to beat me. It is early days but I love having the opportunity of being with colleagues who are also injured.

"I never wanted to leave the Army so being part of the Combined Services set-up gives me a link to the Forces.

"It is great to have the camaraderie again; you cannot get that on a civvy street.

"This is my first season so I'm just going to see how I go. Hopefully I can improve, enter competitions and do well."

For more information on the team visit [www.csdst.co.uk](http://www.csdst.co.uk)





# Drivers excel in battle of endurance

Report: Richard Long

**T**HE Mission Motorsport team reached the chequered flag at the Britcar 24-hour race to claim a thrilling 17th place finish at the UK's premier endurance event.

The Army aces faced challenging conditions on the track at Silverstone but battled the elements – as well as a grid packed with professional racers – to complete their quest.

Tpr Jimmy Gilborn (9/12 L) was awarded the driver of the weekend accolade following an incredible spell behind the wheel but the Servicemen were made to work extremely hard for their achievements.

At one stage it looked as though the team's Nissan 370Z would retire from the race after it sustained heavy front-end damage in a confrontation with a Marcos.

But in the space of under two hours the support crew had fixed the car and it was back on track.

Speaking at the end of a gruelling 24 hours, Mission Motorsport co-founder and driver Maj Jim Cameron (2 RTR) said: "It was an ambitious idea that was potty enough to work.

"I didn't think for a moment that we wouldn't get here [to the finish] as I know what high quality the lads are.

"The car was so strong, a really fantastic racing car that is engaging to drive – once you've tamed it.

"All of the guys had to deliver all the way through the programme and they haven't let me down once.

"We've done two 24-hour races now and we've never had a 'did not finish' or even been summoned to race control.

"This is a very emotional moment for everyone involved with Mission

Motorsport. We could feel it building through the event as word spread about what we were doing."

Gilborn had the honour of bringing the team home and dedicated his individual accolade to fellow drivers LCpl Martyn Copleston (2 RTR), Sgt Gary Dunning (RLC) and Cameron.

He said: "I felt really proud that the lads let me do the last hour of the race. It was very slippery but it was also a lot of fun. The team had to tell me to slow down a couple of times but I wasn't trying to break any records, I just wanted to do a good job.

"I wasn't expecting the driver of the weekend award but feel very honoured to receive it, as there are some great competitors here. It goes without saying that I will share it with my teammates."

For more information on the charity visit [www.missionmotorsport.org](http://www.missionmotorsport.org) ■



Picture: Drew Gibson



## LEONARD'S CALL

ARMY Rugby Union star LCpl Jane Leonard (RE) has been recalled to the England women's squad ahead of this month's clash with France.

The Wasps player returns from a lengthy injury lay-off for the fixture at Esher on November 3 and will be pushing for a place in the three-match series against New Zealand later in the month.

"Although Jane has been playing international sevens, she has not played the full format for quite some time so it's great to have her back in the fold," said coach Gary Street.

The Army Rugby Stadium in Aldershot will host the second game in the New Zealand series on Tuesday, November 27.

Kick-off is at 1930 and tickets, which cost £10 for adults and £5 for under-16s, can be purchased through Ticketmaster. Discounted entry for military personnel is available directly from the Army Rugby Union. Email [iturner@ascb.uk.com](mailto:iturner@ascb.uk.com)



Picture: Cpl Oti Igbo, RLC

## Late charge steers Paras to glory

THE Parachute Regiment boxing team secured the bragging rights over their Royal Marine rivals with a stunning 5-3 victory at a charity match in London.

Fought in front of a passionate and vocal crowd of military supporters, the contest was tied at the halfway stage but a superb run of successive wins in the final three bouts saw the soldiers emerge triumphant.

More than £40,000 was raised at the event and the proceeds will be divided between The Afghanistan Trust and The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

Colin Smith, chief executive of the Army charity, said the atmosphere on the night matched the fierce rivalry but mutual respect that exists between the two prestigious units.

He added: "Paras and marines each think they're the best soldiers and try to prove it through sport or on exercise, but each would pick the other to be beside them on the battlefield."

"The boxing was very competitive and made for an excellent event to support the charities, with talk of a rematch already in the air."

## Coaching course boosts Smith's ring return

**I**NJURED soldier LSgt Mark Smith (1 Gren Gds) has taken his first steps towards a new coaching career in the ring by completing his level one boxing course.

The above-knee amputee took part in the week-long programme at London's Wellington Barracks last month, where former Army coach Sgt Tony Davis (RAPTC) was on hand to teach soldiers the fundamentals of the sport.

Smith was wounded during a pre-deployment training exercise in Canada and is already putting his new-found skills to the test at the Milton Keynes Victors Boxing Club, where he has been working with up-and-coming fighters.

"Before my injuries I enjoyed boxing and competed at inter-company level," the Serviceman told *SoldierSport*.

"After getting injured I took my football coaching badges but I felt that something was missing.

"I found a gym in Milton Keynes, which is where I'm from, and asked if there were any courses I could do.

"I got invited back and have been working

there on a voluntary basis for three days a week. It has been a brilliant experience.

"The owner knew Tony Davis and this has been a massive opportunity for me. We have been working on areas such as the boxers' stance, movement, different guards and straight shots."

"It is the first stages of coaching and when qualified I will be an assistant and second in the corner. You have to spend a minimum of 12 months at this level before you can progress further.

"It has been a lot more enjoyable than football and I have been able to take part in most of the activities. Thankfully my leg has not hindered me too much."

Smith is planning to continue his work with the civilian club and believes the presence of a serving soldier has had a positive influence on the youngsters taking part.

"It seems to have had a really good impact and the lads have responded well," he said.

"They are working very hard for me.

"Having someone from the Army on-board is a real motivator and there has been a huge difference in their enthusiasm levels."





## SPORT SHORTS

■ **ENDURANCE** runners Sgt Sonia Clamp (RAPTC) and Capt Nicky Jefferson (R Signals) took to the road to commemorate the British personnel who have lost their lives during the 11-year campaign in southern Afghanistan.

The Servicewomen ran the equivalent of 20 marathons in just 11 days to raise money for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

The route started at the National Memorial Arboretum in Stafford and finished at Ternhill in Shropshire.

Donations can still be made at [www.justgiving.com/afghan-memorial-run](http://www.justgiving.com/afghan-memorial-run)

■ **NOVICE** athletes are being invited to try their hand at three exciting winter sports during the Army's annual ice camp in the Austrian mountains.

Exercise Raging Ice will introduce newcomers to bobsleigh, luge and skeleton bobsleigh and will be hosted near Innsbruck.

Ex-international sliders will offer expert advice on all aspects of the disciplines and sessions will run from January 20 to 26 and January 27 to February 2.

The cost of the exercise is £500, with a reduced rate of £400 for Army Sports Lottery and Army Winter Sports Association members. The price includes return flights, six nights' half-board accommodation and all instruction, equipment and track fees.

For more details contact Maj Belinda Robson on 94561 3312 or at [skeleton@awsa.org.uk](mailto:skeleton@awsa.org.uk)

■ **ARMY** Rugby League stars Cpl Casey Shaw (REME) and Bdr Katie Garside (RA) had the honour of carrying the coveted Super League trophy onto the pitch ahead of last month's Grand Final at Old Trafford.

Shaw was given the opportunity after he was named men's player of the tournament during his debut Inter-Services campaign.

Women's skipper Garside was selected as her team's player of the season and cheered her side Leeds Rhinos to a 26-18 win over the Warrington Wolves.

■ **THE** Royal Scots Dragoon Guards have become the first official Service team to conquer the Mongol Rally.

Racing from the United Kingdom to the Mongolian capital Ulaan Bataar, the Screaming Eagles completed the 10,000-mile route in 27 days and finished 30th in a field of 309 vehicles.

Competitors are only allowed to use cars under 1,200cc and must travel across some of the most isolated regions on the planet while being entirely self-sufficient.



**Mission over:** Service mountaineers saw their Indian adventure ended by the threat of an avalanche

## Judgement call halts ascent

**A**N expedition party from the Army Mountaineering Association saw its bid to scale an unclimbed peak in the Garhwal Himalayas cruelly thwarted by bad weather.

The eight-man team reached an altitude of 5,750 metres before a sudden snow burst increased the threat of an avalanche and halted their progress.

The trip was staged as a joint mission with the Indian Army and the climbers were attempting to ascend to a height of 6,565 metres when the conditions rapidly deteriorated.

"As soon as it snowed it was the end of the expedition," Maj Matt Hing (RLC), vice chairman of the Army Mountaineering Association, told *SoldierSport*.

"The Indian Army team climbed a peak across the valley a day later and three of their guys were killed in an avalanche.

"As an experience in judgement and making the right call at the right time, this trip was invaluable."

The soldiers suffered an earlier setback as late monsoons delayed them in Delhi,

meaning they lost ten days at the start of their quest.

"It was quite frustrating," Hing said. "We could have had that time on the mountain. To spend 18 months planning, preparing and training for the expedition and to only have a few days mountaineering was a real shame.

"We could see the peak and it was almost within touching distance. We had done the hard work and there was only a couple of technical climbs left."

The association is keen to welcome new members and is already planning expeditions to Peru next year and either India or Nepal in 2014.

A winter meeting has also been scheduled in Scotland for the end of December and early January.

"We are actively recruiting, especially among junior soldiers," Hing explained.

"If they want an easy way to get into mountaineering, rock or sport climbing, we can provide that link."

For more information on the group log on to [www.armymountaineer.org.uk](http://www.armymountaineer.org.uk) ■

## Church pushes boundary in marine marathon

**SUPER-fit** athlete Maj Iain Church (RE) has set himself the painstaking challenge of completing the US Marine Corps Marathon while wearing a 75lb bomb suit.

The officer was in action as this issue went to press and was hoping to set a new world record for such a feat by running as part of a 15-man team from the Army explosive ordnance disposal community.

The soldiers were invited to the event by their American colleagues under the Allied Forces Foundation "carry a comrade" initiative and were

raising money for bomb disposal charity the Felix Fund, which has just celebrated its first anniversary.

Having accepted the request, the Servicemen and women split into three groups of five, with one member from each outfit taking on an extra challenge in the race.

"Over a pint I said 'why not take part in a bomb suit?'," Church explained.

"The organisers loved it and I reached the point of no return as pride and peer pressure took over." Donations can be made at [www.justgiving.co.uk/teams/MarineCorpsMarathon](http://www.justgiving.co.uk/teams/MarineCorpsMarathon) ■







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# final word



**We asked members of 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, who recently returned from Op Herrick 16, how their tour went and what it felt like to be home**

INTERVIEWS: SARAH GOLDTHORPE  
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



## Gdsm Joe Robinson

The mission was very good and we were well prepared for it. Our seven months out there went really fast; I thought it would go slowly but it actually flew by. The weather was incredibly hot but we kept on pushing back the Taliban. I am looking forward to going on leave now and relaxing in California. It feels surreal to be back; a bit like a dream.



## LCpl Ciaran Hanna (IG)

I volunteered to be attached to the Grenadier Guards for this mission and I think it created progress. Op Herrick 13 was a lot tougher with more fighting. But this time we established Afghan Uniformed Police checkpoints and saw local forces getting tighter. It is good to be back and I won't return to Helmand now unless my battalion does. Two deployments is enough.



## LCpl Matthew Bailey

Things have changed a lot in Afghanistan since I was last there during Op Herrick 11. The local forces seem to be far better now and deploying was a good experience. My role was a mortar fire controller and that has equipped me well for the future. I think troops have set Helmand province up nicely for transition. It is excellent to be back. Missing my wife was the main challenge.



## LCpl Jack Glasgow (R Signals)

I learnt a lot during this, my first tour. Mission-specific training meant that we all knew exactly what to expect out there. The conditions were very basic but we had everything we needed. There was no air conditioning so July was a tough month to get through at Patrol Base Clifton. Everything we did was Afghan-led for the last two months of the tour, which was really positive.



## Maj Dominic Alkin

It has been a hard summer of fighting. The guys of Inkerman Company have done a fantastic job and I couldn't be more proud of them. We were mentoring local forces so that they could get better at their roles. It's an ongoing process and one that is working well. I'm looking forward to having some time at home now before we get back into the training cycle.



## Gdsm Andrew McLaughlin

Op Herrick 16 was good, challenging and hot. The tour was not what I expected; you sit and listen to other people's experiences but you never really know how it will go until you are there. We worked closely with the Afghan National Army and that was definitely a learning curve. Their culture is very different to ours and we had to be careful not to offend them.



## Gdsm Marc Stacey

I had a good summer. I thought there would be more fighting in Helmand province but it wasn't too bad. Before coming home we were involved in a big operation for three or four days. I think it is great working with the Afghan National Army. People say we have to be careful with them but in our area they were switched on and knew what they were doing. There is trust there.



## LCpl Charles Wasswa

The work and environment out there was tough and completely different to that of training exercises. I can't say I enjoyed the tour but I got on with my job. When we first arrived in Afghanistan the local forces didn't like us; we had to build up trust. The welfare was better than I expected and allowed us to stay in touch with families. It is nice to be back.



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