

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

BATTLE TO SAVE A SPECIES

BALL, BRENNER, FOGLE, KNOPFLER

'I was a victim of sextortion' | Reserves on tour | Your letters | Reds reign at Lord's



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Trial numbers for the Army are limited to 800 places. Application forms are available at your unit or you can access additional information and a copy of the application form at:
www.ctp.org.uk/reservists.



ARMY

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“

It's exciting, really
rewarding and worthwhile

”

Fighting for a species – p22



“

It tested everything
we wanted it to

”

Motorbike mission – p13

Eventually we
ended up having
Skype sex

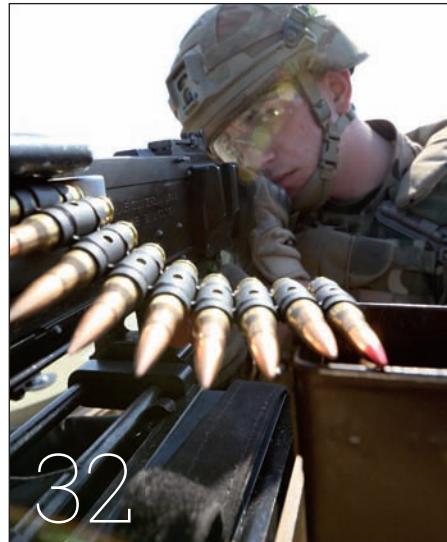
30

“

The aim is to get
people flying
cross-country

”

Ready for take-off
– p70



Sweating the small stuff



I AM always struck by the bizarre world of contrasts that exists in the British Army.

At one end of the scale you have an organisation dealing with some of the biggest issues known to man – life, death, war and even the survival of a species (page 22).

At the other end you have a workplace that, like others, can get lost in a cacophony of red tape, IT glitches, paperwork and “pet peeves” which take troops a long way from the job they signed up to do.

Read *Talkback* to find out what is rattling personnel this month.

Not all readers like this section of the magazine, but feedback from you tells us that the opportunity to air annoyances and get official answers to your problems is appreciated – perhaps even more so in this era of “fake news”.

And surely that helps to avoid bigger problems down the line.

Turn to page 45 to find out how to get your questions answered.

Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

Where to find *Soldier*

► Printed copies

THESE are distributed to every Army site at the start of each month.

► Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

ALONG with news and glimpses behind the scenes at *Soldier*, we publish a link to the latest magazine at www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine and on Twitter (@soldiermagazine).

► Online

DIGITAL versions of current and past editions are available on the Army website at www.soldiermagazine.co.uk. Just click on the “read it now” tab.

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IF you’re not in the Army you can buy *Soldier* from your high street magazine retailer or directly from us at subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk (£23 for 12 issues in the UK).

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Picture: Steve Dolk

Aiming high: The MoD wants to give Regular soldiers more room for manoeuvre

SOLDIER

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Service life set to be more flexible

WORKING arrangements for military personnel could be set for a major shake-up following the announcement of the Armed Forces (Flexible Working) Bill in the Queen's speech to Parliament.

Scheduled to come into effect in 2019, the legislation will enable part-time service among Regular troops. It will also allow soldiers to apply to limit the time they spend away from their home base and families.

The measures will enable Servicemen and women to have more flexibility through variable hours, home working, career breaks and extra leave.

The plans were drawn up after the MoD consulted all three Services, with many of the details still being developed through ongoing pilot programmes and surveys.

"We've learnt a lot from the flexible duties trial, such as the reasons why some Regulars seek time out to care for children or pursue other opportunities," Brig Chris Ghika, director of personnel capability at Army HQ, told *Soldier*.

"Further work is now required to make sure we meet their needs and to become a more modern employer, whilst at the same time preserving our

combat readiness."

So far 46 Army personnel have applied to temporarily work part-time and/or limit their deployability through the trial, which is set to continue until March 2019.

The Armed Forces are seeking more feedback through a flexible engagement survey that will go online for three weeks from July 10.

It will be the second major questionnaire of the summer for soldiers after the new joiner offer survey also went live.

The latest poll, which closes on July 9, asks troops for their views on proposed changes to pay, pensions, allowances and other non-financial factors such as personal development, childcare and leave.

The responses will help to shape fresh terms, conditions and benefits for recruits who enrol from 2020.

"The new offer will not apply to current Service personnel, however their experiences make their input invaluable," commented Chief of Defence People Lt Gen Richard Nugee.

“We've learnt a lot from the trial”

Ready to move with the times?

The two surveys can be completed on DII or by visiting
www.fessurvey.mod.uk &
www.njosurvey.mod.uk

Each one takes around 15 minutes.



A taste of Army events across the world

GLOBAL SITREP

1. CALIFORNIA

RESERVISTS TAKE AIM

THE Honourable Artillery Company deployed to Southern California to test their intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance capabilities alongside troops from the US 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment.

Exercise Vambrance Saber, which also involved the California National Guard, saw the British soldiers working with their counterparts to be the eyes and ears of a formation tasked with tackling a notional European cross-border incursion.

As well as getting to grips with each other's procedures and rules of engagement, the HAC had to familiarise themselves with American kit such as Humvees, mortars, anti-tank missile platforms and the Raven unmanned aerial system.



WEST COAST HIGHS

RESERVE personnel from 32 Signal Regiment have been developing their skydiving skills in California.

Four of the party of 22 gained the British Parachute Association B licence and formation skydiving qualification while another four jumpers completed the accelerated freefall course and A licence.

The regiment has built a strong group of skydiving enthusiasts since its initial expedition three years ago and this was the first such trip run wholly by Reservists.

"This year has been quite a step up for me as organiser so it's been an exciting challenge," explained SSgt Kelly-Ann O' Donnell (R Signals, pictured above).

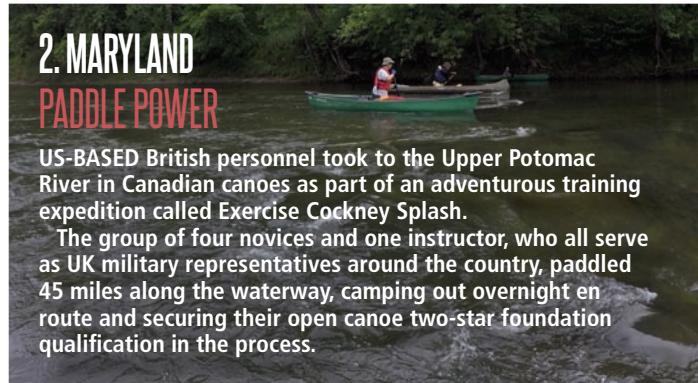


2. MARYLAND

PADDLE POWER

US-BASED British personnel took to the Upper Potomac River in Canadian canoes as part of an adventurous training expedition called Exercise Cockney Splash.

The group of four novices and one instructor, who all serve as UK military representatives around the country, paddled 45 miles along the waterway, camping out overnight en route and securing their open canoe two-star foundation qualification in the process.



3. UK

ISLAND MENTALITY

RESERVISTS from 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland headed up a two-week cadre camp on the island of Benbecula for their counterparts in 51st Infantry Brigade.

Personnel undertook roles in specialist platoons such as mortars, the general-purpose machine gun and Javelin, while the assault pioneers conducted infantry bridge building and mine clearing tasks.

Lt Col Piers Strudwick, commanding officer of 7 Scots, said: "Benbecula lends itself as a great place to learn infantry skills."





4. ROMANIA JUMP START

AROUND 1,000 UK personnel have been taking part in Exercise Noble Jump in Romania, the first time the country has hosted the package.

Staged on Cincu training area, it tested the capability of Nato's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, which 20 Armoured Infantry Brigade is leading this year.

Units including 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards conducted numerous combined manoeuvres alongside their Dutch and American counterparts.



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5. KENYA STAR SUPPORT

ANGELINA Jolie met British troops involved in UN and African Union efforts to counter sexual violence.

The film star and UN special envoy visited the International Peace Support Training Centre in Nairobi, where peacekeepers from across the continent attend UK-backed courses on preventing gender-based crime in conflict.



6. ESTONIA TANKS SHOW TEETH

CHALLENGER 2 tanks of The Queen's Royal Hussars were put through their paces during Exercise Saber Strike, the US-led training package involving 20 Nato partners.

Serials were staged across multiple locations in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland and the British platforms were part of a tactical demo at Tapa, Estonia.

Troops from 5th Battalion, The Rifles, the main UK contingent of Nato's enhanced forward presence in the country, were also in action.

Meanwhile, The Light Dragoons and 75 Engineer Regiment went through their drills in Poland.



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Main picture: Steve Dolk

Tankies mourn two talented soldiers

TRIBUTES have been paid to two Royal Tank Regiment soldiers who died following an incident involving ammunition at Castlemartin Training Area in Wales (pictured).

Corporals Matthew Hatfield (shown above) and Darren Neilson (right) of Badger Squadron were described as exceptionally talented.

Lt Col Simon Ridgway, commanding officer of the Royal Tank Regiment, praised Cpl Neilson's natural leadership style and dry sense of humour.

"While happy in any crew position, Daz had a real talent for gunnery and this was the area he specialised in, becoming a Challenger 2 gunnery instructor and commander," the officer said.

"His passion for his career in general, and gunnery in particular, was obvious and many of our soldiers have improved their skills as a result of his dedication and experience."

Cpl Hatfield, who transferred to the Royal Tank Regiment from The Queen's Royal Hussars to be nearer to his family, was also commended for his professionalism in a career that saw the Serviceman deploy to both



Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Whether as a tank driver, gunner, operator or commander, Hattie was in his element," continued Lt Col Ridgway.

"He was a man who loved soldiering, loved being part of a crew and loved having a laugh with everyone he worked with."

The junior NCO was a keen rugby and cricket player, and spent his spare time volunteering for his local Army Cadet Force.

The incident, which left two other personnel seriously injured, is being investigated by the MoD, Dyfed-Powys Police and the Health and Safety Executive.

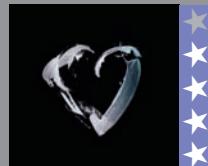
The Army has suspended live-firing by the Challenger 2 tank's main armaments following the tragedy.

“
He loved having
a laugh with
everyone
”

IN THIS MONTH'S REVIEWS



Churchill and the stigma of struggle



"If you're looking for a stylish multi-purpose stove this is worth considering."

PAGE 61

TRIBUTE TO TROOPS

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Fallon paid tribute to the vital work being carried out by Service personnel during last month's Armed Forces Day celebrations.

He said: "The military community works so hard to keep us safe each and every day. We have much to thank them for."

"In the last few years alone our personnel have fought Daesh terrorism, rescued thousands of migrants in the Mediterranean and helped protect us here at home."



CUMBRIAN QUEST

MORE than 500 determined walkers battled howling winds and driving rain to raise more than £140,000 for Walking with the Wounded at the charity's flagship event, the Cumbrian Challenge.

Staged in the Lake District, the annual test saw 130 teams tackle three routes of varying difficulty, with the 29-kilometre course proving particularly gruelling.

PAY PROTECTION REVIEW

A REVIEW of protection measures introduced as part of the Pay 16 salary model is under way.

Transitional arrangements were put in place for three years when the new scheme came into force last April, so that no personnel were left out of pocket.

The assessment now in progress was scheduled to happen after a full year of the new system.

A decision is due by December, with policy makers intending to give troops a minimum of 12 months' notice of any changes to their pay protection.



“I feel really privileged to come out here”

—Troops relish wildlife fight, page 22

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING

Long-haul hike

OWEN Murray (ex-RGJ) has embarked on a walk from John O'Groats to Land's End to raise £10,000 for military charity Blesma. The 35-year-old is carrying all kit, food and water with him, and is aiming to cover 30 miles a day to complete the 874-mile route within his 30-day target. The veteran is due to finish the challenge in mid-July.



Visit:
<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/owenmurray2>

Food for thought...



Raised:
£9,400

For: SSAFA

CELEBRITY chef Adam Handling raised thousands for a Forces charity by hosting a dinner at his restaurant, The Frog. He and former *Masterchef: The Professionals* finalist Andi Walker decided to support the military community after hearing how an elderly ex-Serviceman had been scammed out of £10,000.

“I didn't know where to turn for advice”



Help to navigate charity maze

FINDING the best military charity to suit your needs is set to be far easier for ex-soldiers thanks to the launch of a new service.

Veterans' Gateway can be accessed by calling 0808 8021212, logging-on to www.veteransgateway.org.uk or texting 8121.

Its announcement comes after research revealed more than 40 per cent of veterans said they would not know which organisation to turn to, while 54 per cent said they found the sheer number of providers confusing.

With more than 2,000 registered Armed Forces charities now in existence the result is not surprising.

It is hoped the 24-hour online chat, phone and text message service will offer greater clarity.

Staffed by trained veterans, the £2 million initiative – which has

been financed by a grant from the Covenant Fund – is being delivered by a Royal British Legion-led group of organisations including Poppy Scotland, Combat Stress, SSAFA, the MoD and Connect Assist.

It will direct ex-Servicemen and women to a full list of services from housing and recovery to mental health, finance and employment.

Former lance corporal Craig Slicker (ex-QLR), who left the Infantry in 2013 after being made redundant, championed the scheme having struggled during his transition to civvy street.

“I didn't know what I could do or where to turn for advice,” he said.

“A service like this would have been hugely helpful because I had no idea how to find out what support was available to me.”

SEE YOURSELF DRIVING THIS?

■ SERVICE personnel could bag themselves a limited edition Aston Martin for the price of a £20 raffle ticket. The car's manufacturers have donated a Vanquish S Red Arrows model to the RAF Benevolent Fund to help the charity continue its work supporting airmen and their families. Worth £250,000, it is one of just ten vehicles designed in tribute to the famous aerial display team. The raffle is open until December 1 and to buy a ticket visit www.rafbf.org/red10





Mixed emotions for motorbike mission

SIX soldiers have completed their gruelling quest to ride the length of the American continent on their motorbikes.

The expedition along the Pan-American Highway began from Tierra del Fuego in March and was due to see the team make history by crossing the infamous Darien Gap, a roadless section of rainforest between Panama and Colombia.

However, when they were refused permission to enter the region the troops were forced to miss this section out and press on with the trip.

"We had to carry on," expedition leader Maj Nick Foulerton (Scots DG) told *Soldier* afterwards.

"Yes, the Darien Gap was the highlight for us as a team and we could have waited to see if the political situation changed, but not

getting to the end would have been a double whammy.

"Our military aims and objectives were still achieved.

"Each of our various skills was required on a number of occasions. It tested everything we wanted it to."

Setbacks encountered by the Servicemen during the three-month trip included an injured arm that required stitches and a blown engine.

But the troops continued to the end, and were cheered into British Army Training Unit Suffield by exercising troops en route back to the UK.

"The trip was really fascinating," Maj Foulerton continued.

"It has been great to see the effect it's had on the team, and especially for the younger guys it really was a life-changing experience."

The truth as troops see it...

RESEARCHERS are canvassing the views of serving and civilian MoD staff on working for the department. The "lived experience" study will poll 600 personnel in a bid to improve the working environment, boost retention and recruit more people from a wider variety of backgrounds. Volunteers will give their feedback via informal interviews or on the phone. To get involved contact livedexperiencestudy@qinetiq.com or 01252 394116.

“
It was a
life-changing
experience
”

HELP IN A HANDBOOK

OFFICER and *Soldier* Career Development Handbooks have been launched to help steer personnel through key stages of their Army careers.

Published by the Individual Development Branch, the documents offer guidance on the various elements of training and education and can be viewed as a PDF on its section of the defence intranet.

MILITARY TASTE TEST

THE Army's top chefs had their military and culinary skills tested in a two-day test on Salisbury Plain.

After completing an eight-mile march, blindfolded rifle strip and obstacle course, the three-man teams were tasked with creating a two-course meal using the Service's ten-man ration pack.

A second challenge saw them cook a feast from a selection of mystery ingredients in an improvised field kitchen.

"This highlighted what chefs can achieve and that we can do military stuff as well," said Cpl Chris Glover, from the winning 30 Signal Regiment team.



A PROUD MOMENT

PRINCE William completed his first colonel's review of the Irish Guards ahead of the unit's participation in this year's Trooping the Colour ceremony.

He judged the readiness of the regiment in front of an audience of 6,000 guests on Horse Guards Parade – the first time he has performed the function since becoming royal colonel of Irish Guards back in 2011.

Capt Jimmy Parke said: "As a battalion we have not trooped the colour in front of Her Majesty the Queen since 2009.

"It is a really proud moment for the Irish Guards, especially to be able to have our royal colonel on parade as well."





“You can find yourself soaring along at 4,000 feet”

– Army paragliding thrives, page 70



A personal view from Sara Baade, Chief Executive of the Army Families Federation...

TABLE TALK

AT a recent meeting I was told, “if you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu”.

This struck a chord because it is often the dilemma that the Army Families Federation (AFF) finds itself in – how far can we push an issue without losing our seat at the table?

Many Service families want us to be outspoken in the press.

But this isn’t always the most effective way of achieving change and it could even have the opposite effect.

We would quickly remove ourselves from the table and onto the menu: no longer invited in to represent families and therefore not in a position to influence or challenge decisions.

However, just because we do not speak loudly in the media doesn’t mean that we don’t do this behind closed doors.

We’ve heard our evidence – your experiences – cited in many parliamentary debates, committee hearings and by ministers and the senior command.

We also know that our findings on the future accommodation model survey have played a major role in how this policy is developing.

Using your responses we have also been able to challenge allowances, seeing resulting increases in disturbance expenses and Service children’s visits, as well as retention of residential

mortgages on moves, to mention a few. Please be reassured that the families’ voice is being heard.

www.aff.org.uk



“
The arts are
a way we can
engage
”



Picture: Edinburgh Fringe Society

Army joins the Fringe fray

DANCERS, actors and musicians will be showcasing their talents at an Army Reserve Centre in Edinburgh as the Service plays host to the world-famous Fringe festival for the first time.

Hepburn House on East Claremont Street will become venue 210 during the spectacular, which runs for three-and-a-half-weeks next month.

The site will present six shows, with personnel acting as ushers and helping to serve drinks.

The move is part of the Army’s bid to build stronger ties with the public and has been championed by Lt Col Sue Wright (Int Corps), its first ever officer for the arts.

“Many people simply don’t have the connections with the Service in the way they used to,” she explained.

“We are society’s Army; it’s important that people know who we

are and what we do.

“The arts are a way we can engage in new and different conversations with those who often don’t meet soldiers in their day-to-day lives.”

The Edinburgh Tattoo has traditionally been the festival’s most famous link to the British Army.

Among the shows to be staged at the venue is the dance production *Five Soldiers*, which follows the fortunes of an Infantry company as they train for combat operations.

To prepare for their roles the cast spent three days on exercise with members of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards in the Scottish countryside.

Other highlights include *Between the Crosses*, which recounts the experiences of a First World War veteran at Ypres, and a drama charting a female soldier’s battle with PTSD.

Search Army@TheFringe online.

PTI QUALIFICATIONS

■ THE basic and advanced all-arms physical training instructor qualifications are now valid for ten years from the date of issue instead of five.

The change applies to Regular and Reservist personnel and has been introduced to increase the pool of qualified individuals.

All soldiers are now required to maintain a logbook to show their currency.

For further information read **ABN 58/17**.

CLIMBING THE WALL

■ COLCHESTER’S Cpl Budd VC Gymnasium has opened a new nine-metre climbing wall, which boasts 14 auto-belayed routes and a one-and-a-half metre overhang.

AWARD-WINNING WOMEN

■ NOMINATIONS are open for the second Women in Defence Awards. The deadline is July 10 and for details read **ABN 62/17**.

"I can't thank you enough for your assistance and keep up the good work."



William Riding, FPS Member



INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

At the Forces Pension Society, we value our independence. It enables us to serve the interests of our Members as the Armed Forces Pension watchdog. We hold governments of the day to account, arguing for better pensions and campaigning against unfairness in the schemes. For example, our 2015 campaign won the right for **all** widows to retain their pension on remarriage.

You will receive a range of other membership offers, too.

William's query was yet another example of a pension underpayment resulting from his voluntary retirement before completing five years' commissioned service. With our help, his claim was accepted resulting in an increased pension and a lump sum payment.

We deal with hundreds of such enquiries from our Members, helping them through the AFPS pension maze every month. Join us and see how we can help you. Or simply become a Member for the peace of mind of knowing we're here to help you when you need us. You'll be in good company; we have almost 50,000 Members.

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“I admit I used to have a low level of appreciation for them”

—Reserves U-turn, page 32

Picture: Cpl Pete Brown, RLC



TOP TERROR RESPONSE

■ SERVICE personnel have been praised for their support to the UK's police in the wake of two terror attacks on home soil.

Salman Abedi detonated an IED in the foyer of the Manchester Arena as crowds were leaving a performance by US singer Ariana Grande, killing 22 people and injuring 116 others.

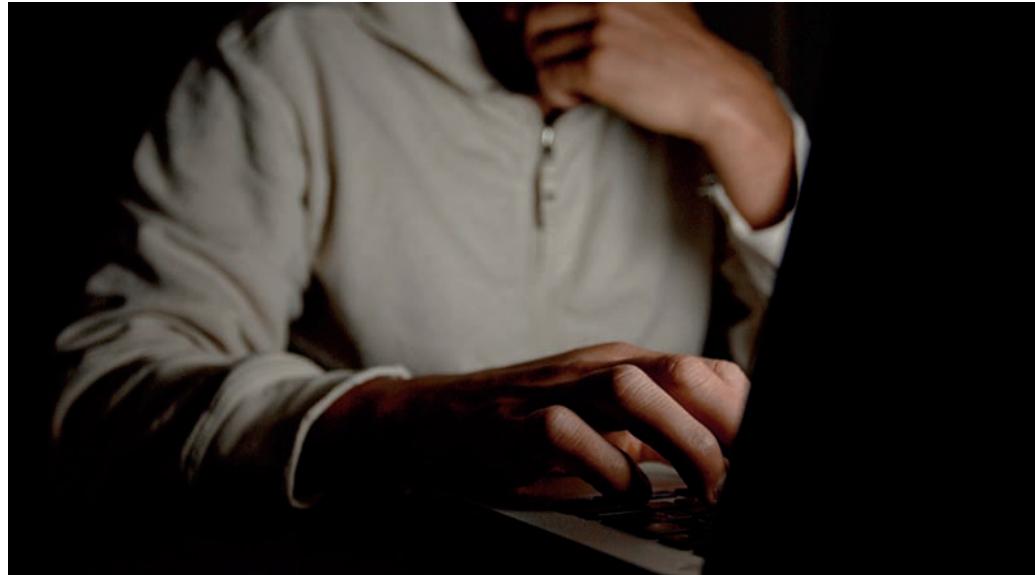
Op Temperer saw 1,000 troops deployed in armed guarding roles so that extra officers could be deployed to support the wider incident response.

“The collective calm professionalism of the military has been evident for all to see,” commented Chief of the Defence Staff, ACM Sir Stuart Peach, afterwards.

Days later eight people were killed and 48 injured when three attackers drove into people on London Bridge and stabbed others in Borough Market.

Lieutenants Pete Bryan (RA) and Jared Bambridge (Yorks, pictured below) were both off-duty when they heard a disturbance and rushed to the scene to help treat the victims.

“Call it what you will, I put it down to the training and the fact we are trained to help,” Bambridge told *The Sun*.



Picture: Shutterstock

Warning over sex videos

“
All RMP are trained to deal with this
”

HAS someone threatened to share an X-rated photo or video of you online unless you pay up?

If the answer is yes, you are probably the victim of a crime known as “sextortion”, and the Army is warning that soldiers could be prime targets.

The problem often begins when two people get chatting on social media or a dating website.

The victim may be persuaded to undress or perform a sex act in front of the camera, but later gets a message saying the material will be shared unless money is paid.

And the risk is not just financial. Blackmailers could demand information or even classified documents.

“The Royal Military Police has dealt with a number of offences involving the use of blackmail over the internet,” said Capt Sadie Paterson (AGC (RMP)), of the Investigations and Policy Branch at HQ Provost Marshal (Army).

“The majority of victims are males aged 21 to 30, so a large proportion of the Service could be subject to this.

“But victims can be male or female and any age.”

Those found guilty of blackmail can face up to 14 years in prison.

The message is “don't panic and don't pay”. If troops are bribed, the Royal Military Police advises them to cease all communication with the person, report it to a local military police station and retain any messages so they can be used as evidence.

“Victims of this type of offence may feel embarrassed or ashamed, but soldiers should be assured that all RMP are trained to deal with this sensitively,” Capt Paterson added.

“Reports will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.”

● ‘Sextortion happened to me’
— page 30



Musical merriment for military

■ THE Corps of Army Music continues its successful run of open-air concerts in the grounds of Kneller Hall this month.

A rock and pop performance will be staged from 1930 on July 1, with a stage and screen show on July 12 and a Last Night of the Proms on July 19.

Tickets are free for military personnel and their families. To book call 0208 744 8684 or email rmsm-e1courses@mod.uk



Strange twist of Falklands fate

A BRITISH soldier has reunited an Argentinian airman with his military ID tag 35 years after the helicopter pilot lost it getting shot down in the Falkland Islands.

Maj Jim Greaves (PWRR, pictured in white) discovered the relic in the wreckage of an A-109 while out walking on the South Atlantic archipelago back in 1991.

He kept hold of it for more than two decades, but after befriending an Argentinian naval officer in Cyprus last year the QM of 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment decided to ask for his help tracking down the owner.

Within 24 hours of hearing the story, navy commander Leonardo Maugere (pictured in dark blue) had called his military contacts at home and discovered that Col (Retd) Enrique Magnaghi survived the crash and was living in Buenos Aires.

Back in 1982 as a first lieutenant, the pilot had been tasked with a rescue mission in Port Howard but when his aircraft was struck it crashed and burst into flames.



Remarkably, he and his crew escaped but he broke his collarbone in the process and the ID was lost.

"I didn't expect him to be alive," Maj Greaves told *Soldier*.

After receiving some grateful messages from the owner (shown right), the British officer returned the tag to him in Argentina via his friend.

"Apparently he didn't believe it at first, then he thanked me," the Serviceman continued.

"I thought it was right that it should go back to its owner; after all these years it closes the loop."

"We are all soldiers after all, British or Argentinian."

Maj Greaves is now planning a trip to South America with his wife to meet the veteran in person.



Picture: Sgt Rupert Frere, RLC

Sheepish substitute

SOLDIERS from 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment are performing public duties in London this summer, led by their distinctive mascot Pte Derby. The Swaledale ram will be on parade alongside his human comrades at ceremonial events around the capital until August. Every year a different Infantry unit stands-in for Household Division troops, freeing them up for training exercises and overseas deployments.

UNRULY APPRAISALS

■ AN unacceptable number of annual appraisals are being submitted late and full of errors, according to chiefs at the Army Personnel Centre.

Units are being urged to ensure that their reports are accurate and timely to avoid any delays, which can give rise to Service complaints by troops.

Career managers in Glasgow will now monitor the process and hold chains of command accountable for poor practice.

For more details on the issue read Army briefing note 64/17.

WIN

SPINE LINE COMPETITION



LAST month's spine line clues were inspired by intrepid Serviceman LCpl Ben Willett (R Signals), who scaled the world's highest active volcano.

Mounts Etna, Pelee, (Nevado del) Ruiz and Yasur are all volcanoes.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with outdoor clothing supplier Snugpak (www.snugpak.com) to offer two lucky readers the next generation of its Kitmonster kit bag.

Available in two models – 70-litre (RRP £79.95, below) and 120-litre (RRP £129.95, above) – these handy holdalls are covered with durable, waterproof tarpaulin, making them ideal for busy Servicemen and women.

We have one of each to give away. To be in with a chance of winning either, just tell us what links the words on the side of this issue.

Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by July 31.





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Service personnel commended by Queen

TWO Servicewomen have been awarded MBEs for their work to promote mental health awareness and equal rights.

Maj Pauline Murray-Knight and WO2 Karen Styles (both AGC (SPS)) were among 65 Army personnel recognised in the Queen's birthday honours list.

As a mediator and mental health first aid teacher, Maj Murray-Knight (shown right top) was praised for her "endless capacity" to support personnel in need.

WO2 Styles was the first senior NCO to chair the Army LGBT forum and during her tenure helped to raise the Service from 79th to 32nd place in Stonewall's workplace equality index.

The 42-year-old (shown right) said the award had been a team effort.

She added: "Seeing differences that have been made by continual education throughout the Army has been the best part of the job."



“
Seeing the differences made has been the best part
”

Morale by numbers...

■ THE results of the latest Armed Forces continuous attitude survey have been published, with 51 per cent of Army personnel rating their unit morale as low and 60 per cent of officers saying their workload was too high.

One quarter of troops thought senior leaders understood the impact of change on troops and around half were dissatisfied with facilities in their barracks.

The survey, which helps defence chiefs understand the views of personnel, shows that soldiers' satisfaction with Service life has been in steady decline since 2009.

Two-thirds of respondents said their line manager encouraged them to develop their skills and was someone they trusted.

PRAIRIE PAUSE

■ EXERCISE Prairie Storm 3 has been rescheduled to 2018. An Army statement said the change was the result of the Service regularly "reprioritising" its training programme. It will also allow further tests with the so-called strike brigade concept.



Picture: Cpl Donald Todd, RLC

ROOMS WITH A REVIEW

■ A NEW management information system aimed at improving the allocation of single living accommodation is due to begin in spring 2018.

Plans for the scheme, previously known as Project Harmonia, were put on hold in August 2016 as a lack of take-up was reported at the 40 sites where it had already been introduced.

A review was subsequently launched and the system has now been redesigned to improve usability and performance.

Read Army briefing note 68/17 for more details on the change.

RESERVISTS IN THE BANK

■ BARCLAYS has introduced a new entry scheme to entice graduates who are enrolled as Reservists.

Candidates who have passed the Army officer selection board will now progress automatically into the final interview stage for the bank's graduate programme.

Other perks include being granted additional annual leave and membership of the Barclays Military Network offering mentorship and support.

‘HELP THE VULNERABLE’

■ TROOPS who are likely to struggle to adapt to civilian life should be identified before they leave the Army and given more assistance, according to two veterans' organisations.

The Forces in Mind Trust and housing provider Stoll are calling on the Ministry of Defence, local authorities and charities to increase support for vulnerable Service leavers, including those with mental health issues or no settled home or family life.

A pilot outreach scheme run by Stoll showed that tailored intervention during the transition process could help such groups to avoid homelessness and unemployment.

MOMENTOUS MEMORIAL

■ THE first ever memorial to African and Caribbean Servicemen and women has been unveiled at a ceremony in Brixton.

More than two million troops from these regions served during the two world wars and the monument (shown) recognises the sacrifices they made in the conflicts.

The initiative was supported by £80,000 from the Department of Communities and Local Government.







THE BIG PICTURE

THE BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE,
JULY-NOVEMBER 1917

MUD AND BLOOD

THIS month marks the 100th anniversary of the start of the Battle of Passchendaele, officially known as the Third Battle of Ypres. It has since become infamous for the sheer scale of casualties – 325,000 Allies and 260,000 Germans – as well as the appalling conditions it was fought in, with the worst rain in 30 years falling just days after fighting began. The main image shows a group of wounded Canadians resting for a smoke near Heine pillbox, somewhere between October 12 and November 6, 1917. In the other pictures stretcher-bearers struggle in knee-deep mud as they attempt to carry an injured comrade to safety at Boesinghe (bottom left) and two soldiers from the Irish Guards make their way along a communication trench with supplies (bottom right).

Pictures: Imperial War Museum



How British troops



are stepping
up the fight

against
ivory poachers
in Gabon





“ THE situation is critical. In the last ten years we've lost about 30,000 elephants across Gabon. In the past people used to kill animals just to feed their families, but now it's a black market activity. Poachers hunt elephants so they can get the tusks and send them all over the world and sometimes the money is used to support terrorism. ”

THAT is the bleak assessment of Christian Mbina from the country's National Parks Agency.

During 25 years at the coalface of conservation, the organisation's technical director has witnessed firsthand the merciless plundering of his country's natural resources.

The situation is even worse in Minkebe National Park in the north-east, where well-organised gangs exploit the porous borders between Gabon and its neighbours, Cameroon and the Republic of Congo.

The majority of Gabon's lost elephants have been killed there, their tusks destined for markets in the Far East and – it is believed – used to finance militant groups.

The stakes couldn't be higher, but with the assistance of British troops, Mbina and his colleagues are hopeful that they can begin to turn the tide.

Personnel from 2nd Battalion, The Rifles have been helping the National Parks Agency develop its capacity to take on the poaching gangs.

The latest deployment, the third in a series of six packages funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, saw a 17-strong team based at a training area near Lope National Park in the centre of the country.

Over the course of five weeks, the soldiers delivered lessons in basic military tactics and procedures to 41 eco-guards, or park rangers – the organisation's boots on the ground.

For the first time they were joined by six park managers, known as conservateurs, who also received tuition in operational planning, logistics and leadership.

Maj Joe Murray (Rifles), officer commanding the short-term training team, said personnel had been deliberately selected for their experience.

"We needed experts so the group is drawn from across the Army," he explained.

"We've got linguists and people who can deliver intelligence training but also guys who can teach basic tactics to the park rangers, things like tracking, ambush and arrest – the kinds of skills that will hopefully put them on the road to dealing with the poaching threat in Gabon."

In a joint effort, US Marines were putting the Gabonese army through its paces next door to the British camp.

The soldiers deploy alongside the civilian park staff when firepower is required.

Mr Mbina, who oversees all the managers and rangers, agreed that both packages would have a tangible impact.

"The agency's first job was monitoring animals but the criminality has grown so much that we have to get the British and American armies to come and train the guys so we can develop their techniques to protect themselves and the wildlife."

"Now we have a military presence all over the national parks, so it's not just monitoring anymore, it's not just about statistics, it's about getting results and this is very beneficial." →



Their students may have been civilians, but the UK troops found them well versed in operating in the jungle and receptive to learning military drills.

Cpl Gyanendra Rai (RGR) completed his operational tracking instructors' course in 2015 and was keen to pass on his craft.

The Brunei-based NCO was impressed by their natural abilities and said his role had mainly been to give them more structured techniques.

"As park rangers they already had some experience and knowledge," he explained.

"So they can track poachers or animals but they do it without any real organisation or order of march.

"Military trackers have a professional way of doing things so I just polished them up.

"I taught them how you rotate the guys, how if they come across an incident site they can gain more information about the targets they're following, and procedures for gathering and preserving evidence.

"If they get accurate details, when they find the poachers they will have some proof and will be able to arrest them."

Part of the reason Gabon's parks offer fertile hunting grounds is because of their remoteness.

Therefore the eco-guards have to be adept at operating at range in difficult terrain if they are to effectively police their areas of responsibility.

With medical backup often days away and any number of hazards lurking in the jungle, one of the most important elements of their training is mastering basic first aid.

LCpl Roseanna Rowbotham (RAMC) took them through what to do should they encounter snake or insect bites, gunshot wounds or illness.

"Their medical knowledge is very limited," she said of the park rangers.

"One of their biggest fears is snakes and scorpions. They have a lot of experience with it but the way they treat it is quite old-school, almost like witchcraft, nothing with any real scientific proof.

"They use tree sap on wounds because apparently it slows down the venom.

"Whether there's any truth to it I don't know. It might work but there's no book that says it does.

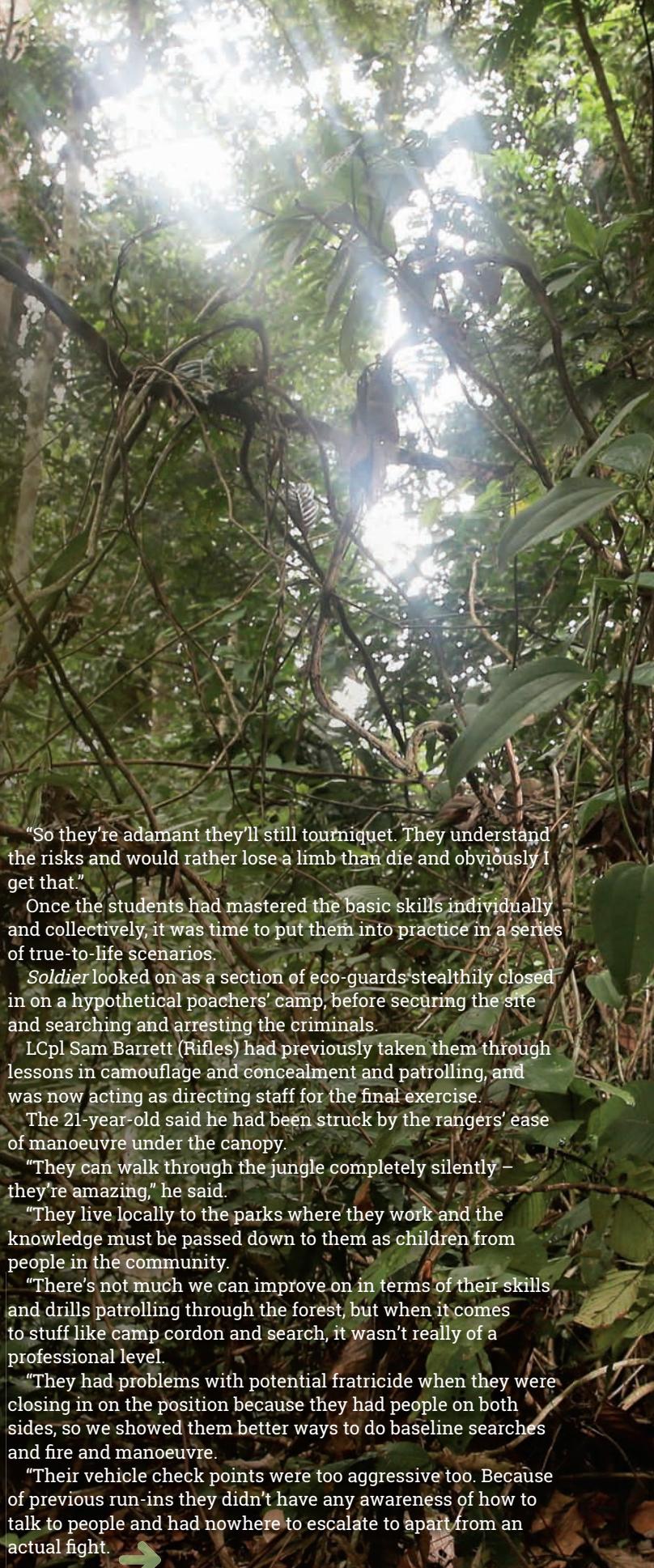
"I also went through our equipment, like tourniquets and splints, as well as how to improvise using sticks and scarves because they currently aren't issued with that kind of thing."

One of three Servicewomen on the training team, the 25-year-old said that while the rangers were receptive to her advice, the nature of their role meant they may be forced to make difficult choices out in the field.

She explained: "In the British Army we're no longer taught to use tourniquets if you've been bitten by a snake because of the limb damage it causes.

"The eco-guards were shocked by that. They say that the poison from the Gabon viper will spread to your brain in just five minutes.

"You can't carry anti-venom out here because you need a fridge. It's going to be hours if not days to get someone out of the jungle and to hospital.



"So they're adamant they'll still tourniquet. They understand the risks and would rather lose a limb than die and obviously I get that."

Once the students had mastered the basic skills individually and collectively, it was time to put them into practice in a series of true-to-life scenarios.

Soldier looked on as a section of eco-guards stealthily closed in on a hypothetical poachers' camp, before securing the site and searching and arresting the criminals.

LCpl Sam Barrett (Rifles) had previously taken them through lessons in camouflage and concealment and patrolling, and was now acting as directing staff for the final exercise.

The 21-year-old said he had been struck by the rangers' ease of manoeuvre under the canopy.

"They can walk through the jungle completely silently – they're amazing," he said.

"They live locally to the parks where they work and the knowledge must be passed down to them as children from people in the community.

"There's not much we can improve on in terms of their skills and drills patrolling through the forest, but when it comes to stuff like camp cordon and search, it wasn't really of a professional level.

"They had problems with potential fratricide when they were closing in on the position because they had people on both sides, so we showed them better ways to do baseline searches and fire and manoeuvre.

"Their vehicle check points were too aggressive too. Because of previous run-ins they didn't have any awareness of how to talk to people and had nowhere to escalate to apart from an actual fight.

66

They can walk through the jungle completely silently

99

IN NUMBERS

600

number of park rangers working across Gabon's 13 national parks

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Gary Jamieson, former Scots Guardsman, injured in Afghanistan in 2010, Charity Beneficiary. © Malcolm Cochrane



Did you know?
Gabon's forest elephant is smaller than its African cousin, the savanna elephant.

It has shorter tusks but its ivory is prized because it is said to have a pink tinge.

Picture: Shutterstock



→ "But they've taken that on-board and have changed the way they approach it."

"I've got a lot of time for them. I've stayed out with them at night and even though there's a language barrier I've chilled with them and they've shown me their ways of cooking in the jungle and things like that."

"They might be civvies but I'd happily have them in my section."

The NCO described how he had wanted to be part of the 2 Rifles training team for some time but had to wait until he was promoted to be eligible for the mission.

As well as the opportunity to develop himself professionally by working with foreign personnel, he said it was especially rewarding to contribute to animal conservation.

As if to underline the importance of the project, an elephant carcass had been discovered nearby shortly after the troops deployed.

"There's a reason why we're doing this," continued LCpl Barrett.

"Back home you don't really understand the severity of the problem but coming out here you realise it's serious."

"An elephant was killed about 20km from here.

"We've seen them cutting around a few times and they're amazing animals so to see the effects

of the poaching really brings it home."

Among the conservateurs to take part in the package was Nazaire Madamba, a park manager from Monts de Cristal National Park.

The 50-year-old confessed he had been afraid of firearms before the training – these rangers currently only carry machetes – but said his newfound skills, tactics and strategic knowledge would go some way to levelling the playing field in the battle against the poachers.

"Before the course I did not know about guns, but now I do and conservation will benefit from that," he commented.

"We're ready to go on ops out on the ground."

"This is like a little war, because people are shooting elephants with rifles and we only have machetes to protect them."

"So in order for us to face up to this threat we also must be equipped in future."

Sharing his opinion on the poachers, Mr Madamba was unequivocal.

"For me they are thoughtless people," he said.

"They don't think of the needs of their children or grandchildren. It's the search for easy money."

"There are other jobs they could do."

"It's very unpleasant; we can never understand each other."



It's exciting and it's really rewarding and worthwhile to be able to impart some of the knowledge I have to the park managers and the eco-guards so they are better equipped to think about their casevac plans and first aid skills and drills on the ground. Everyone loves elephants and to know that you are trying to make a difference against the poaching trade means a lot.

Capt Katherine France, RAMC

WILDLIFE WARRIORS

Rangers and their trainers reflect on their motivations



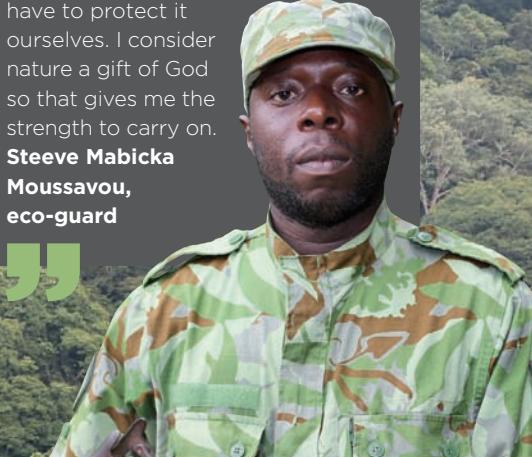
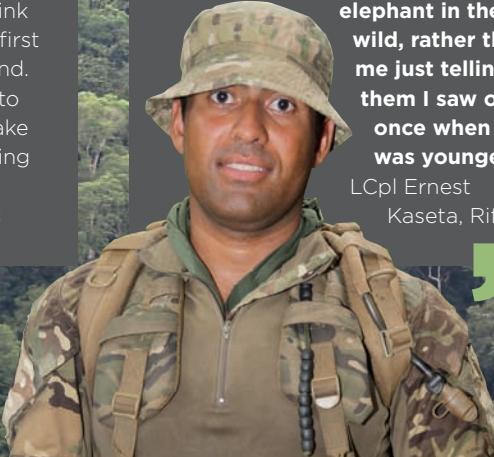
Honestly, I feel really privileged to be here and do my bit because in the future if I have kids I'd like them to be able to come and see a real elephant in the wild, rather than me just telling them I saw one once when I was younger.

LCpl Ernest
Kaseta, Rifles

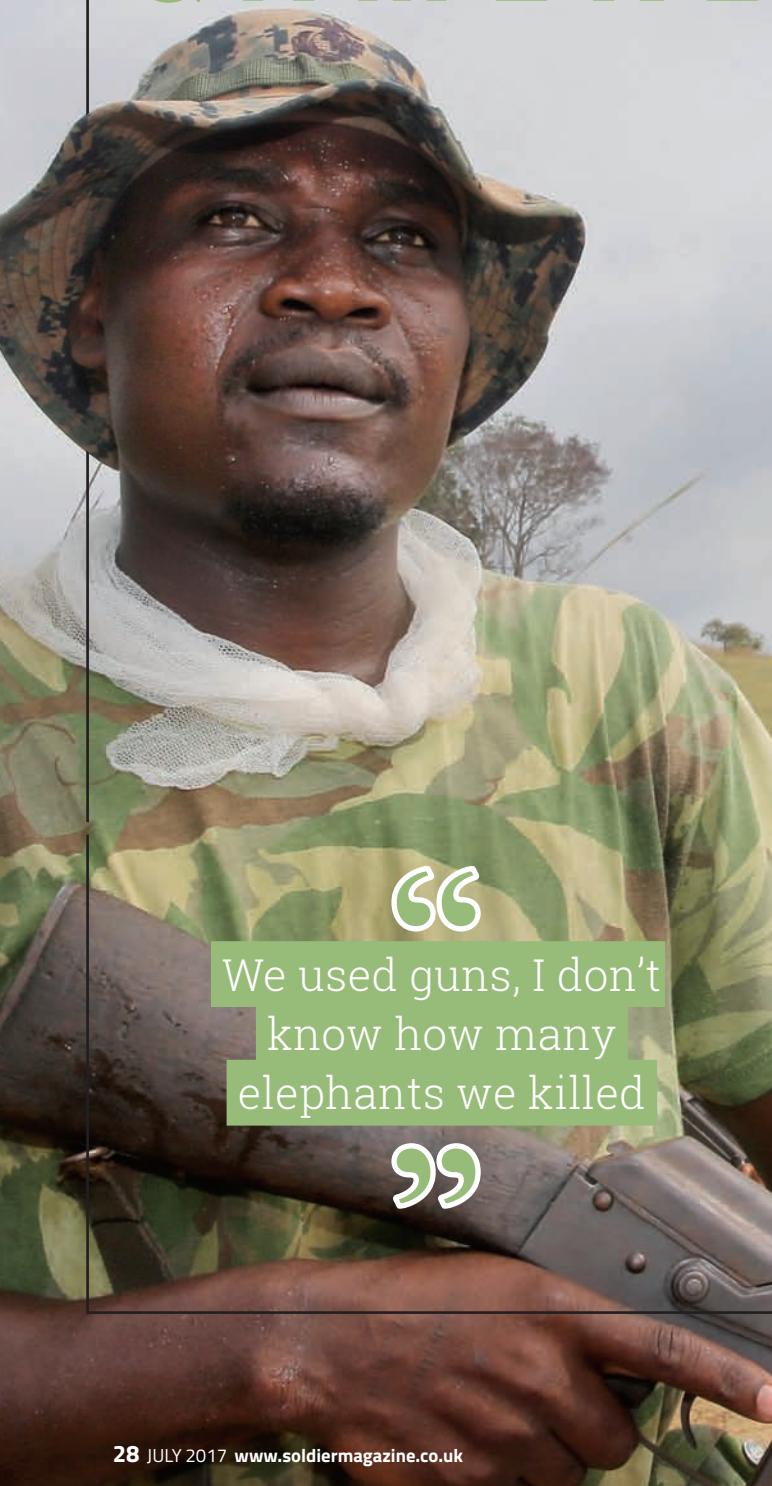


I do this for the love of nature and the environment because we live in a country with many trees and animals and we see many poachers. This is our forest and we have to protect it ourselves. I consider nature a gift of God so that gives me the strength to carry on.

**Steeve Mabicka
Moussavou,
eco-guard**



POACHER TURNED GAMEKEEPER



66
We used guns, I don't know how many elephants we killed

99

WHILE professional poaching gangs are decimating the elephants of Minkebe National Park on an industrial scale, elsewhere people hunt game just to make ends meet.

The National Parks Agency recruits former poachers as eco-guards, partly to harness their experience but also to offer local communities alternative employment and encourage them to see wildlife as a resource to be protected.

Ulrich Emane Meguazeb is open about his time on the other side of the conflict.

"I was a poacher with my father and grandfather when I was younger," he told *Soldier*.

"They did it to pay for my big brother to go to school.

"So I went into the forest with them and they taught me how to track and hunt animals.

"We used guns. I don't know how many elephants we killed – I was only 15.

"Because I had that experience I now know how to track the poachers.

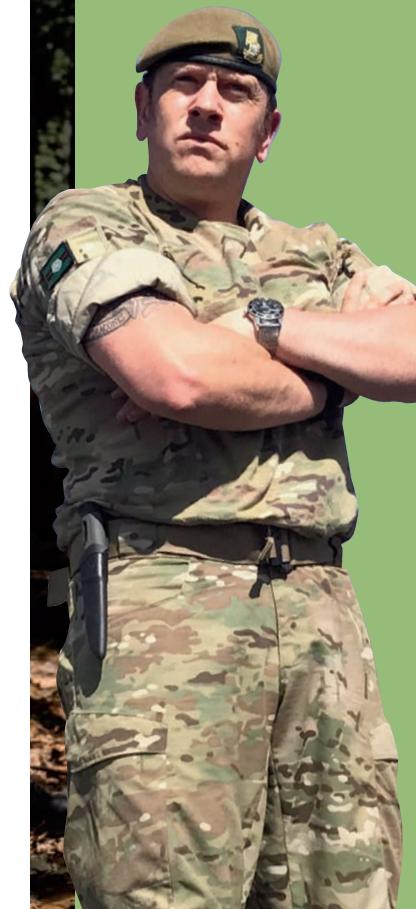
"I know how they work, how they move through the forest with their equipment, the times that they sleep.

"I feel good that I'm helping to protect nature.

"Yes, I made some mistakes but now I'm doing some good."

TURNED GAMEKEEPER

Following several anti-poaching deployments in Africa, a specially trained team has been set up by 102 Logistic Brigade. Eventually its troops will take over all such missions. Here, the officer at the helm of the tasking explains why it will be as valuable for his soldiers as it will be for the wildlife...



BUSHCRAFT'S BACK

WITH some of the best military kit in the world and a well-honed casualty evacuation system, it is easy to understand how the British Army's proficiency in survival bushcraft has faded somewhat over time.

With little requirement for such skills on recent combat operations, and thoughts now turning to the realities of cyber warfare, it is probably fair to say that the closest many of today's soldiers will have come to such lessons is the TV offerings of Ray Mears and Bear Grylls.

But now a specialist team of counter-poaching operators (CPOs) has been set up by 102 Logistic Brigade to assist African countries in the battle against wildlife crime.

And with it is coming the renaissance of some of the more traditional military skills.

"This is giving soldiers a chance to practise something that has almost been forgotten," Maj Tony Viney (Yorks), officer commanding the CPO teams, told *Soldier*.

With help from some of the world's best bushmen and conservation charity Tusk Trust, he has turned 20 troops from 1st (UK) Division into survival masters, who are able to build a snare, survive on plants and butcher a goat as well as track poachers independently over several kilometres.

And all in the space of just five months.

According to the jungle warfare instructor, these are valuable lessons that the troops can call on when deploying alongside park rangers to boost their skills and tactics.

"Tracking is a skill set that's been lost," Maj Viney adds. "These are things that people just don't know about as much."

"When I was a young officer we were taught it, but they aren't now."

After completing a final training package in northern Kenya last month, the newly-trained CPOs are now awaiting their first deployment.

And when the call comes, as with the latest Gabon tasking, the team will be training civilian rangers rather than military personnel.

But that will not stop the lessons running both ways.

"We are partnering with them to try to stop people breaching the fence, killing the animals and leaving with the ivory," Maj Viney explained.

"But we are going to learn as much as we teach; it's absolutely a two-way street."

"These young 18- and 19-year-old soldiers who would potentially have been sitting around on PlayStations in their units will instead be sitting around campfires without their phones."

"It's producing a very different soldier to the one that's developing naturally in our society."

"Survival is a big deal, and these CPOs get to do this for real and practise so that if the skills were ever needed in an aggressive stance, they've already done it."

But a note of caution: "We are not militarising park rangers, we are going out there to help professionalise them and to enthuse them."

With that in mind, the troops who responded to the original calling notice were vetted to ensure wildlife crime was something they cared about and understood.

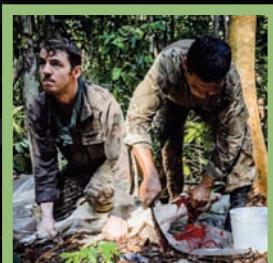
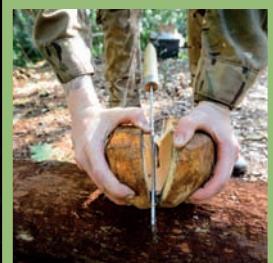
And a can-do attitude will be essential on the ground: individual troops could find themselves on patrol with the rangers for up to four or five days at a time.

"This is where it differs to other operations; when our guys deploy they will be on their own," Maj Viney continues.

"But they will come back much better at operating like this because they have been based with local forces, practising SOPs with them and working with them."

With the illegal ivory trade pushing elephants and rhinos towards extinction, and causing corruption and instability in states around the world, having the British Army's highly respected values and standards influencing this vital work seems like a no-brainer.

And if that broadens the skill set of the Service's technology-driven millennials in the process, all the better. ■



COUNTER-POACHING TEAMS: THE SCORE

- Each mission will see around seven personnel deployed, typically consisting of an OC based in the operations centre of the park, a senior NCO from the Intelligence Corps who can provide human intelligence and advice on patterns of activity, and four CPOs, who will deploy individually with a couple of rangers for days at a time out of camp. By training the rangers it is hoped the lessons will be passed on throughout the national parks.

I got caught out

hook

line

&

sinker

As the Army warns troops of the danger of sharing intimate material online, one colour sergeant speaks anonymously to *Soldier* about falling victim to 'sextortion'





Interview: Becky Clark Picture: Graeme Main

IT was a normal, boring night in the block. I was on some kind of dating site where it was easy to hook-up with women.

In my experience the girl never messages you first, so that was the first combat indicator, but I got a message and looked at her profile.

She was a stunner so I wrote back.

She suggested talking on Facebook instead, so I added her.

We chatted for a bit. She had a profile; not an extortionate number of friends but enough to make it look real.

This was about five years ago so you could only really video via Skype, so we switched to that – this was all within the space of about 20 minutes.

She said her microphone was broken so we'd have to type and there was a video of her typing.

She was asking me whether I had children, if I was married, what I did for a living.

I now know that these are the questions they ask when they're looking for a victim.

Eventually we ended up having Skype sex.

Suddenly the video link went dead. She typed that she was having problems and would set it up again.

She called back, I clicked on the video chat button and basically there was the video I had just broadcast to her being played back to me.

She typed: "Ha ha, look at this, I recorded you, this will be very embarrassing for you."

Then she said she'd hacked my Facebook and was going to send the footage to all of my friends if I didn't send her £1,000.

Initially I just laughed because I honestly didn't care, but what got me was that I was friends with my niece on Facebook and she didn't want to see me doing that.

So I said I could probably conjure up £250.

She said I had 24 hours to pay and sent me an account and I ended up transferring the money via Western Union to a bloke somewhere in the Philippines.

They messaged back saying they'd received it and that I had a week to give them the rest.

The next day I went straight into work and told the lads and, of course, in the Army a problem shared is a problem laughed at. The blokes were in stitches.

But someone knew about computers and traced the IP address to somewhere in London, where the Skype call came from.

I spoke to a friend of mine in the police and he said this kind of thing happens all the time.

He said not to give them any more money and that it was highly unlikely they would actually post the video.

On payday, right on cue, I got another message asking for the rest. So I called their bluff, told them I didn't care and that I'd reported them to the police.

Nothing further was ever said.

Coincidentally, about a fortnight later, I got chatting to a guy in a pub and he said he was making an absolute fortune conning people on the internet. He seemed to think it was a legitimate career!

He told me how it works. Scammers download software, which has loads of pre-recorded videos of girls that they can use to trick you.

They normally go for rich married men who have a lot more to lose but I think Service personnel also make soft targets because it could bring the Army into disrepute.

I also know another soldier who it happened to and they actually posted his video.

It's another life experience that I've had – I got caught out hook, line and sinker.

But the combat indicator is: if it

seems too good to be true then it probably is.

If a girl messages you first online, be suspicious. Girls just don't do that because they are normally bombarded with messages.

If the girl says her microphone isn't working, if she wants to see you on camera but she's not willing to put herself on camera, then don't do it.

If you are blackmailed don't pay; block and delete them. Tell them you've reported them to the police and they'll probably bottle it.

I honestly wasn't that bothered about it but I can understand how it could ruin someone else's life.

I don't do any sort of social media anymore.

And I use more conventional means of meeting women.

Sextortion:

Wise up

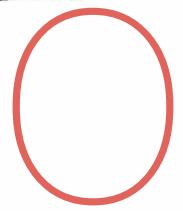
**Don't want this story to be you?
The Army has the following advice...**

- Be cautious about who you share your details with online
- **Don't tell strangers that you are in the Services**
- Consider that any images you send may not be kept safe
- **If you think you have been a victim, report it to the civilian or Service police**



'YOU CAN'T

Reservists blend in on the road to Kabul



OPERATION Toral is proving to be a great chance for the Army's volunteers to test their mettle.

The mission is ensuring the safety of British and Nato personnel working with Afghanistan's government and security forces.

And when 250 members of 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment deploy to Kabul later this month, they will be taking 12 Reservists from the 4th Battalion they are paired with.

It is not the first time that part-time personnel have brought a boost to this important mission: the incumbent 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment have been working alongside 20 Reservists.

But according to those in charge, these soldiers are really starting to blend in.

"When they joined us I was genuinely impressed," said Maj Gary England (Yorks), OC of Corunna Company, during 2nd Battalion's pre-deployment training at

Report: Steven Muncey Pictures: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

TELL WHO THEY ARE

Caerwent Training Area.

"They have worked with us in the past on various Op Telic and Herrick tours, but this is the greatest number we've operated with for many years."

The officer continued: "They all had to go through a tough selection process at their battalion and then they went through the Mission Training and Mobilisation Centre at Chilwell.

"As a result, they're very fit and have come up to speed on the required skills and drills really quickly.

"You can't tell who they are among my troops and I think it's a credit to 4 Yorks that they have been trained to such a high standard."

Recent events in Afghanistan have illustrated just how volatile the situation in Kabul is and as if the stakes weren't high enough, this will be the first operational tour for most of the soldiers and the first time 2 Yorks have been deployed as light mechanised infantry since switching from a light role in 2015.

The Reservists joining them won't be employed just to fill certain technical or support functions, either.

They'll be involved in core tasks such as vehicle searches, sentry duties

and close protection to the advisers working at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy.

The contingent will also be expected to form up a quick reaction force when required, and protect Nato personnel and Royal Air Force Puma helicopters based at Hamid Karzai International Airport.

"It's a unique deployment and preparing for it has been a steep learning curve for us all but we are highly motivated," said Maj England.

"We are making sure everyone, including the Reserve soldiers in our ranks, brush up on skills such as close protection, detecting insider threats and judging atmospherics to make sure they are completely up to standard.

"They have completed urban driving sessions with their Foxhounds in order to prepare for negotiating the busy streets of Kabul and will complete another field firing exercise at Otterburn before they deploy to reinforce the training from the first package of this type we conducted several weeks ago (*Soldier*, May)."

With the training tempo gathering pace, *Soldier* took the chance to gauge the views of some of the Reservists who have been selected to deploy...

THEY ARE

Pte Tom Batty

Day job: Gas engineer

Joined Army Reserve: 2015

The decision to deploy was a hard one to make. I didn't treat it lightly. I spoke to my family and then my partner before I volunteered; she was keen for me to go because she knew how important it was to me. My civvy employer, British Gas, has been very supportive and gave me no trouble when arranging dates to be away. Our battalion put us through a tough selection process based on lots of physical fitness tests and I'm really pleased to have got through.

The biggest test in training has been learning cultural awareness and until we've found our feet out there and got to know the locals this will be pretty daunting. The language is also a hurdle but we have cards to learn from and it's those little things that could help us build a rapport with the Afghans. Mounted drills have been a challenge too because 4 Yorks is a light role battalion and we've never touched Foxhounds before. We have been trained up on safety procedures, basic maintenance, prepping the vehicles and learning how to use the comms gear.

I'm looking forward to returning to Afghanistan.

I served as a Regular with the Grenadier Guards on Op Herrick 16 and after I left I wanted to keep my foot in the door. Joining the Reserve has given me a good balance between soldiering, family time and picking up a new skill set in a civilian role. The general standard of Reservists is pretty high and I admit I used to have a low level of appreciation for them but it's much higher now.



Pte Nick Liddle
Day job: Printer
Joined Army Reserve: 2016

My employers were fine about me deploying once they knew it wasn't going to cost them anything. My family are okay about me going away too - my boys are grown up now so they'll only miss me when they want to borrow money!

The initial unit selection process was very tough and then we did two weeks at Chilwell consisting of two physical training sessions every day. I used to do triathlons and I've kept myself pretty fit so even though it was hard work I got through. Now we're with 2 Yorks it's great to be doing training every day rather than once a week or month and the boys here seem to have accepted us without any problems.

Learning about Afghan culture has been fascinating.

Even the little things like not giving an Afghan national the thumbs-up sign, which I do all the time in the UK, is a no-no. Apparently that's the equivalent of giving someone the finger.



Pte Daniel Hill
Day job: Maths teacher
Joined Army Reserve: 2015



The 2 Yorks guys have really welcomed us. I was expecting a bit more banter to be honest. I can't wait to get out to Afghanistan, it's what I joined up for and this might never happen again. My employers are relaxed about me going away on tour and I've taken a full 12 months off work so I can go travelling for a bit after it's finished.

I've never been in a Foxhound before so learning how to get in and out of the vehicle with all our kit on has been vital. I've also enjoyed the courses I've been on such as field medic and IED detection. In my Foxhound I'll be the one to clear an IED so I'll have some responsibility, which is great because it means the respect is mutual.

I have no plans to leave yet but if there weren't opportunities to go on tour like this I'm not sure how long I'd stay in for. However, I'm thinking of applying to commission as a Reserve officer after completing this deployment.

LCpl Chris Trunkfield
Day job: Architect
Joined Army Reserve: 2007

My employers were surprised that Reserve soldiers could actually be deployed. Once it had sunk in they were more concerned about how I felt than how it would affect them. I'm really excited about the deployment - it was a tough selection process back at my unit and at Chilwell and out of 40 or 50 blokes who applied only 12 of us made it.

The quantity of information we have to absorb has been a surprise. It's been a real challenge, especially learning about the culture and the country; there's so much to take on-board.

Being a Reservist helped support me through college. I saw it as a good opportunity to travel and earn money while I was doing my degree - architect courses last for six years. My friends asked me why I didn't join the engineers as it's related to architecture but when I'm with the Army I want to do something completely different.





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MAN ABOUT MAYFAIR

Interview: Richard Long Pictures: Graeme Main

Loggie-turned-jeweller speaks to *Soldier* about his new life among the rich and famous

THE notion of supply and demand can vary in extremes. Ex-soldier Kerry Gospel is the perfect embodiment of this as he sits in his Mayfair office awaiting his next client. Seven years earlier he was on the front line in Afghanistan spearheading the logistical chain that ensured personnel from 3rd Battalion, The Rifles had the kit, ammunition, rations and water needed to fuel their battle with the Taliban. The fighting in Sangin district proved an intense affair and failure to deliver would have had fatal consequences. Fast-forward to today and there is no life-or-death scenario attached to Gospel's new career as a high-end jeweller.

Time for a change: Kerry Gospel served for almost 30 years before embarking on a new career as a jeweller





But in this environment the same failure to deliver could have a grave impact on the company he works for.

Blowers has forged a reputation as a leading supplier of luxury watches and exquisite jewellery and with a client base that includes Premiership footballers, movie stars, business leaders and musicians its services are highly coveted.

Some customers are willing to spend in excess of £200,000 on a single item so if their demands are not met the consequences could be costly to say the least.

Fortunately, Gospel's military background means there are no worries in this regard and having been asked to head-up the firm's Mayfair operation he has enjoyed a successful spell in the capital.

After joining the Army as an 18-year-old private in 1987, he had a rewarding life in the Royal Logistic Corps that included tours of Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor, the Falklands and Afghanistan, as well as three deployments to Iraq.

One of the biggest tests he experienced in that time was his work in Sangin, which looked to revolutionise the way supplies were moved forward.

"I headed up a trial that saw RLC soldiers embedded in the front line," the former major told *Soldier*. "It was just a concept at that stage.

"It could not have been a more challenging area of operations and it was our job to make sure the right kit always got to the right places.

"One of the biggest criticisms of that campaign was the time it took to get supplies to the front. It wasn't a case of people not doing their jobs it was just the system that was in play; that's why we launched the trial. The Infantry said what they wanted and we made it happen."

As a career that spanned almost three decades came to an end Gospel was ready for a change and when it came to deciding what to do with his life next he was adamant the safe option was not for him.

"I wanted to find a job I loved because it makes things easier," he explained.

"My advice to anyone leaving the Army is don't go down the obvious route. Even if you have no experience why not pursue your dreams?

"A lot of officers I served with went into the logistics trade as it seemed to be the logical step. Guys will do the 'safe job' for two or three years and then find the thing they love.

"That leap of faith is hard for people to take.

"I wanted to go into the music industry as a tour manager, helping a band get shows on the road.

"I was in London for a meeting to discuss this but Blowers had just opened their office and invited me to look round.

"Off the record they asked if I was interested; I thought about it for a week and my decision was made. One instinctively knows if something is right."

Luckily for Gospel, it was a case of being in the right place at the right time.

Thanks to his grandfather he had forged a keen passion for watches as a youngster and was fascinated by the maker Panerai due to their links to the Italian navy in the Second World War.

His interest eventually led him to the Hull-based jewellers and a friendship with managing director Mark Blowers ensued.

He concedes there was an element of fortune in his new career



Front of house: The former major runs the show at Blowers' Mayfair office

66 Soldiers have more to offer than qualifications 99



path but believes his military background has served him well.

"This business is built on trust and integrity, which is just like the Army," Gospel explains. "I'm sat in an office by myself with at least £250,000 worth of kit in the cupboard.

"I could chuck it in a bag and disappear but we have that element of trust.

"I have been lucky in the fact I had some good contacts. Anyone leaving the Service who says they are not daunted by life on the outside is lying – you always worry.

"Soon after I took on the job the owner, who is a stern businessman, came down to have a look. He sat in the corner and watched me working with the customers.

"That was the one day I felt like a duck. On the surface I was calm and collected but under the water I was flapping like crazy; I wanted to be back in Sangin."

But Gospel passed the test and his days are now spent heading a different supply chain.

If a high-profile client has his eye on something expensive a home visit can be arranged to seal the deal. Likewise, the former soldier can find himself sat at his desk late at night to honour an appointment with a businessman who has only just jetted into the country.

"There is a lot of excitement in what I do," Gospel added. "In the military you are used to solving problems and moving on and it is the same when selling luxury goods.

"You are constantly focusing on a problem that needs to be solved, and then you move on.

"I'm also lucky to be working for the right people. Mark is like a good commanding officer; when I was struggling I knew I could call him for some guidance and I was never made to feel uncomfortable for making a mistake.

"He is also very good at taking feedback the other way."

With his new life on civvy street taking a positive steer Gospel's leap of faith has clearly paid off and he has some simple advice for those daunted by what to do after leaving the military.

"Soldiers have more to offer than just qualifications," he explained. "They do not realise they are good at working with other people, have integrity, good timekeeping and can think on their feet.

"Military personnel take these things for granted but employers on civvy street love this.

"My advice would be to get on LinkedIn and build a network of business people and let them see your qualities and attributes.

"Your character may well be better than any qualifications." ■



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[VETERAN INTERVIEW]

Name: Roy Cruttenden

Age: 92

Dates of service: 1943-47

Cap badge: Royal Engineers

Standout operations: Served with 577 Fuel Coy, 13 Corps in the Second World War. Completed bridge reconstruction tasks in Trieste, Italy. When the war ended he was responsible for awarding claims for infrastructure projects.

Current status: A former Olympian, Cruttenden competed in the long jump at the 1956 Games and finished fifth at the Commonwealth Games two years later. Having qualified as a civil engineer, he worked for the Admiralty Works Department after the war. Now retired, he lives in Sussex and follows Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club.

► DON'T HESITATE TO PUT YOUR HAND UP

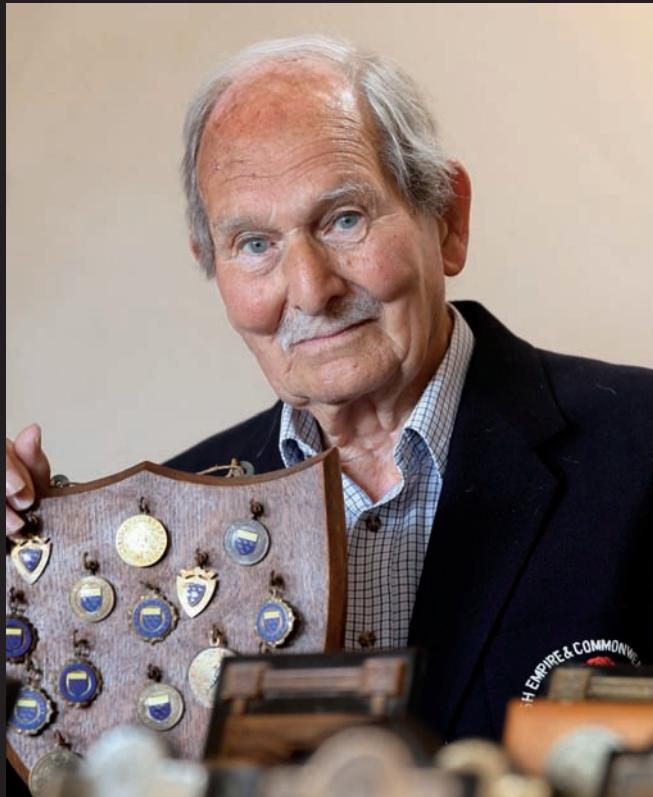
I volunteered to join the Army. I wanted to be part of a para engineering company but it was being disbanded. I then assumed I would be going to Burma so I did the Far East warfare course. In the end I was posted to Italy. It's important to be keen and willing.

► THE MILITARY CAN HELP YOU GET QUALIFICATIONS THAT WILL BE OF GREAT BENEFIT ON CIVVY STREET

Through the Army I got to study engineering at Cambridge. That lasted for six months and counted towards the first year of a degree. I combined my studying with infantry training.

► CONTACTS CAN BE VERY HELPFUL LATER ON

To become a qualified civil engineer I had to do a series



HARD-WON LESSONS

This month a Second World War veteran and former Olympian explains how life in the Army helped him pursue a rewarding civilian career

of papers. My ex-colonel in Italy was a surveyor in Brighton and he arranged for me to come down and do those articles. It was a coincidence but it really helped me. Contacts are valuable.

► ARMY SKILLS AND DISCIPLINE ARE CRUCIAL

The Services are very good for personnel. They teach individuals to do things for themselves without the need for supervision and they become more mature than they otherwise would be. The Army taught me how to deal with people in the outside world.

► LEAVING DOESN'T MEAN CUTTING ALL TIES

The discipline of the Army is first class, and that is something I really liked. If it had not been for the fact the Admiralty Works Department was part-uniform, part-civilian I probably would have stayed in the Service. In Nepal although we were all civilians we employed a lot of ex-Gurkhas and it felt like an Army project. Opportunities like these are great for former soldiers.

► DON'T BE AFRAID TO FOLLOW YOUR SPORTING AMBITIONS

Competing at the Olympics was wonderful; it was the pinnacle of my sporting career. I was with the Admiralty in 1956 and had to take six weeks' leave to compete. It was worth it; you should always chase your dreams.

Interview: Richard Long Picture: Steve Dock

THE number of military personnel who self-harm is on the rise. Recorded cases in the Armed Forces rose by more than a third between 2010 and 2015, according to MoD figures, with Army personnel found to be at highest risk.

The extent of the problem is similar among the UK's general population, but there are some important things soldiers can do to help anyone they know.

Here, experts at Big White Wall – a free online support network for troops who are stressed, anxious, low or not coping – explain to *Soldier* what self-harming is and how to help if you suspect someone is doing it...

What is self-harm?

It is usually associated with cutting, but can take other forms such as overdosing on medication or alcohol, starving oneself, practising unsafe sex or engaging in reckless activities such as excessive exercise. It doesn't have to be a regular occurrence, either; it could just happen once.

What can trigger it?

Common things include physical or sexual abuse,

depression, relationship problems, unemployment and associated feelings of worthlessness. Separation adjustment, transition to civvy street and battlefield trauma can also be factors. You may be more likely to harm yourself if you feel unappreciated and undermined, hopeless, lacking control, isolated or lonely.

Who does it affect?

MoD figures show that Army personnel, women and those under 24 years of age are particularly at risk of self-harming. More generally, those who have suffered from physical or sexual abuse, and those who have experienced traumatic life events such as asylum seekers and prisoners are also at risk.

Is it a suicide attempt?

Most people who self-harm are not suicidal. It is a coping



mechanism for survival and a way of escaping emotional pain, though because of some physically dangerous expressions it can sometimes unintentionally lead to death.

So is it a cry for attention?

This is another common misconception. Most people who self-harm do so in a very private capacity. While they are communicating their distress, they often hide it rather than seek attention.

Are people who do it mentally ill?

Injuring oneself is usually someone's way of coping with trauma, not mental illness. They are dealing with their emotional pain in the only way they can. However, those with mental illness can self-injure as well.

Does the injury reflect the problem?

There is no direct correlation between one and the other. Someone who has hurt themselves a little could be just as distressed

as an individual who has gone to extremes.

What are the first steps to stopping?

To admit the problem. It can be very difficult to say the words out loud and ask for help, but talking to a friend, relative, padre, medical or welfare officer, counsellor or anonymously on the Big White Wall can make things much easier.

What happens next?

People are advised to get help from a medical officer or therapist as the root problem causing the self-injuring is usually related to trauma and this can be a very difficult situation to treat without a professional background.

24/7 SUPPORT

If you or someone you know is self-harming you can get help from the chain of command, a unit welfare officer, the Army Welfare Service, a padre, medic, GP or by logging on to www.ssafa.org.uk or www.bigwhitewall.com

What you might not know about soldiers who hurt themselves...

WOUNDING



Want to hurt yourself?

Big White Wall's medical experts have the following advice...

There are various things that can be done to manage self-harm while treating the psychological aspect.

For those who are feeling angry or frustrated, alternatives could include **punching pillows, listening to loud music, attending the gym** or even **cleaning**.

Those feeling sad or depressed could be encouraged to **write poetry, take up painting** or **relax with a hot bath**.

For those who crave the need for a physical sensation, alternatives include **firmly gripping an ice cube, chewing on chilli or ginger root** or **snapping an elastic band on your wrist**.



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Feeling rock bottom

I AM 41 and own a house where my wife and two young children live.

As it's more than 50 miles away from my place of work I moved into the mess but was dismayed to learn that I wasn't eligible for the over-37 provision because my assignment had started.

The stated aim of this particular allowance is to support the domestic stability of those Service personnel who choose to serve unaccompanied in the latter part of their careers.

Yet, because I purchased my home while at my current unit I'm unable to take advantage of the scheme.

I'm coming to the end of my 23 years in the Army and this has left a bitter taste in my mouth.

Surely this policy needs to be urgently reviewed. – **WO2 Paul Hicks, RLC**

Brig Chris Ghika, Director Personnel Capability, responds: The over-37 provision was introduced to allow soldiers to buy a property, settle their family and be able to serve voluntarily separated without being charged for single living accommodation (SLA).

Because of the large size of the Army when compared to the other Services, the provision has certain criteria to keep it affordable and, unfortunately, the timing of your move counted against you.

However, you should have benefited from both the disturbance

expense and movement of personal effects allowances.

I can assure you that all our measures are regularly reviewed and the policy for applying a waiver to SLA charges and its substitutes is under review as part of the development of the future accommodation model.

If changes are made they will be communicated as soon as possible.

“
This has left a bitter taste in my mouth
”

WITHOUT A HINT OF IRONY...

● IT was ironic that three page-turns after the *Rant of the Month* column in the June issue decrying the inequality of men's and women's rugby, the *How Observant Are You?* competition offered a £100 voucher for menswear as a prize.

Is this because women are less observant than men and so less likely to enter, or do all women have men to buy clothes for?

Whatever the reason, I found this casual sexism to be offensive as well as ironic. – **Guy Lilley, Chicksands**

The managing editor responds: When a generous competition prize comes along we accept; there's nothing sexist in our thinking. If and when a great female-orientated gift is offered to us I can assure you we'll snap it up.

“
It's rock bottom
”

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas... but please be brief. Emails must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style. Before you write to us with a problem, you should first have tried to get an answer via your own chain of command.

✉ mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk
Twitter @soldiermagazine

RANT OF THE MONTH



Get it off your chest and on social media



www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine

Facebook was full of praise for lieutenants Jared Bambridge (Yorks) and Pete Bryan (RA) who helped victims of the London Bridge terror attack...



Bill Fowler

Not what you want to be doing when off duty, that said good to know those who are trained are always ready to give assistance. Thanks to you all!



Geraldine Penn

Thank goodness we have kind and sensible people like you, so much respect.



Barbara Gordon

Extremely brave and courageous we salute all who helped on the day.



Melvkath Curtis

Where would we be with out the Army, good for you to put yourself out to try and help. Well done.



Pat Hawkins

Well done. I am so proud of you and glad to be British. Thanks.



Bernadette Yare

Shows why we have the best Armed Forces in the world. Committed to assisting civilians in a time of need. So proud of you!

We're treated as second-class citizens



Hungry for a change

OUR Sodexo staff are having their hours cut and soldiers on camp over the weekend are being asked to go without meals from an early dinner on Friday until 1030 on Saturday.

This isn't good for young soldiers in particular, who rely on the kitchen for food at the end of the month when they sometimes have very little salary left.

The Armed Forces supplies three meals a day but who is going to eat breakfast at 1030 and then have lunch two hours later? – **LCpl Bob McLaren, MPGS**

Lt Col Chris Gent, commanding officer, 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, replies: The meal timings at Albemarle Barracks were adjusted at the request of the soldiers after an election at the mess meeting.

The few personnel who remain on camp during the weekend (an average of 13 attend brunches and evening meals on these days) quite understandably do not want to get up early for breakfast on a Saturday.

The issue has nothing to do with the Sodexo contract or the recent cut in staff hours; we enjoy an excellent relationship with the contractor and they have ensured their outputs are unaffected.

The master chef has negotiated to provide a duty breakfast from 0800 until 0830 on a Saturday and Sunday to give flexibility to dismounting duty staff.

Finally, there is no evidence here of soldiers not being able to afford food at the end of the month. We do not have issues with irresponsible indebtedness and routinely run financial fitness briefings to educate our young Servicemen and women.

In the last two years only four soldiers have requested a free meal; the last one was in May 2016.

You are welcome to attend any of the monthly mess meetings, the details of which can be found on regimental part one orders.

RESERVISTS IGNORED

● **WE'RE** constantly told we are working towards "one Army".

But Reservists are treated as second-class citizens by MoD contractors who provide the JPA and DII systems because they usually only offer user support during regular office hours. – **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col Jason Hurndall, Directorate Reserves (Army), responds: One helpline is available all day and night and can deal with the vast majority of issues.

If you experience a serious problem you will be passed to technical experts and they are employed only from 0700 until 1900 during the week.

The use of these services at the weekends and during the evenings would be very low and off-peak provision is more expensive so it is not economically viable to provide it.

But this is not a deliberate attempt to treat Reservists as second rate.

You have administration teams made up of permanent staff members who are there to support you and take forward any issues you may have.

“**Personnel are not bothering to take the course**”

TALKBACK

Commanders need a boost



UNTIL recently personnel who completed the Challenger 2 crew commanders' course would receive a pay boost but that is no longer the case. I want to know if there is any chance this might be reinstated.

My reason is that the new pay model provides the same salary for certain roles that don't have the same mental and physical challenges.

For example, a Royal Logistic Corps corporal working as a storeman will earn the same as a tank commander.

Yet we are responsible for the lives of the three other crewmen and have to make split-second decisions, like whether to give a gunner the authority to engage a target which could stop the enemy, save our vehicle or save myself and my crew.

We also have to manage the vehicles, working alongside the troop sergeant, and are in addition expected to maintain our crews' skills.

With the world as it is, tanks will be needed for a long time to come but a lot of eligible personnel are not bothering to take this course because there is no incentive and they can still promote to sergeant and above without completing it.

I strongly believe we should receive a one-off payment at the least or even be moved to a higher pay scale. — **Cpl Andy Shaw, QRF**

Maj Arthur Dawe, S02 Allowances, Army Remuneration Policy, responds:

Thanks for your letter highlighting your discontent with the removal of the accelerated incremental progression payment (AIP).

The MoD announced that this would cease from December 31, 2015.

AIP was introduced to improve capabilities and retention by linking it to the acquisition of specific skills or qualifications.

However, it proved to be divisive, with each Service and cap badge applying it in different ways.

As a result, it was costly, complex to administer and we saw a rise in pay casework and Service complaints.

The savings made from cutting it were used to fund incentives to encourage personnel to complete essential courses and to overhaul trade supplements.

In order to judge one trade against another a job evaluation process is now used to deliver a trade score and order in the trade hierarchy.

This process takes into account all aspects of each role, including the level of responsibility and accountability both in barracks, during training and on operations.

Each trade score is also used to determine supplements.

The process is robust, transparent and audited by experts in the field. Based on this, your trade has been placed correctly, relative to others.

COMPUTER ATTACK

● OVER the years we have been bombarded with numerous computer systems that are supposed to make our lives easier.

The reality is, however, that rarely a day goes by when Outlook, Churchill, Oracle, JPA or Moss isn't being temperamental, on a go-slow or completely offline.

When the pressure is on to meet a deadline there is nothing more frustrating than watching the spinning wheel of doom.

How do we expect our Reservists, who have little time to complete administration tasks, to work with such inadequate systems?

Large businesses would not put up with this, so why do we?

— **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col John Dagless, S01 Service Design, Army Information

Services, replies: As recent high profile information technology failures across the National Health Service and British Airways have shown, there is an increasing dependency on this technology and we get it wrong at our peril.

In order to ensure the right level of service is provided and to identify where further investment is required, it is imperative that all personnel report issues as they occur. This can be done by dialling the 24-hour helpline called the Defence CIS Single Point of Contact on 188 from a military phone or +44 (0)370 600 8910 from a civilian line.

From this number you will be given various options and a dedicated team will help you with your issues.

In addition to this, defence and the Army are continuing to invest millions of pounds to improve the information services provided to all personnel, including the Reserve.

There are also a number of initiatives across the Army that aim to challenge and change "stovepiped" policies and systems to ease the burden on end users.

“**We should receive a one-off payment at least**”

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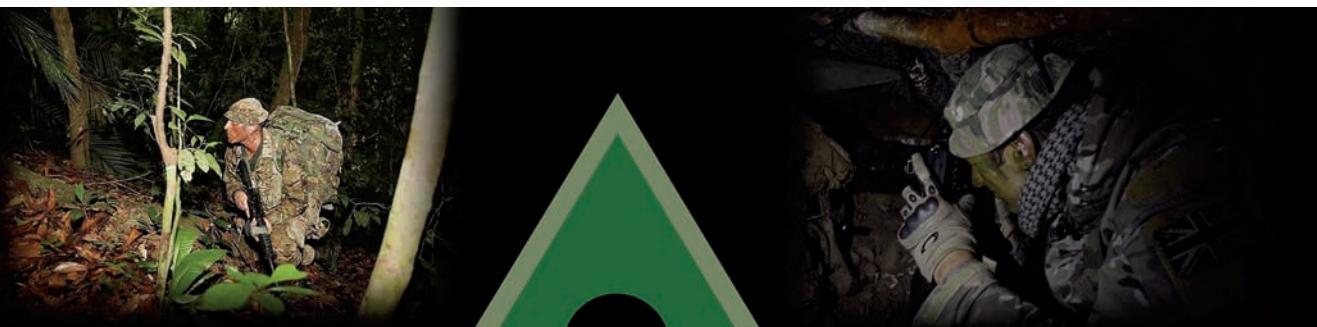


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“Can anyone explain this disgraceful disparity?”

TALKBACK



Driving down wrong road

BEING a driver by trade, I'd like to know why national vehicle transport tasks are contracted out to numerous civilian companies.

We have the personnel, vehicles and equipment to do this at no additional cost so wouldn't it be better to create a national unit to undertake these assignments, employ our people and save the taxpayer money? — **LCpl Leroy Clarke, RLC**

WO1 Kevin Orpe, Command Master Driver, responds: You raise a good point and we are looking at a range of options to optimise military transport as part of a review looking at enhancing and maintaining driver competency.

The use of our assets does incur additional charges, however.

They are from maintenance,

spares and storage but this has to be balanced against driver training requirements and availability of commercial solutions.

One mooted idea is to use military drivers to deliver supplies from local depots forward to unit locations, potentially replacing some third party couriers and allowing our drivers to have more time behind the wheel.

We recognise the importance of training and maintaining skills and as the lead driver within the Army I have been working to not only widen the scope of job opportunities but determine if our current qualifications and experience can count towards civilian credentials.

The next step is to link driver qualifications as prior accredited learning to the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence.

THE MOORE THE MERRIER

● I READ about the death of Sir Roger Moore with great sadness.



In *Soldier* years ago he talked about his Army days and described how, when called up in 1945 he was passed A1 despite having jaundice because "they must have been desperate".

An aspiring cartoonist at the time, he was sent to the Royal Army Service Corps where his sergeant major said: "Your papers show you're an artist: go and paint that ***** hut!"

He spent his last year in the Army with the Entertainment National Service Association in Hamburg, and so began his journey into the world of acting. — **Alan Grace, Fleet**

‘IT BROUGHT IT ALL BACK’

● I WOULD like to thank you all for the great article "Photographic Memories" in the June issue regarding the Falklands War.

It brought back a lot of recollections, good and bad, of my time there during the conflict with T Air Defence Battery, Royal Artillery as an 18-year-old old gunner. — **WO2 Rolf "Perry" Mason, RA**



TICKET TRAVESTY?

● I RECENTLY travelled from Windsor to Exeter while on duty.

As required, my train journey was booked using the Hogg Robinson Group (HRG) travel service, who supplied a single ticket with a face value of £107.50.

Using the same machine from which I collected my ticket, I could have taken the same journey using my railcard for just £29.85.

Even without using that method of payment the fare on the day would have been under £40.

Can anyone explain this disgraceful disparity?

Presumably we pay HRG for this "service" as they must add their fee to the price of tickets.

If this situation applies across defence travel how are we obtaining the value for money that we are told drives all MoD procurement?

— **Name and address supplied**

Pauline Boardman, Secretariat Assistant Head, Defence Equipment and Support, replies: All MoD business travel must be booked through HRG as significant departmental savings can be achieved.

While we appreciate that there will be occasional exceptions, they should always find the best value-for-money travel arrangements and will provide multiple ticket options at different prices.

It is important to remember that HRG options are the most cost-effective, which does not always mean the cheapest.

For example, tickets booked through them are fully refundable if, for some reason, travel arrangements change at the last minute. This is unlikely to be the case for independently booked travel.

There are exemptions for those who need to book travel outside of the mandated contract, for example for emergency travel or, indeed, for finding a cheaper rate.

However, savings should be significant and any comparison should be on a like-for-like basis.

‘Is policy a smoking gun for Reservists?’



I WANT to know why Reservists at my unit do not receive longer separation allowance (LSA).

I believe that this is contrary to both the “one Army” concept and the rules set out in JSP 752.

In chapter five, paragraph 05.0405

of that document it clearly states that Reserve personnel are entitled to LSA in line with their Regular counterparts.

The exception to this is covered in paragraph 05.0407, where it states that Reservists are ineligible for LSA while training under terms 22 and 27 of the

POOR RECEPTION FOR PERSONAL MOBILE ORDER

● IS ordering soldiers to use their personal mobile phones acceptable within the Armed Forces?

I have seen this on many occasions and listened to first-hand accounts of soldiers being told to use their own devices for military purposes.

Our mobile phones are not Army equipment and while we need a contact number, pushing us to use WhatsApp so that military information and messages can be passed on could be viewed as bullying and harassment.

What has happened to regimental and squadron details published each day? — **Name and address supplied**

Col Nathan Sempala-Ntege, Assistant Head, Personal Services, replies: It is incumbent on all of us to protect MoD information and WhatsApp and other social media platforms should not be used to communicate official material.

ACIN 6-17: Use and Protection of Information in the Government Classification Scheme provides the correct guidance. If you have any queries, your unit IT security officer should be able to help.

Routine orders should be the

default method of disseminating information and Queen’s Regulations (paragraph five) requires them to be available on all unit and sub-unit noticeboards, messes and orderly rooms.

It also details the duty of all personnel to read them.

Orders may be passed over electronic messaging services (equivalent to an order given over the phone), but as recipients are not required to monitor them this is not recommended.

Defence Connect provides a secure method for disseminating information up to official-sensitive level, but this should complement your routine orders.

No pressure should be put on someone to use their personal device to join a social messaging group in order to receive unclassified orders.

If you suspect a case of bullying or harassment you should speak to your unit equality and diversity adviser or call the Speak Out helpline on military **96770 4656**.



Reserve Forces Act 1996.

The first clause deals with the duration of time that a Reservist can be deployed in a number of years and so would appear to be irrelevant.

Section 27 deals with these personnel working on full-time Reserve service.

Therefore, in the course of other duties it seems we should be entitled to LSA. — **Sgt Don McLauchlan, 4 Para**

Maj Arthur Dawe, SO2 Allowances, Army Remuneration Policy, replies: The aim of LSA is to compensate those who experience separation over and above that paid through the X-factor within basic pay.

This covers involuntary separation from a permanent residence or duty station or voluntary separation when posted to a different theatre from the family home.

LSA is paid for each day of qualifying separation, which is when an individual is on temporary duty for a period of seven or more consecutive days and is unable to spend a minimum period of 24 hours at their duty station, family home or permanent residence.

Service personnel who are engaged under different terms and conditions of service are remunerated differently.

Reservists who conduct normal training and an annual camp do not qualify for LSA but do receive a training bounty (at the top level this works out at £1,759 or £65 per day for 27 days of obligatory training which is tax-free, unlike LSA). Regulars do not receive such a bounty.

Reservists also receive five per cent X-factor, an element of which covers separation associated with this training.

The introduction of full LSA qualification for Reservists would undermine the case for both the tax-free bounty and the X-factor.

Reservist separation is voluntary, but if they are mobilised they will qualify for LSA.

Lastly, Reservists serving under full-time Reserve service (full commitment) are eligible for LSA just like their Regular counterparts.

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BULLET POINTS



CAREERS

SSAFA has teamed up with online learning company New Skills Academy to offer serving personnel, veterans and their families free training. Among more than 160 accredited packages on offer are courses in Microsoft Office and Sage Accounting, plus digital marketing, business and horticulture. Log on to www.newskillsacademy.co.uk

Veteran Employment Transition Support programme connects ex-Forces personnel with employers. For details visit www.veteranemployment.co.uk

The University of West England is hosting a careers fair at its Frenchay Campus in Bristol on October 18. More than 170 exhibitors are expected on the day. For details email careers@uwe.ac.uk



COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: John Dargavel, 116 Pro Coy, 3 RMP, Cannock, Staffs and Glyn Coney, Shaftesbury.



DIARY

July 1: Corps of Army Music open-air concert in the park at Kneller Hall. Entitled *Rock and Pop*, the show starts at 1930. Tickets are free for military personnel and their families. Call 0208 7448684 or email rmsm-e1courses@mod.uk

July 7: The Royal British Legion is holding a drumhead ceremony and reception at the National Memorial Arboretum to mark 100 years since the establishment of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

July 8-9: The Flying Legends Air Show at IWM Duxford. Featuring Spitfires, the world's only airworthy Bristol Blenheim, a trio of Hawker Hurricanes and many more rare historic aircraft, flying displays and the world-famous Red Arrows. Tickets must be booked in advance and for more information visit www.flyinglegends.com

July 12: Corps of Army Music open-air concert in the park at Kneller Hall. Entitled *Stage and Screen*,

the show starts at 2000. Tickets are free for military personnel and their families. Call 0208 7448684 or email rmsm-e1courses@mod.uk

July 14-16: The Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford, featuring a variety of flying displays, including the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and the Red Arrows. Tickets start at £34, under-16s go free. Visit www.airtattoo.com

July 15: 16 Air Assault Brigade and Colchester Garrison Show at Abbey Field, Colchester. The free event will showcase the equipment and skills of the formation, with a Red Devils display, funfair, refreshments and dramatic combat demonstration. For more information follow the event page on Facebook.

July 15: Charity ball in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Trust at the Dudsbury Golf Club, Dorset. Guests will enjoy a glass of fizz on arrival, a three-course dinner, live entertainment, a raffle and auction. All proceeds from the event will go towards the trust's work. Tickets £50 each. Visit www.gwt.org.uk/Event/dudsbury-gurkha-ball

July 19: Army LGBT Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Commanders, equality and diversity advisers, unit welfare staff, LGBT personnel and those interested in diversity are all encouraged to attend. For more details read *ABN 48/17*.

July 19: Corps of Army Music open-air concert in the park at Kneller Hall. Entitled *Last Night of the Proms*, the show starts at 2000. Tickets are free for military personnel and their families. Call 0208 7448684 or email rmsm-e1courses@mod.uk

July 21: The Henlow 100th. A hangar dance in aid of the RAF and Army Benevolent Funds. Live music from the 1930s onwards performed by The Band of The Queen's Division. From 1930 until late. Tickets (£15) from www.ticketsource.co.uk

August 4-6: Gloucestershire Vintage and Country Extravaganza at South Cerney Airfield, Cirencester. More than 100 military vehicles will take part in the South West's largest festival of vintage transport. For details visit www.glosvintageextravaganza.co.uk

Until November 19: For Then, For Now, Forever: 100 Years of the

Bite-sized data to keep you in the know

Commonwealth War Graves

Commission tells the story of the commission through historic artefacts and archival material. The exhibition is located in Canada Building at Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey. For details visit www.cwgc.org or call 01628 634221.



DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity:
0845 241 4820

Armed Forces Buddhist Society:
Chaplain 020 7414 3411;
www.afbs-uk.org

Armed Forces Christian Union:
01252 311221; www.afcu.org.uk

Armed Forces Muslim Association:
Chaplain 020 7414 3252;
www.afma.org.uk

Armed Services Advice Project:
0808 800 1007; www.adviceasap.org.uk

Army Families Federation:
01264 382324; mil 94391 2324;
www.aff.org.uk

Army LGBT Forum:
www.armylgbt.org.uk;
chair@armylgbt.org.uk

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society:
www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Welfare Service:
01904 882053;
www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support

Big White Wall:
www.bigwhitewall.com

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans:
020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org

Blind Veterans UK:
(formerly St Dunstan's)
020 7723 5021;
www.blindveterans.org.uk

Care After Combat:
www.careaftercombat.org

Career Transition Partnership:
020 7469 6661

Children's Education Advisory Service:
01980 618244;
dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk

Combat Stress:
01372 841600;

www.combatstress.org.uk

Defence Humanists:
www.defencehumanists.org.uk

Erskine:
0141 814 4569; www.erskine.org.uk

Family Escort Service:
020 7463 9249

Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity:
07713 752901
www.felixfund.org.uk

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:
020 7820 9988

Help for Heroes:
0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459;
www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Heroes Welcome:
www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

HighGround:
www.highground-uk.org.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01252 787574

Medal Office:
94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group):
www.mutualsupport.org.uk

National Ex-Services Association:
www.nesa.org.uk

National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:
24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853;
www.ngvfa.org.uk

Poppyscotland: 0131 557 2782;
www.poppyScotland.org.uk

Regular Forces' Employment Association:
0121 236 0058; www.rfea.org.uk

Remount:
01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion:
0808 802 8080;
www.britishlegion.org.uk

Royal British Legion Scotland:
0131 550 1583;
www.legionscotland.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational

Assessment Centre:
01622 795900; www.rbli.co.uk

Scottish Veterans' Residences:
0131 556 0091; www.svronline.org

SPACES (Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services):
01748 833797; www.spaces.org.uk

SSAFA:
0845 1300 975; www.ssafa.org.uk

Stoll (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation):
020 7385 2110; info@stoll.org.uk; www.stoll.org.uk

The Not Forgotten Association:
020 7730 2400
www.nfassociation.org

The Poppy Factory:
020 8940 3305; www.poppyfactory.org

The Royal Star & Garter Homes:
020 8481 7676;
www.starandgarter.org

The Veterans Charity:
01753 653772;
info@veteranscharity.org.uk

uk4u Thanks!:
01798 812081; www.uk4u.org

Veterans Welfare Service:
0808 1914 218 (from the UK);
0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service

INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at www.armynet.mod.uk

ABN 73/17: Moss surveys – new joiner offer and flexible system, June/July 2017 upload

ABN 72/17: Hearing conservation resources and policy update

ABN 71/70: Officers/Soldiers Career Development Handbook published

ABN 70/17: Meritorious Service Medal presentation

ABN 69/17: Army Annual Health Report

ABN 68/17: Single living accommodation management information system

ABN 67/17: Regular Army soldier

rejoin policy

ABN 66/17: Diversity and inclusion

ABN 65/17: Revised climate assessment policy

ABN 64/17: Annual appraisal reports – holding to account

ABN 63/17: Restructuring of Warfare Branch, HQ Field Army

ABN 62/17: Women in Defence Awards 2017

ABN 61/17: Incorrect implementation of officers' joint appraisal reports 2016

ABN 60/17: Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2017

ABN 59/17: Army advanced development programme expressions of interest

ABN 58/17: Change of duration to all-arms physical training instructor (PTI) qualification and introduction of a PTI logbook

ABN 57/17: Civilian recruitment

ABN 56/17: The award of the Carrington Drum Trophy by ABF The Soldiers' Charity for 2017/18

DIN 2017DIN01-108: Women in Defence Awards 2017

DIN 2017DIN01-106: The Army Reserve reinforcement group

DIN 2017DIN01-105: Regular Army soldier rejoin policy

DIN 2017DIN01-104: MoD provision of passports for Service personnel, MoD civilians and their dependants living in the UK

DIN 2017DIN01-103: Lead first scheme

DIN 2017DIN01-102: Information Excellence Awards 2017 (formerly Information and Knowledge Excellence Awards)

DIN 2017DIN01-101: Tax-free childcare scheme for eligible working parents

DIN 2017DIN01-100: Criminal injuries compensation (overseas) scheme

DIN 2017DIN01-099: The Defence Stammering Network guide to stammering

DIN 2017DIN01-098: The Services Cotswold Centre

DIN 2017DIN01-097: Career information for professional healthcare

staff – Defence Medical Services speciality fields

DIN 2017DIN01-096: Occupational health and rehabilitation for Reservists

DIN 2017DIN01-095: Civil service senior leaders scheme, future leaders scheme, Meta, and the MoD high potential development programme

DIN 2017DIN03-014: Cyber and electromagnetic activities in defence – definition

DIN 2017DIN04-109: Control of issue for pellet irritant smoke respirator L1A1

DIN 2017DIN04-106: Nato functional area services software distribution

DIN 2017DIN04-105: Declaration of confirmed out-of-service date for the grenade discharger

DIN 2017DIN04-101: Assets subject to special controls – US export control regulations

DIN 2017DIN04-100: Declaration of obsolete explosive ordnance disposal tan/summer suit Mk 6, lightweight EOD suit and large stowage bag

DIN 2017DIN04-099: Cartridge countermeasure 118 MTV L1A1

DIN 2017DIN04-098: Notification of change to the ADR, ADR+ and ADRA hold-up battery

DIN 2017DIN04-097: Declaration of obsolete and deletion of NSs within DMC M82

DIN 2017DIN04-096: AP116B-0908-123 emergency personal locator systems (issue 3, amendment 0) – update to include emergency personal locator beacon

DIN 2017DIN04-095: Declaration of obsolescent TCIS/Bowman miscellaneous items from DMC Z1

DIN 2017DIN04-094: L13A2 general-purpose machine gun safe blank firing system

DIN 2017DIN04-093: Information Systems Services MJDI demand procedure

DIN 2017DIN04-091: New support contract for dismounted close combat surveillance and target acquisition equipment

DIN 2017DIN04-090: Service family accommodation compensation scheme

DIN 2017DIN05-008: Clinical

service name change of Clinical Aviation Medicine Service to Aviation Medicine Clinical Service

DIN 2017DIN05-007: Introduction of International Standards Organisation 8000 corporate licence to defence

DIN 2017DIN06-011: Transportation of BCIP and TCIS lithium ion batteries managed by Batsis delivery team

DIN 2017DIN07-073: Visiting officer and casualty notification officer training, debriefing workshops (Army) and caring for carers

DIN 2017DIN07-072: Adventurous training sea kayaking – planning expeditions to Cyprus in 2018

DIN 2017DIN07-071: Qualified warfare instructor intelligence surveillance reconnaissance course

DIN 2017DIN07-069: QARANC post registration education and training application and selection process

DIN 2017DIN07-068: Radiation protection training requirements

DIN 2017DIN08-006: Joint Services Command and Staff College international student charging regime and allowances

DIN 2017DIN08-005: Insurance arrangements for charging activities (income generation and repayment)

DIN 2017DIN09-012: The George Beeching Prize for Compassion

DIN 2017DIN10-035: Army Ski and Snowboard Individual Slopestyle Championship 2017 – Exercise Snow Method 2017

DIN 2017DIN10-034: British Army motorsports event – Festival of Army Motorsports, incorporating training, members' annual meeting and annual dinner

DIB 15/17: Review of Pay 16 transitional pay protection

DIB 14/17: Publication of the results of the Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2017

DIB 13/17: General election guidance on contact with parliamentarians

DIB 12/17: General election guidance on conduct for MoD staff

Continued on page 54



REUNIONS

23/144 Parachute Field Ambulance Old Comrades' Association all airborne medics reunion, October 6-8 at the Royal Court Hotel in Coventry. For details contact Roy Hatch on royhatchbem48@gmail.com or 07730 977989.

8 Regt, RASC/RCT/RLC 16th anniversary weekend, October 20-21. The event is open to any ex-member of the regiment, with their partner or guests, and any cap badges who served in the unit between October 1964 and July 2012. The venue for October 20 is the Army Reserve Centre, Wigan, with The Village on the Green Club in Aspull, Wigan, playing host the following day. For details contact Jimmy Aspinall via jimmyasp@hotmail.com

289 Para/Cdo Bty will be holding an all-ranks reunion at the Royal Air Force Association Club, 18 Carlton Road, Romford, Essex, RM2 5AA on October 21. The event is open to all who have served in 289 Regt Bty or Troop, past and present, in

any position. Contact Barry Exley via barry.exley@sky.com or 01268 293592 for more details.



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 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 queries. Call 01276 412880 or email your name and address to armymediocomm-aeg-mailbox@mod.uk with the event you are interested in attending.

July: 6, Tower Hamlets; 27, Wolverhampton.

August: No roadshows.



SEARCHLINE

Ian Sinclair is seeking memories and information about RAF Mafraq, Jordan circa 1945/46, where his grandfather Archibald Sinclair served as a staff sergeant in the

Royal Engineers. Anyone with details is asked to contact him via ian_js@hotmail.com

Military charity SSAFA is taking bookings for its short breaks – free, week-long adventure holidays for the Forces community. A break for families with a child with an additional need or disability will run in Exmoor from July 29. For more details or to apply contact Hannah Wiltshire on hannah.w@ssafa.org.uk or 0207 463 9275.

The Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society is looking for enthusiasts to join its ranks. With its HQ in Blandford, the group would welcome serving and former signals trade specialists from any cap badge. Email general secretary John West via g4lrg@yahoo.co.uk

Veterans living in Hampshire, Surrey, Dorset, Wiltshire or Sussex are invited to join the Hampshire History Hunters – an interest group that has regular digs while raising funds for Help for Heroes and Combat Stress. For more details find the Hampshire History Hunters group on Facebook.

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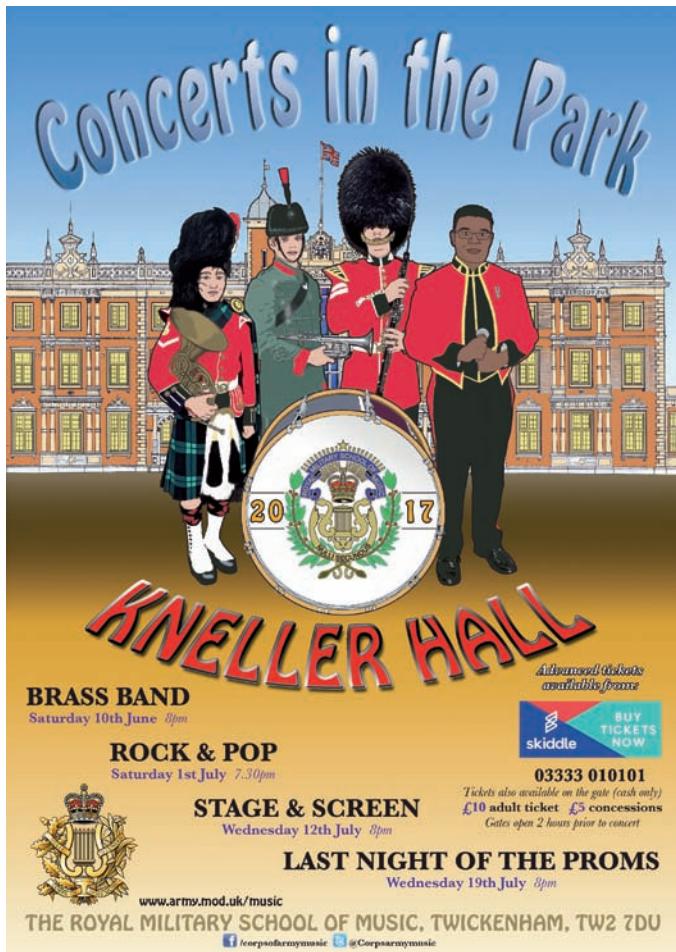


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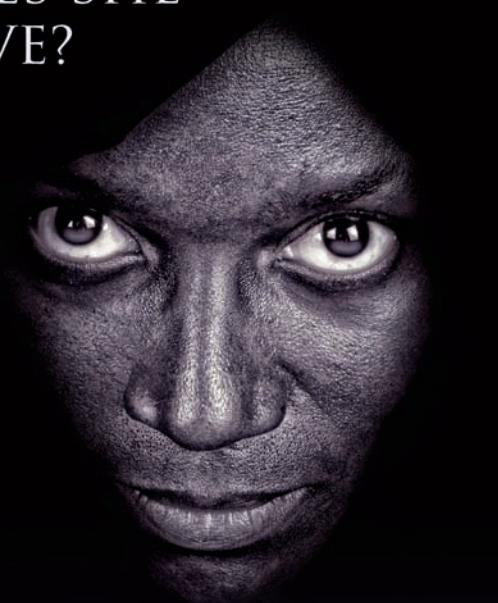




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UK's 2016 Top 20 Independent Schools % A*/A A level (Sunday Times)

Ranking of Schools taking boarders

Nationally Ranking all type schools

%age A*/A at A level

1	St Paul's Girls' School	93.8
2	Magdalen College School	88.7
3	North London Collegiate	88.5
4	Westminster School	88.0
5	Queen Ethelburga's College	86.9
6	Winchester College	86.1
7	Wycombe Abbey School	86.0
8	King Edward's, Birmingham	85.6
9	Sevenoaks School	85.2
10	St Paul's School	84.7
11	Guildford High School Girls	84.3
12	Haberdashers' Aske's Girls	83.8
13	Faculty Queen Ethelburga's	83.7
14	James Allen's Girls' School	82.5
15	Eton College	81.9
16	Withington Girls' School	81.4
17	Godolphin & Latymer Sch	80.2
18	St John's College, Cardiff	80.2
19	Brighton College	79.8
20	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys'	79.6

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Other Schools' Results % A*/A A level (Sunday Times)

5	QE College	87%
13	Faculty of QE	84%
76	Kingswood School	61%
94	Bromsgrove School	56%
136	Monmouth School	51%
n/a	Gordon's School	48%
171	Cheltenham College	47%
177	Dauntsey's School	47%
209	Kingham Hill School	44%
245	Dean Close School	41%
277	King's Sch Bruton	37%
288	Monkton Combe	36%
n/a	Welbeck College	34%
317	King's Coll Taunton	31%
328	Stamford School	30%
336	Millfield School	28%
349	Warminster School	26%
375	Royal Hospital Sch	21%
376	Licensed Vict Ascot	20%
378	Barnard Castle Sch	19%

REVIEWS



MUSIC

RISING FROM THE EMBERS

Metal act set for exciting future as new material drops

ROCK outfit **Beneath the Embers** are looking to make their mark on the metal scene following the release of debut EP *Ashes*.

Spearheaded by soldiers SSgt Clint Bredin and Lt Charles Workman (both AGC (RMP)), the four-piece have enjoyed a rapid rise since finalising their line-up in 2016 and with a busy summer of touring to come their ascent looks set to continue.



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MOVIES



The Servicemen formed a musical alliance through the Army and after recruiting drummer Spencer Churchill the final piece of the jigsaw fell into place when singer Lewis Rowland joined the band following an appeal via social media.

"I was playing with another project but wanted to move into original music," Bredin told *Soldier*.

"Charlie is a jazz musician by trade. We got chatting at work and I asked if he was interested in joining. He came for a jam and was instantly hooked.

"There are a couple of social media sites for people who are looking to join bands. They give you the chance to pinpoint like-minded individuals in the local area and that's how it all came together."

The group have drawn comparisons to the likes of **Metallica**, **Trivium** and **Bullet for My Valentine** and boast a desire to

embrace the heavier elements of metal.

With the foundations in place a deal with independent label Oakfield Records soon followed and attention swiftly turned to work on the EP.

"In some ways the process is a lot easier than you would imagine," Bredin continued. "But we were very fortunate to get a deal so quickly.

"At the same time, we're all career men and are highly motivated. People like working with us as they know there will not be any problems.

"In the studio we had the benefit of a producer, as well as sound engineers and technicians, and we are really pleased with the end result. It is anything but a home recording."

“
We're all career men and
are highly motivated
”



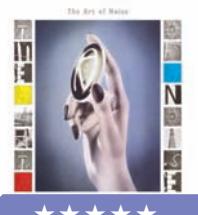
Based in Colchester, **Beneath the Embers** have a host of dates across East Anglia booked between now and the end of the year and once complete they will make a decision on their next move.

"Playing live is what it's all about," Bredin added. "We are going to gig on the back of the record and see what happens. There will either be a full album or another EP to follow so it is an exciting time."

Ashes is available now on various streaming sites. For more information on the band search for **Beneath the Embers** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. ■

INTERVIEW: RICHARD LONG, SOLDIER

MUSIC RELEASES



★★★★★

In Visible Silence by Art of Noise

WHO could forget one of the all-time 80s musical greats, **The Art of Noise**? With classics such as *Paranoimia* and *Peter Gunn* their unique sounding instrumental compositions created a totally new and different style. The name of this album may sound a bit *deja-vu* and there is a very good reason for that; it happens to be the same name of their April 1986 record which went on to sell a million copies worldwide. So what's the deal? Well this is a new, remastered version that features all the original hits but with the addition of fresh, unreleased/hidden tracks and it is brilliant. They were good back in the 80s and this is just what the doctor ordered.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



★★★★★

Paper Heart by Hunter and the Bear

WITH the British festival season under way you are unlikely to find a better example of a summer soundtrack than this album. Oddly, it is the title track *Paper Heart* that is probably my least favourite of all the songs. However, *Who's Gonna Hear You* is an instant main stage classic that you're going to be hearing more and more of. The band also prove they're able to mix it in the acoustic stakes with *I Am What I Am* before kicking you back into the 21st century with the rock guitar and synth epic that is *DRK*. Without doubt the best album of the year so far from a band you'll want to hear more of.

LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



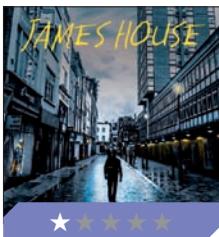
★★★★★

Inter Alia by At the Drive-In

THIS album has been nearly 20 years in the making. Since reforming in 2016, **At the Drive-In** have been busy touring and recording the follow-up to 2000's *Relationship of Command*. They still have the wall of sound assault reminiscent of bands like **The Mars Volta** and via singer **Cedric Bixler-Zavala's** lyrics they are still unhappy with the political spectrum in the world. Opener *No Wolf Like the Present* kicks off proceedings in style and has echoes of an **Iron Maiden** song from the mid-80s. It gets louder with *Governed by Contagions*, a gorgeous riff-laden assault on the ears backed-up by some furious drumming, and the only track that disappoints is the gothic punk sound of *Ghost-Tape No 9*, which seems somewhat out of place.

Damian Hern, ex-AGC (SPS)

MUSIC RELEASES

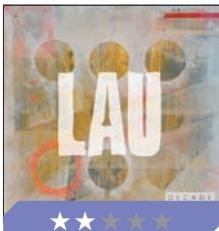


Berwick St
by James House

If you are a fan of evening and night-time *Radio 2* you

are going to love this. In-between tracks you expect to hear "whispering" **Bob Harris'** barely audible tones. But what do I think? Well, I disliked it intensely. Despite having a wide taste in music, the lyrics from American star **James House** did not say anything to me and the soundtrack is equally forgettable. It is difficult to categorise the style of this album; it occasionally hints at country but one thing is for definite, it is ultra middle-of-the-road. This easy-listening record would be great as background noise, but only if played in a different town to the one you are in.

Martyn Timmis, civvy



Decade, Best of Lau
by Lau

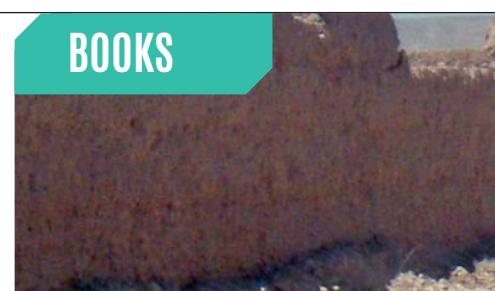
THIS 12-track offering showcases ten years of British

folk giants **Lau**. My understanding of putting out a greatest hits collection is that it shows prospective fans what a band is about and highlights their best work to date. But having listened to this album extensively, that doesn't seem to be the case here. *Hinba* is a solid offering from their early days and *Horizontigo* proves to be a signature instrumental piece. But that is it. Overall, this record is characterless and quite depressing and definitely doesn't gel as a good compilation should. Lau could have given newcomers a better introduction to their music and, personally, I think it is an opportunity missed.

Tony David, ex-RE

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BOOKS



PICK OF THE MONTH:

PAINTING THE SAND

Bomb disposal on Afghanistan's front line

AS far as hard days in the office go, they don't get much tougher than August 16, 2009, when bomb disposal expert Kim Hughes calmly defused a cluster of seven IEDs in the middle of a mass-casualty scenario in Sangin.

Two explosions had already killed or seriously injured six soldiers and further lives would almost certainly have been lost if the then staff sergeant had not disabled the devices.

The incident saw him decorated with the George Cross and he and his team would render safe a total of 119 bombs before their six-month tour of Helmand was up.

Eight years on and now serving as a warrant officer class one with 11 EOD Regiment, he is telling his story for the first time.

His recently published memoir, *Painting the Sand*, recounts his journey from, in his words, "the thick kid with a girl's name" to high-threat operator, as well as the grim realities of Afghanistan.

"There were an awful lot of times where I probably should have died but me and my guys walked away," he told *Soldier*.

"It could have gone so much more wrong. The amount of tasks the teams were doing – in terms of percentages of injuries to device – I'm surprised there weren't more, but because the guys are trained to such a high standard they just smashed through it.

"But it's not just about that one crazy day on the ground.

"It's also about my childhood and how I struggled at school, got bullied and how that turned me to the Army."

Having made it through the

gruelling training process to become an ammunition technician, Hughes eventually found himself on the front line of the war against the Taliban's weapon of choice.

With his marriage crumbling on the domestic front, he describes feeling more at home in Helmand than the UK, but the daily pressures of the job began to take their toll.

"On one task I was sat over a device and I started laughing," he said.

"It was what was known as a command pull device; the terrorist would pull a piece of string which caused a switch to close and the bomb to go off.

"It had failed to function but it was so close to touching that it was ridiculously dangerous.

"I just sat back and started laughing with 20kg of explosives under me.

"The guys said 'dude, that's wrong', but humour was my way of dealing with things. In a way it was weirdly sick."

The task that earned him the George Cross was described in his citation as the single most outstanding act of explosive ordnance disposal recorded in Afghanistan but Hughes insists any of his colleagues could have done the same.

Similarly, while he is proud of what the counter-IED teams achieved, he maintains they were just a small part of the wider British effort.

"I feel absolutely honoured to





VERDICT:
A heart-pounding behind-the-scenes look at one of the most dangerous trades in the military

★★★★★

say I've gone there and done that," he said.

"But everyone out there had a job. Without the drivers, the Infantry, the engineers or the chefs the whole system would fall apart.

"So, yes, we had a key role but so did everyone else."

Inevitably, there were those who paid the ultimate price in the line of duty, including Capt Daniel Shepherd and SSgt Oz Schmid (both RLC), who were killed that same year.

Afghanistan will doubtless forever be etched in the minds of those who fought there, but collective memory is quicker to fade.

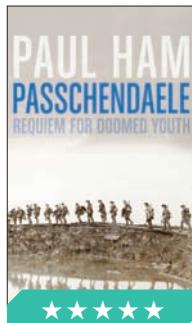
That's why accounts such as this, which remind us of the sacrifices made on the battlefield, will form an important part of the historic record in years to come. ■

INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK, SOLDIER

» **WIN**

Soldier has teamed up with Simon and Schuster to give away three copies of *Painting the Sand*. To be in with a chance of winning one tell us what the acronym IED stands for. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by July 31. Good luck!

BOOK RELEASES

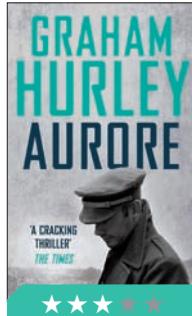


★★★★★

Passchendaele Requiem for Doomed Youth
by Paul Ham

THIS outstanding book covers the battle on and around the Passchendaele ridge in Flanders from October 1917 until the defeat of the 1918 German spring offensive in November of that year. The central theme is that the carnage of the campaign eclipsed that of both the Somme and Verdun, notwithstanding improvements to tactics and weaponry. Ham explains how friction between Lloyd George and Gen Haig, and amongst Allied commanders about the strategic direction of the war, resulted in muddled compromise and the adoption of plans based more on misplaced optimism than the application of experience. His account is thought-provoking, readable and informative.

George Robey, ex-GH

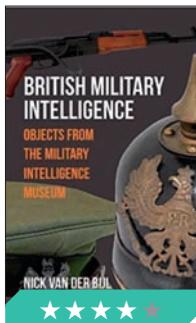


★★★★★

Aurore
by Graham Hurley

THIS is a follow-up to Hurley's previous novel, *Finisterre*, but is a completely stand-alone story set in the same period late in the Second World War. The plot is complicated, as I've come to expect with this author, but mainly it is about sending a spy into occupied France with false information prior to D-Day. As ever a lot of time is spent on characterisation but once you've worked this out the book is easier to read and comes over quite well. The storyline has much potential but it is a shame that it is lost in the minutiae of the protagonists' lives.

Andy Kay, ex-RS

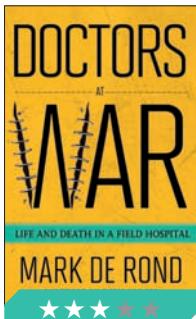


★★★★★

British Military Intelligence: Objects from the Military Intelligence Museum
by Nick van der Blij

THERE are dozens of books available on military intelligence, including various histories of the Intelligence Corps. This one is unusual, however, in that it is a hybrid collection of artefacts, snippets of the formation's history and a museum guide. At just 100 pages, it is relatively brief but the imagery is excellent and is accompanied by clear and concise prose. I highly recommend this to anyone visiting Chicksands and would also encourage them to allow extra time to look in on the corps museum, where they will discover much more than is illustrated in this title.

WO1 Dave Henley, Int Corps



★★★★★

Doctors at War
by Mark de Rond

LIKE a modern day *M*A*S*H*, this title reveals the highs and lows of a tour with a trauma team in

Camp Bastion hospital. One minute dealing with multiple amputations, the next describing a nurse wearing bunny ears and handing out Easter eggs, the book is packed with a dark humour few would tolerate, let alone understand. Added to this are the absurdities of war, where you could have a coalition soldier on an operating table next to the Taliban insurgent he'd just shot. This is not your standard account of Afghanistan but is still a worthwhile read, especially for any prospective medics or doctors.

LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

TOP GEAR

PICK OF THE MONTH:

FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

Tegstove delivers handy help for outdoor enthusiasts

IN an age where mobile phones dominate our daily lives a camping trip in the remote wilderness, with civilisation seemingly days away, is fraught with danger.

Sure, on the first night you can check your Facebook timeline or upload some pictures to Instagram but there's no guarantee you can do the same thing 24 hours later given the short battery life of today's handheld devices.

This is nothing short of a disaster.

Thankfully, help is now at hand courtesy of the Tegstove three-in-one portable gas stove – an innovation that received £45,000 of Peter Jones' money on *Dragon's Den*.

The handy gadget doesn't just cook your food but also charges a battery pack by using the heat generated from the flame.

Electrical energy is produced via a thermoelectric generator, meaning you can charge your phone by using a USB port under the power pack.

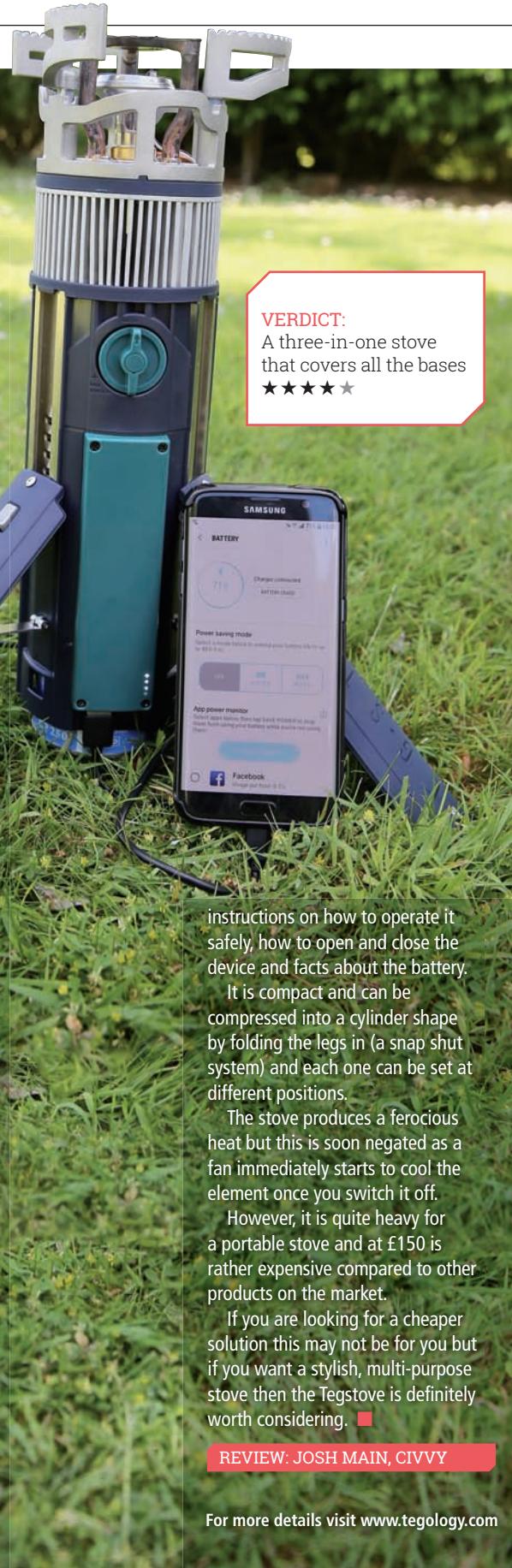
While all this sounds great there is a slight downside in the fact that it is a struggle to connect the cable to your handset if the stove has the legs in the 'out' position.

That aside, this is an impressive piece of kit. It has a cutting-edge design, is well built and comes with a camouflage bag that it fits snuggly inside.

It uses every last drop of butane and is really powerful compared to other camping stoves.

On first impressions the legs looked rather flimsy but when I started to use them they turned out to be very strong and robust.

The cooker also comes with simple



VERDICT:

A three-in-one stove that covers all the bases



instructions on how to operate it safely, how to open and close the device and facts about the battery.

It is compact and can be compressed into a cylinder shape by folding the legs in (a snap shut system) and each one can be set at different positions.

The stove produces a ferocious heat but this is soon negated as a fan immediately starts to cool the element once you switch it off.

However, it is quite heavy for a portable stove and at £150 is rather expensive compared to other products on the market.

If you are looking for a cheaper solution this may not be for you but if you want a stylish, multi-purpose stove then the Tegstove is definitely worth considering. ■

REVIEW: JOSH MAIN, CIVVY

For more details visit www.tegology.com

MOVIES

PICK OF THE MONTH:

HUMAN TAKE

Film offers personal perspective on great British leader

FEW would confute Winston Churchill's status as a colossus of our nation's history.

Nevertheless the former prime minister remains a deeply controversial figure for some, despite his obvious success leading Britain to victory in the Second World War.

Churchill, out now, may well resurrect a little debate in this particular department.

But interestingly, the title steers away from this sort of discussion to focus on a lesser-known side of the great leader's character – a man plagued by self-doubt, depression and fear.

Directed by Jonathan Teplitzky (*Railway Man*, *Marcella*), the movie tells the story of the figure's battle

DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES



Drone
Out July 3

YET another offering which questions the legitimacy of collateral damage in the international war against terrorism. Saying that, this is atmospherically filmed with some artistic shots and haunting music. **Sean Bean** gives a solid performance as a secret high-level drone contractor who, after being outed on a whistleblowing website, is tracked down and dramatically confronted by an avenging Pakistani businessman (**Patrick Sabongui**). This title is well worth watching despite the slow start.

Janet Dornan, ex-R Signals



between the personal and political in the hours running-up to D-Day.

Brian Cox takes on the daunting lead role, and the Scottish actor put much work into making all the visual details spot-on – from Churchill's distinctive lower lip to his trademark Cuban cigars.

Opposite him, **Miranda Richardson** plays his wife Clementine, whose unflappable nature is said to have buoyed the leader when his views were at odds with the likes of **Gen Eisenhower** and *Soldier* founder **Fd Marshal Montgomery**.

"For me, the most moving parts of all Churchill's extensive and revealing writing are about his family and his struggles with mental health," said screenwriter **Alex von Tunzelmann**.

Churchill is her first feature film, and predictably the historian's portrayal has come under fire by some who say it is inaccurate to suggest the leader had concerns so close to the start of

Operation Overlord.

But the writer is unequivocal about her reasons for changing some details.

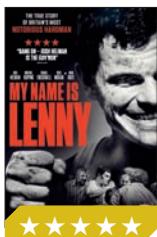
"In real life, Churchill was opposed to D-Day some weeks before it happened, but was reconciled to it by the time it occurred," she said. "In the film, this timeline has been shortened to increase the tension."

She continued: "My priority was to get to the character of a man who acknowledged his lifelong struggle with depression and yet who could inspire a nation.

"I hope we are now at a stage as a society where we understand better that these struggles are not shameful, and that to explore them is not disrespectful.

"If anything, the fact Churchill achieved everything he did despite his 'black dog' only makes him a more extraordinary figure."

PREVIEW: SARAH GOLDSHORPE, *SOLDIER*



My Name is Lenny

Out now

I WAS looking forward to this fictionalised biopic of Lenny "The Guv'nor" McLean, having read his autobiography a few years back. The character is notorious for his epic rivalry with Roy "Pretty Boy" Shaw (UFC champion Michael Bisping) and their unlicensed fights in the 1970s, which this title captures with several epic showdowns. The movie does a great job of reflecting both the public and private life of McLean and his devoted wife Val (**Chanel Cresswell**). It features a fantastic cast including **Josh Helman**, **Nick Moran** and the late **John Hurt**. A fantastic snapshot of a legend, and a great film that is well worth a watch.

Cpl Adam Jackson, Para



Origin Wars

Out on digital July 17

HAVE you ever spent your evening trawling movie libraries for hidden gems amidst the cheap straight-to-DVD dross? Every now and then you get lucky. If you ignore the inaccurate cover blurb, you have here a sci-fi film (the start of a series) made by a good director (who has form in the genre), with competent actors who prove production values don't have to suffer with a limited budget. The story and scope is ambitious and while occasionally hit-and-miss in execution, you come away having been entertained. The tone reminded me of **Tom Cruise's** *Oblivion*.

Maj Alex Janaway, RAMC



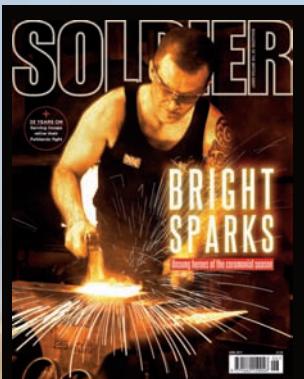
Security

Out July 3

THERE are some big names in this film, which thankfully wasn't a cunning ploy to hide a shoddy plot or revive someone's career. **Antonio Banderas** plays a PTSD-suffering war veteran who takes a job as a security guard. On his first shift he opens the doors to a distraught girl who has escaped the hijacking of her police motorcade, which was taking her to testify as a trial witness. Banderas then finds himself pitted against **Ben Kingsley** – both playing to their strengths in this fast-paced and explosive action thriller. This movie is excellent from start to finish.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

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A STAR IS BORN

ALL-ROUNDER Pte Tade Carmichael (RLC) produced a sublime individual display on his Lord's debut as the Army claimed another Inter-Services Twenty20 title. Read about their latest success on pages 78-79...







GET INVOLVED: FOR MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO GET INVOLVED VISIT THE ADVENTUROUS TRAINING GROUP ARMY SITE ON [ARMYNET](#)

READY FOR TAKE-OFF

ARMY PARAGLIDERS SEEK FRESH TALENT TO HELP PUSH THEIR SPORT TO A NEW LEVEL

WITH the possibility of flying hundreds of kilometres cross-country at speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour, paragliding is seen as the ideal adventurous training activity.

By offering "controlled exposure to risk" the discipline delivers direct benefits to a soldier's day job in that it pushes them outside their comfort zone and challenges them to operate under pressure.

But paragliding is more than a training tool and the Service enjoys a thriving sporting scene that sees personnel tested in a series of competitions at home and abroad.

To prepare for the challenges to come the Army Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association runs a series of coaching clinics throughout the year, the most recent of which – Exercise Wessex Wings – saw ten pilots take to the sky during a two-week camp.

"Participants can come and practise their skills or build up some flying time," WO2 Garrick McMullin (RA), the exercise's OiC, told *SoldierSport*.

"For us, the aim is to get people flying cross-country at the appropriate standard.

"Paragliding is something that starts off as adventurous training and then progresses into the sporting side; it is one of the few activities that covers both sides of the coin.

"Everyone looks after each other so it promotes teamwork

and it also offers an opportunity to enjoy some amazing scenery from a totally different angle.

"You can find yourself soaring along a mountain range at 4,000 feet or embroiled in a cross-country down wind dash. It really is an adrenalin sport."

Wessex Wings followed hot on the heels of a similar camp in the Peak District in April and preceded another in Cumbria as the training run continues.

The top Army pilots were reaching the conclusion of the Inter-Services Championships in Wales as this issue went to press and McMullin is hoping the attention to detail will pay off on the big stage.

"The Royal Air Force won this competition last season," the senior NCO explained.

"They tend to be a strong team but this year we have almost double the numbers of the other Services.

"We have got some really good up-and-coming pilots so it should be interesting."

Despite boasting a core number of experienced athletes the set-up is looking for new blood to join the ranks so the discipline can continue its rapid development.

Fortunately, paragliding is among the cheapest forms of aviation and novices can purchase the kit they need, second-hand, for around £1,500. The association also has equipment for hire.

"We want more young soldiers and junior NCOs to take



"WE
HAVE
SOME
REALLY
GOOD
UP-AND-
COMING
PILOTS"

part," McMullin said. "A lot of our pilots are older so we need an injection of talent to push things forward.

"The opportunity to go and represent the Army is a big draw so hopefully we can get more people involved."

Newcomers can progress to an intermediate standard on completing 25 hours of flying, while the open class is achieved with 75 hours of airtime and a 20-kilometre cross-country flight in the UK.

When it comes to competitions, entrants are tasked with flying from a chosen site along a route with a series of cylinders before reaching the end goal.

"It is about picking the right conditions to take off in, navigating correctly and maintaining a good sense of what is happening in the airspace," McMullin said.

"It is a test of all the skills learned during the course of a pilot's career."

Success with the Army team can lead to selection for the UK Armed Forces squad, which is due to compete at events in France and Macedonia over the coming months.

The outfit enjoyed an expedition to Colombia in early 2017 and will be flying in India later this year. ■



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KEEP IN TOUCH: FOR MORE NEWS AND RESULTS FROM THE SPORT'S VARIOUS DISCIPLINES VISIT THE ARMY CYCLING FACEBOOK PAGE

» CYCLING



SOLDIERS PASS TRIAL TEST

THE Army's cyclists repelled the challenge of a rapidly improving Royal Air Force outfit to reign supreme at the Inter-Services Time Trial Championships in Yeovilton.

Returning star Capt Ryan Perry (REME) – part of the Team Raleigh GAC professional set-up – produced record-breaking displays in the ten- and 25-mile disciplines to spearhead the soldiers' assault, while the women dominated the podium positions over the shorter distance as the squad's successful run continued.

Perry battled gruelling weather conditions to post a course-record time of 19min 53sec in the ten-mile race and then repeated the trick a day later with an effort of 50min 49sec over the longer route.

Lt Col Chris Murray (Int Corps) led the charge in the women's podium push as her time of 24min 9sec secured top spot ahead of teammates Capt Sue McFarlane (RAPTC) and Pte Samantha Wilson (RLC).

WO2 Chanel Mason (RAPTC) was the star of the show over 25 miles, clocking a time of 59min 22sec to finish more than five minutes quicker than Wilson in second place.

Her achievement came in the immediate aftermath of a national tour series event in Bath with Storey Racing and preceded a training camp with the same team in the Lake District.

Having secured the individual honours the Army also claimed both team titles.

"These championships are never a foregone conclusion and thankfully we had Ryan and Chanel on hand to help the cause," time trial secretary Maj Rich Hunt (Rifles, pictured), winner of the veterans' 25-mile race, told *SoldierSport*.

"The RAF have made a massive investment in cycling; they have thrown huge resources at this.

"They have defeated the Army at triathlon and it looks like cycling is their next mission.

"We did not realise how tight it would be." ■



"WE
DID NOT
REALISE
HOW
TIGHT IT
WOULD
BE"

SPONSOR SIGNS UP

PLANS to form a UK Armed Forces cycling team have been given a major boost with the news that Carillion has signed a three-year deal to sponsor the sport.

The agreement will see the company supporting Inter-Services races across all disciplines and it is hoped that improved standards at such events will create an environment where athletes can go on and compete at the highest level.

Capt Peter Simmonds (RE), secretary of UKAF cycling, said: "This is a brand new project within Forces sport and we are extremely grateful to Carillion for accepting the invitation to join us.

"By doing so we can professionalise the highest level of Inter-Services cycling.

"This year we will carry out an assessment of what this new relationship can bring to the four championship races, with an emphasis on delivering the best events possible for those selected to compete for their Service in 2018 and 2019.

"Our longer term ambition remains to select UKAF cycling teams to compete at international events where we can generate maximum impact."





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BACK IN THE FAST LANE: THE ARMY TEAM LOCK HORNS WITH THEIR FORCES RIVALS AT THE INTER-SERVICES SHOWDOWN IN PLYMOUTH ON JULY 5

Picture: Cpl Mark Webster, RLC



RIDERS HIT COUNTRY TRAIL

INTENSE climbs, twisting descents and energy-sapping temperatures were among the many challenges facing riders at this year's Army Cross-Country Mountain Bike Championships.

With more than 200 riders taking to the start line the competition promised to be fierce and they did not disappoint during an action-packed afternoon on the outskirts of Tidworth.

WO1 Dave Pearson (Int Corps) was crowned Army champion but he was pushed all the way by Maj Alex Ficke (RMAS).

After mechanical problems forced the withdrawal of their rivals the duo found themselves locked in a two-way battle for the lead that was decided by a sprint to the finish.

Victory also secured Pearson the title of masters champion, with Ficke taking top honours in the senior ranks.

Elsewhere, Maj Angela Laycock (RE) cemented her status as the Service's number

one female rider by triumphing in the women's race.

Event organiser WO1 Jason Marriott (Rifles) was thrilled with the success of the day, which continued the trend of increased participation seen throughout the season to date.

"We are 50 or 60 riders up on last season," he told *SoldierSport*. "Our publicity is a lot better and we are putting on courses that are demanding but, at the same time, are not destroying people. It is pitched at the right level."

"We wanted a route that combined climbing with single track riding and we nailed it. There were also some technical elements and that gets people used to facing difficult terrain."

"We are also looking for more talent at the top level; there are a couple of youngsters coming through and hopefully they can push for a place on the Army team. It is time for the new wave of riders to shine."

For more information visit www.armycycling.org.uk

**"IT IS
TIME FOR
THE NEW
WAVE OF
RIDERS
TO
SHINE"**

» MOUNTAIN BIKING



Pictures: SBS Photography

UP FOR THE CUP

A SENSATIONAL season in the ring ended on a high as the Army's fighters returned from the annual Haringey Box Cup with four gold medals.

The soldiers launched an eight-pronged assault on Europe's biggest international competition and produced a series of stunning displays to return with a healthy contingent of champions.

LCpl Chez Nihell (PWRR, pictured below) secured a third successive title by triumphing in three tough bouts in the space of three days.

The superheavyweight secured a unanimous verdict against Jonathan Palata in the final – an achievement made even more remarkable by the fact he took to the canvas with a torn bicep.

There was further success for the family as wife LCpl Alanna Nihell (RLC) won a fourth title in the women's 64kg division.

Rising star Spr Ebonie Jones (RE, pictured above) continued her rapid rise in the senior ranks by taking top spot in the bantamweight draw.

And Welsh contender LCpl Ashley Williams (R Welsh) completed the winning run in the men's 49kg competition.



» VOLLEYBALL

SPORT SHORTS



Champions crowned

TOP boxing talent from across the Army descended on Aldershot for five days of action at the Service's annual individual championships.

A total of 19 gold medals were awarded in categories ranging from light flyweight to superheavyweight, with novices and elite-level athletes challenged in the ring.

In terms of collective honours, the Infantry were crowned Inter-Corps champions, while 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment took the Inter-Unit honours.



Boxers get national call

FIVE Service boxers have moved a step closer to international recognition after recently being named in various national squads.

Lcpl Ashley Williams (R Welsh) has been called into the Welsh set-up ahead of next year's Commonwealth Games, while LCpl Kyle Morrison (RLC, pictured) is undergoing a five-week trial in a bid to cement his place on the same team.

Spr Ebonie Jones (RE) has seen her superb form in 2017 rewarded with a spot in the Team GB assessment squad, where she has been joined by teammates Cpl Steph Wroe (REME) and Gnr Carys Artingstall (RA).



COURT DOMINANCE CONTINUES



INTER-SERVICES VOLLEYBALL

ARMY

3

RAF

1

T was a case of business as usual at the Inter-Services Volleyball Championships as the Army women downed their Forces rivals to win a sixth successive title.

Having defeated the Royal Navy in their first match the soldiers squared-off against the Royal Air Force in the tournament final, where they recorded a 3-1 success to claim another crown.

The match appeared to be going to form as the Reds won the opening set 25-20 and quickly added the second.

However, their rivals halted the momentum by taking the third, meaning the champions-elect had to return for a fourth set in the punishing summer heatwave – which they won 25-14.

"It was another really good win for us," head coach WO2 Nikki Mead (AGC (SPS)) told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"We did lots of strength and conditioning work in the build-

up to this tournament and that helped us deal with the high temperatures on court.

"We were also boosted by the fact that all of our players were released from work; that really makes the difference.

"We never think that victory is a formality as anyone can beat anyone on the day. If we don't think like that the players are not properly prepared."

Mead singled out Lt Kim Smith (RE), Capt Karen Tait (RAMC) and Maj Cath Oosterveen (AGC (ETS)) for particular praise but stressed it was the strength of the squad that was the key to success.

Victory at the Forces showdown came hot on the heels of another triumph at the Crown Services tournament in Scotland, where the team faced opposition from the emergency services and military.

The Army defeated every opponent on their way to the final, where they recorded a 3-0 win over the RAF. ■



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FRESH ON THE SCENE: THE SERVICE IS LOOKING FOR NEW TALENT TO JOIN THE RANKS. VISIT THE ARMY ICE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION FACEBOOK PAGE



REDS HOLD STEADY TO REIGN AT LORD'S

THE Army's cricketers negotiated a nerve-shredding final over to down their Royal Navy rivals and claim a fifth successive Inter-Services Twenty20 title at Lord's.

Chasing what appeared to be a modest target of 126 to win the Reds found themselves in deep trouble as a stuttering performance with the bat left them needing 11 runs from the final six deliveries.

With the top order back in the pavilion all eyes were on wicketkeeper Cpl Josh Cooper (R Signals) and partner Capt Steve Booth (RA) and after scampering six runs from the first four balls the former launched a huge six down the ground to seal a three-wicket victory that ensured the trophy remained in Army hands.

There was little sign of the tension to come as the Service's bowlers – led by Lt Col Alex Senneck (R Signals, pictured right) – asserted their authority.

The paceman gave his side

the perfect start by removing openers ETME Ben Kohler-Cadmore and Mne Rob Urmann in the first over and he added a third scalp as Mne Pete Turnbull was caught behind.

A 48-run stand between Sub Lt Leo Buscombe and Sgt Alvin Pollard repaired the early damage but Bdr Sherwin Govender (RA) halted their progress when he bowled Buscombe for 24.

The all-rounder claimed another victim as Lt Andrew Sturman was stumped for 11 and Pte Tade Carmichael (RLC, pictured above) snared two wickets during a tight three-over spell that kept the scoreboard under control.

Pollard top-scored with a knock of 48 but a total of 125-8 looked short of being competitive as the Army's batsmen made their way to the middle.

However, their opponents seized the initiative with the ball and some accurate bowling

ensured runs were hard to come by early on.

With just 12 coming from the first four overs opener Maj James Hudson (RA) tried to pick up the pace but perished while attempting to hit over the top.

Carmichael regained the initiative with a flurry of boundaries but the departure of Gnr Craig Ross (RA) caused further problems for the team.

Another blow was struck when Carmichael was caught on the boundary for 36 and skipper Maj Storm Green (Coldm Gds) followed in the next over as he lobbed a catch to Kohler-Cadmore off the bowling of Urmann.

At 79-4 the Reds still looked well placed but Turnbull removed Senneck and Govender in the same over before bowling Sgt Uri Hill (RLC) to leave their rivals needing 11 runs at the death.

However, Cooper and Booth

INTER-SERVICES T20 FINAL

NAVY

125-8

ARMY

127-7



held their nerve and the Army celebrated a famous win.

The soldiers faced fewer problems in their opening match as the Royal Air Force were dispatched with relative ease.

Batting first, the champions-elect lost Ross and Hudson in quick succession but a blistering stand of 152 between Carmichael and Green laid the foundations for a commanding total of 175-3.

Carmichael top-scored with a superb innings of 81 from 48 balls that featured nine fours and four maximums, while Green smashed an unbeaten 75.

In reply, the RAF were never in contention as Carmichael and Senneck shared five wickets, while the remainder of the Army attack claimed scalps at regular intervals as the airmen limped to a miserable 102 all out.

"Winning here feels incredible," Green told *SoldierSport* at the close of play. "The Navy have dug some guys out of the woodwork and it's great to see them back on par with the other Services.

"I was in two minds whether to bowl first against them. The pitch had held together well during the day but it started to do a bit at the end. They bowled really well and thankfully Josh got us over the line." ■



LORD'S IN NUMBERS

RUNS FROM
PTE TADE
CARMICHAEL

117

WICKETS
CLAIMED BY
LT COL ALEX
SENNECK

5

FOURS HIT
BY MAJ
STORM
GREEN VS
THE RAF

8

TOP SCORE
ON THE DAY
- FROM THE
NAVY'S BEN
KOHLER-
CADMORE

99

SUCCESSIVE
TITLES FOR
THE ARMY
AT LORD'S

5



TROPHY RUN CONTINUES

A HECTIC run of ice hockey action reached its conclusion at the annual Inter-Services showdown in Sheffield, with the Army claiming a fifth successive title to underline their dominance of the sport.

After thrashing their Forces rivals in 2016 the soldiers faced a sterner test this season as a 3-2 win over the Royal Air Force was followed by a slender 5-4 triumph against the Royal Navy.

"The gulf between the sides has closed quite a lot," Capt Ross Walker (R Welsh), secretary of UK Armed Forces ice hockey, told *SoldierSport*. "We've lost some key players

and suffered a few injuries but they have improved.

"Winning five years in a row is a new competition record and that was our main focus. It is a great achievement."

The tournament came on the back of a keenly contested Army Championships at the same venue.

A further sign of the sport's development was witnessed as the Infantry were able to field a full side for the first time and the newcomers made a successful debut by defeating defending champions the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers 3-2 in the final (pictured above). ■

● THE first major event in the windsurfing calendar was staged on Hayling Island as the military's top athletes took to the water for the Forces Open Championships. Solid winds allowed for action over five days and Gnr Chris Cunningham (RA) was named the overall winner. The soldiers return to Hayling Island for the Army Championships on July 17 ahead of the Inter-Services in September.



Picture: Peter Davies

SPORT SHORTS



Junior dragons join up

THE next generation of Welsh rugby stars were given a taste of military life as they embarked on a three-day training camp in Aldershot ahead of the World Under-20 Championships.

As well as making the most of the Army's pitches and facilities the junior dragons were tested in a series of command tasks before sampling a dismounted close combat trainer under the watchful eye of personnel from the Scots Guards.



Tough test in Georgia

RUGBY players from ITC Catterick tested their skills against their rivals from the Georgian Army during a ten-day tour of the country.

The trip featured visits to Tbilisi and Batumi and saw the squad train with one of the nation's top professional sides ahead of two challenging fixtures.

Unfortunately, the soldiers suffered back-to-back defeats as the hosts made a storming start in both encounters to win 17-10 and 33-10.

"We knew from the start that the Georgians were going to be strong and very physical; they had a definite size advantage," said player of the tour Capt Tom Shea.

SPRINTERS HIT TOP GEAR

THE Army Sprint Road Race Team gave another encouraging performance on the track in the latest round of the Inter-Services Championship at Snetterton.

Staged as part of the Thundersport GB series, the race saw WO2 Mick Coxon (RHA) narrowly miss out on a podium finish as he claimed fourth spot – securing valuable points for the outfit in the overall standings.

Teammate LCpl Nathan Salked (REME) also enjoyed a fine weekend as he sealed fifth place.

"Nathan looked great through the Riches right-hander and during the Inter-Services race he achieved another personal best," said team captain CSgt Danny Williams (Mercian).

"He had a productive and consistent weekend."

The pairing of Sgt Jason Markham (RHA) and LSgt Ian McGann (IG) collected trophies in the Superstock twin category, while Cpl Stephen Thomas (AGC (RMP)) broke the Pre-National 600 Freshman class lap record.

The next round was being staged as this issue went to press. For more news see the Army Sprint Road Race Team Facebook page.



Picture: Garry Fox

**"WE
KNEW
THEY
WERE
GOING
TO BE
VERY
STRONG"**



THE latest bearer of the name *British Soldier* has taken to the water for another busy season of Army sailing.

A 36th-place finish in the IRC2 class of the DeGuingand Bowl formed a promising debut for the Danish-built X-41 boat, which produced strong speeds in the two-day race along the south coast.

A full season of competition will now follow, the highlight of which is the biannual Fastnet Race from Cowes in August.

MONTH IN SPORT

July's key fixtures...



WHAT: Inter-Services Swimming, Diving and Water Polo Championships
WHEN: July 5-7
WHERE: Aldershot Garrison Gym

NEED TO KNOW: There were mixed results in the pool last year but the Army's female swimmers maintained their fine form to claim an 18th successive title



WHAT: Inter-Services Athletics Championships
WHEN: July 12
WHERE: HMS *Temeraire*
NEED TO KNOW: The Army won both the men's and women's competitions in 2017 and will be eyeing another double as they head to the Royal Navy's home track in Portsmouth



WHAT: Inter-Services Triathlon Championships
WHEN: July 26
WHERE: Cirencester
NEED TO KNOW: The Army played second fiddle to the Royal Air Force last season as their rivals dominated the individual and collective standings. Can the Reds fight back this year?

LEAGUE IN NUMBERS

PLAYERS NAMED IN THE SQUAD

24

MATCHES IN THE ROUND ROBIN STAGE

3

WARM-UP GAMES AHEAD OF THE CONTEST

4

POINTS CONCEDED IN THE 2015 LOSS DOWN UNDER

26

SOLDIERS IN THE PARTY

7



Picture: SBS Photography

RUGBY LEAGUE

WORLD CROWN IN SIGHT

THE UK Armed Forces rugby league squad have arrived in Australia on a mission to regain their Defence World Cup title.

As defending champions the military outfit were dumped out of the competition by New Zealand at the semi-final stage four years ago and will face the same opposition as part of the four-team tournament, which gets underway on July 7.

Australia and Fiji complete the line-up, with the top two from the round robin matches facing off in the final at Pepper Stadium in Penrith on July 16.

A total of seven Army players have been named in the squad and SSgt Jordan Kerman (RAPTC, pictured) is among those pushing for a starting place ahead of the opening fixture.

"We have been preparing for this tournament for 18 months," he told *SoldierSport* on the eve of departure.

"We've had four fixtures during the build-up and

have played against tough, professional opposition.

"It has been difficult but that is what you need when you're heading into a World Cup.

"Everything is coming together and the squad is getting better and better."

The team travelled to Australia two years ago and suffered a last-gasp defeat to the hosts at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium and Kerman is fully aware of the magnitude of the task.

"I'm guessing their team will not be too different," he said.

"Our coach has done some preparation and we know they will have quality players who come from a semi-professional background.

"I think it will come down to who is better on the day."

Head coach Flt Lt Damian Clayton added: "The squad is looking very strong.

"Some faces have been around for a while and they have played against the Aussies in a World Cup before. Their experience will be invaluable to us." ■

Final Word

Interviews: Becky Clark
Pictures: Steve Dock



Cfn Jack Woodward, REME

Don't be Jack.
Help your mates out when they're in need because hopefully they'll do the same for you. If you work as a team you achieve more.



Lt Philip Beresford-Webb, Int Corps

"It pays to be a winner" is a phrase that's bandied around a lot in physical training, where the last man might have to go again, but it also relates to your career. If you're seen being good at what you do it will reflect well on you. Competence inspires trust in your leadership.



Capt Sven Gronn, R Signals

I've been in for 27 years and the best advice I got was to make the most of education opportunities from functional skills right up to a degree or masters. It makes you a more rounded individual and helps you in the Army and on the outside. I did an Open University degree in history and I think it gave me the edge when commissioning.



Gnr David Perkins, RHA

"Train hard, fight easy" is something I've always been told, right from basic training. If you work hard in exercises, when you have to do it for real you'll know what you're doing.



Spr Callum Kane, RE

My dad was in the Army for 24 years and the first thing he told me when I joined was make friends with the chef, the storeman and the clerk. The chefs are in charge of your grub, if you're mates with the storeman new kit will find its way to you, and it's nice to be friendly with the clerks because they square your pay away.

Cpl Rai Prabin, QOGLR

Follow what the boss tells you to do. Also, senior Gurkhas always say study hard. It's important because English isn't our first language. Now my missus is saying the same! I'm still thinking about doing an Open University course.



What's the best career advice you were ever given?

Soldier asked personnel to share their favourite wisdom

Cfn Max Lancaster, REME

If you want something stick with it and fight for it: that advice got me through my training and I'll take it with me as far as I can go.



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