

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

November 2001 £2

SOLDIER

THIRSTY WORK IN OMAN



- **British troops exercise in desert**
- **First pictures of Jubilee Medal**
- **Henry Cooper on his Army days**



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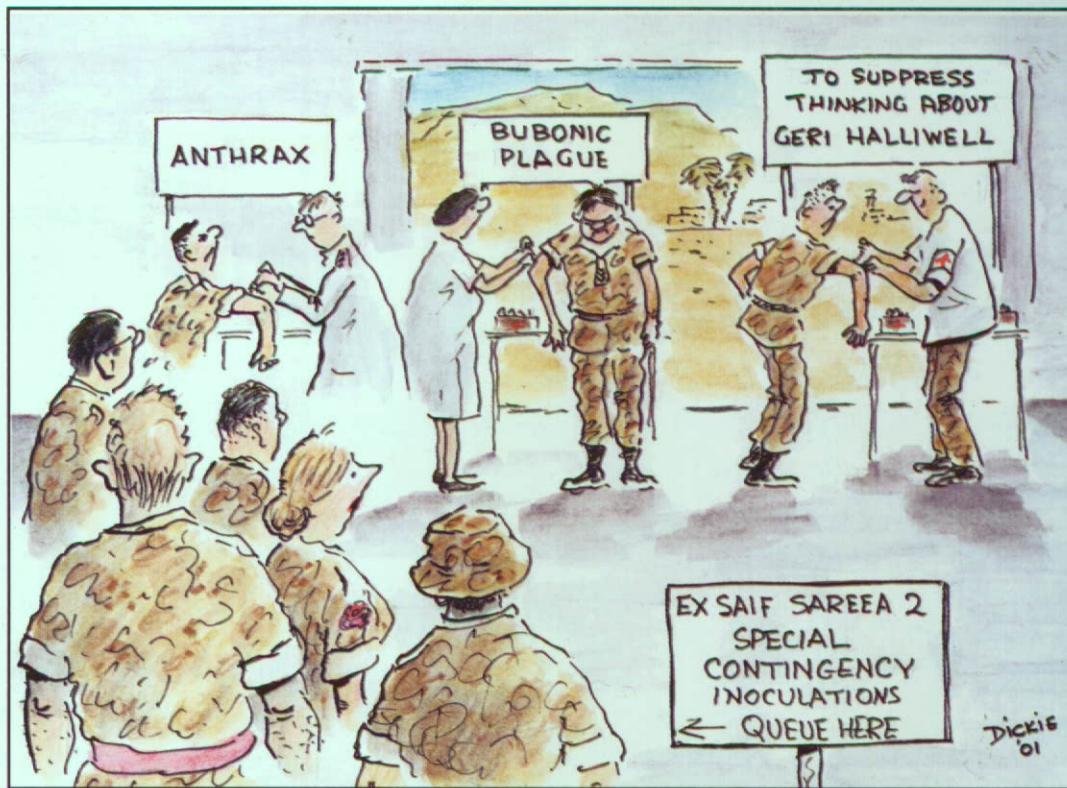
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In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine

39 Cover

Thirsty work: Tpr Ben Parker, left, and Tpr Christopher Petherbridge of D Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers, relax at the end of a day in the Omani desert.

Picture: WO2 Pete Bristo



Freshly minted: First picture of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, left, which celebrates the monarch's 50-year reign. Story and more pictures – Page 37

Win a VIP night with Miss Saigon – Page 27

Waiting, hoping ...

Daughter of an SAS founder recalls agony of families who wait for news – Page 23



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Band of Brothers star talks about Longmoor 'boot camp' – Page 33



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Ready to finish the job

No matter when, no matter where, if called upon British troops are ready to play their part in the war against international terror

Reports: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Mike Weston

FROM the outset it was clear, this would be a war like no other. Years of bloody experience, forged in the furnace of fighting urban, national and international terrorism, mean British troops are uniquely equipped to deal with the new threat.

As *Soldier* went to press no British ground troops had been committed to the war in Afghanistan. Army sources dismissed stories that British ground forces were already operating in Afghanistan. They had no basis in fact, according to the sources.

Prime Minister Tony Blair announced on October 7 that UK Forces were taking part in Operation Veritas against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist organisation and the Taliban regime harbouring them in Afghanistan.

On the night of October 7, Tomahawk missiles were fired at a Taliban terrorist site by Royal Navy submarines. The US struck 29 other locations. USAF C-17 aircraft also began humanitarian drops of emergency rations concentrations of displaced persons.

Coalition operations continued with Royal Air Force support aircraft flying operational sorties from October 9. Royal Navy Tomahawk missiles were again fired on October 13.

The Tomahawk land attack missile is a key weapon system for RN submarines,



ACE force in Thrace

Listen up: Lt Luke Roberts, above right, of C Squadron, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, briefs his troop during Exercise Adventure Exchange in Turkish Thrace, 150km north-west of Istanbul.

The month-long deployment was an opportunity for Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) to work together with the 12 participating nations. AMF (L) was formed in 1960 by Belgium, Germany, the

UK and the USA, with Italy and Canada joining later. The force was intended as a light, strategically mobile force held at high readiness to deploy anywhere within Allied Command Europe to demonstrate Nato's solidarity and resolve to deter aggression. There are currently up to 14 infantry battalions available in the force pool with associated support totalling 22,000 soldiers from 17 nations.

having made its operational debut during the Kosovo campaign in 1999. Targeting data can be passed from Fleet Headquarters at Northwood to a submarine anywhere in the world.

British Forces committed to Operation Veritas include Royal Navy S and T Class submarines and RAF support aircraft.

Three RN nuclear-powered Fleet submarines of the Swiftsure and Trafalgar classes are deployed in the area of operations – HM Submarines *Superb*, *Trafalgar* and *Triumph*.

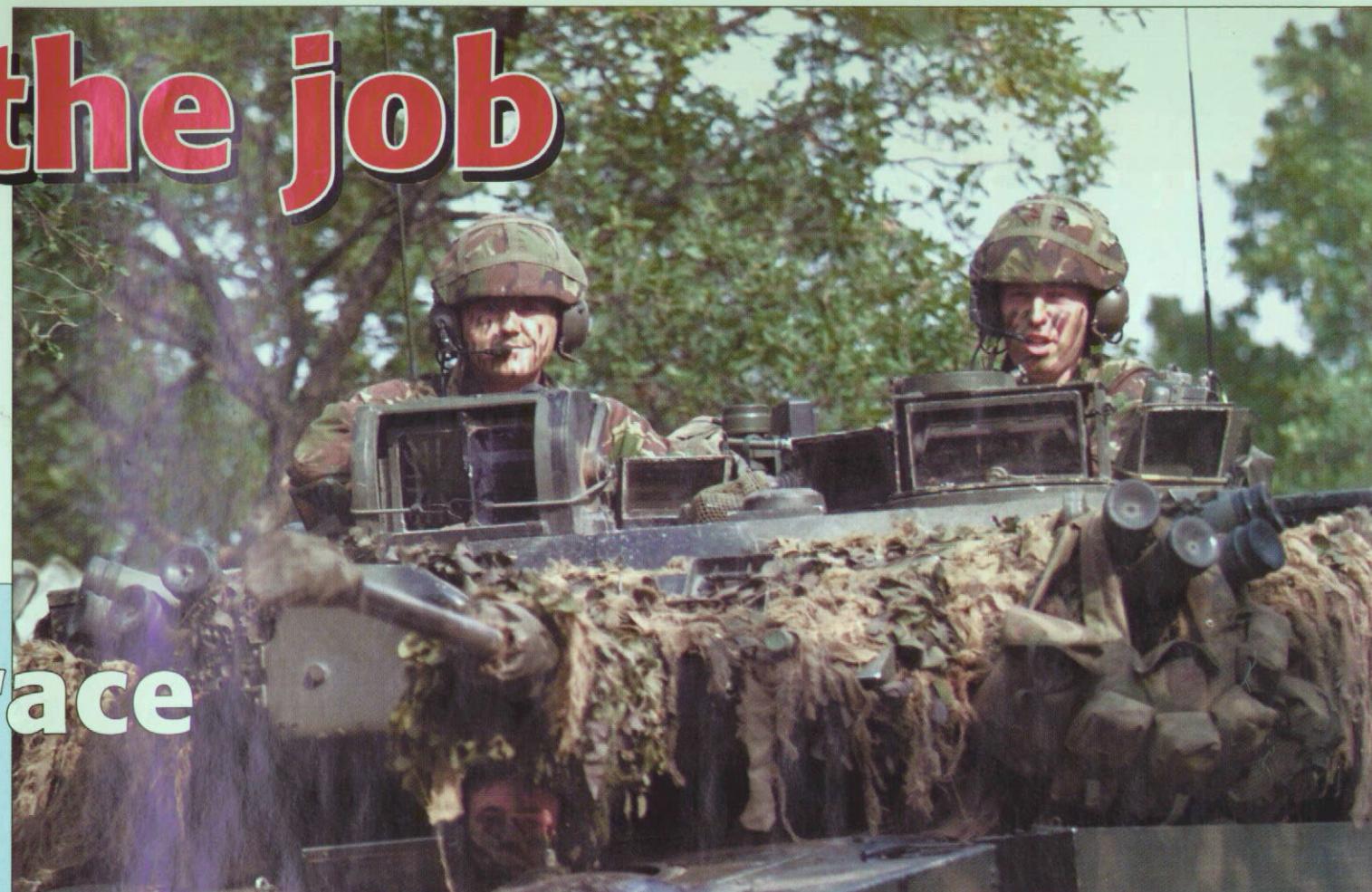
RAF Tristar and VC-10 tanker aircraft from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire have also deployed to support the operation. Their refuelling system is compatible with US Navy and US Marine Corps

aircraft, allowing them to offer support to US carrier-borne assets. The RAF has the largest air-to-air refuelling tanker force in the world after the US.

Air-to-air refuelling is invaluable in air operations, since the limiting factor on aircraft range becomes, to all intents and purposes, the endurance of the aircrew,

allowing aircraft to operate anywhere in the world with great rapidity.

Other RAF aircraft supporting the operation include sophisticated E-3D Sentry AEW1 surveillance and control aircraft from RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire; Nimrod R1 surveillance aircraft, also from Waddington; and Canberra PR9 reconnaissance aircraft from RAF Marham, Norfolk.



Put your foot down: Tpr Dave Read (gunner), Tpr Peter Stoner (commander) and Tpr Rhys Long (driver) of The Queen's Dragoon Guards deploy in a Scimitar

Insurers take cover

PAX, the Army's most popular private personal accident insurer, has put a block on soldiers taking out new policies.

Since September 20 anyone trying to take out a Pax policy will be disappointed. Policies affected include Pax Plus, RPax and XPax. But policyholders who took out insurance before the cut-off date are unaffected.

About 50 per cent of the Army has Pax life assurance or personal accident insurance.

While the MoD encourages its personnel to take out additional cover, the decision rests with the individual. Policies are commercial undertakings and the MoD does not carry any of the risk – or gain – from the premium.

All Servicemen and women are covered by a comprehensive package of benefits through the Armed Forces Pension Scheme and War Pensions Scheme. This guarantees payments to widows of soldiers killed in action and to personnel severely injured. The schemes are unaffected by commercial considerations.

Pax's underwriters, AIG Europe (UK), decided to close their policies to new applicants because of the uncertain international situation. The right to prevent people joining a commercial insurance scheme when the level of risk is thought to have increased is normal business practice. Other insurance companies have increased their premiums.

Staff at Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood, Middlesex are making arrange-

ments for application forms from other insurance providers to be fast-tracked to personnel already deployed to Oman who have no private cover.

Naafi Financial is still accepting applications for new premiums, which start from £2 a month for up to £10,000 cover. Soldiers must pay a year's worth of premiums up front. "For the peace of mind it gives you I don't think it's a large amount of money," said Mr Al Voice, managing director of Naafi Financial.

"We are disappointed that some sections of the market have pulled away from it because there is always the accusation that you can buy insurance when you don't need it, but maybe when you do, you can't."

Mr Voice said customers should accept some responsibility. During the Gulf War, some soldiers took out large cover, usually paid for by monthly premiums, but then cancelled it immediately the crisis was over.

"The cost is quite high to establish a policy in terms of administration, so if you collect one month's premium, and then the policy is cancelled, you've had all the risk and all the cost."

"What we don't want is those individuals who may take advantage of the current situation to cover themselves and then as soon as it is over say they don't need it anymore."

Soldiers who have taken out Naafi Financial motor insurance are automatically covered for personal accidents.

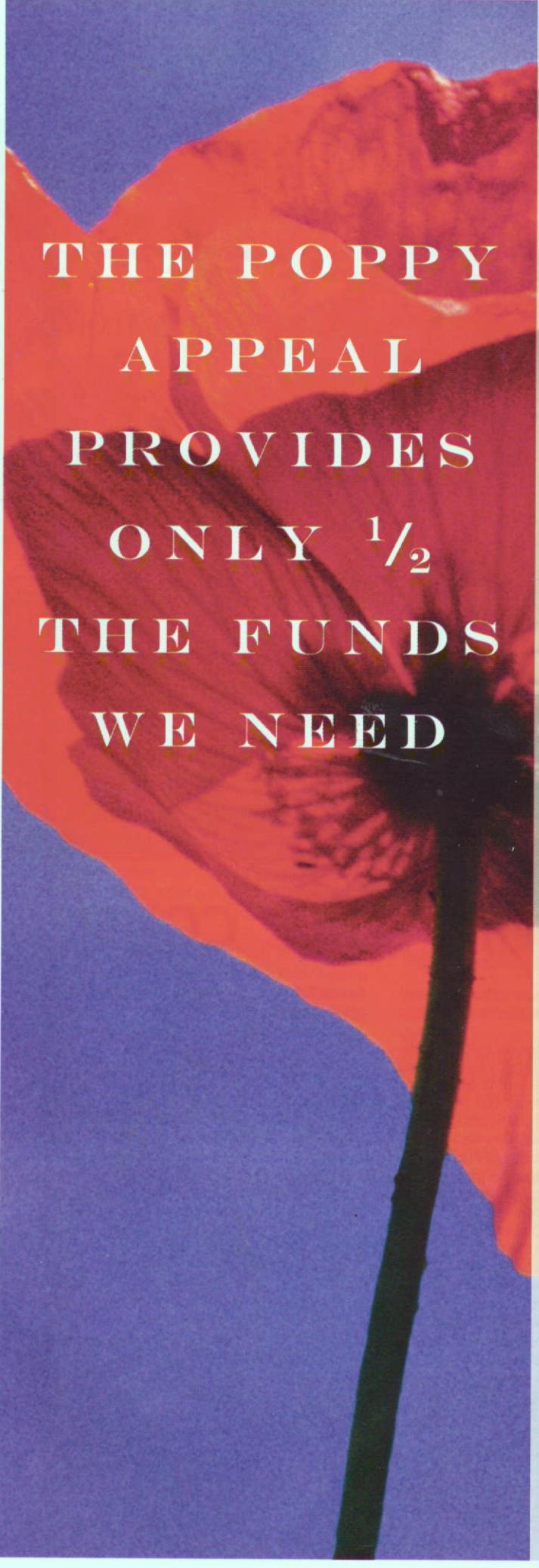
UK's Servicemen and women among 'best in world', says PM

PRIME Minister Tony Blair said in a statement on the security situation: "I want to pay tribute if I might right at the outset to Britain's Armed Forces. There is no greater strength for a British Prime Minister and the British nation at a time like this than to know that the forces we are calling upon are among the very best in the world."

"They and their families are, of course, carrying an immense burden at this moment and will be feeling deep anxiety, as will the British people. But we can take pride in their courage, their sense of duty and the esteem with which they're held throughout the world."

Dr Lewis Moonie, Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veter-

ans, chaired the first plenary meeting of the new Veterans' Forum. Paying tribute to personnel engaged on operations against terrorist targets in Afghanistan, Dr Moonie noted the flood of calls received by the MoD Veterans' Advice Unit from veterans and reservists declaring their availability should their services be required.



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Troops on spot as Iris batters Belize

Ripon divers recover bodies in aftermath of killer hurricane

Report: Anthony Stone

SOLDIERS on an adventurous training diving expedition in Belize helped recover bodies after a devastating hurricane hit the southern end of the country.

Twelve divers on an expedition organised by Ripon-based 38 Engineer Regiment pulled bodies from mangrove swamps and a half-submerged boat after Hurricane Iris wreaked havoc.

A 160-man composite company group from Hounslow-based 1st Battalion, The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, in Belize for routine jungle training, also deployed to badly affected areas.

Two local people and 18 Americans – believed to be nine couples – died during the storm.

Maj John Knopp, PWO, 2ic of the 80-man British Army Training and Support Unit Belize, said: "We got warning the hurricane was coming and we knew we had a real problem on our hands.

"We evacuated the D and D soldiers out of the jungle and got the diving expedition back to base."

Troops pulled from jungle play key role in getting emergency food and water to worst-hit parts of Belize

Miami's National Hurricane Warning Center classified Iris as a small but extremely dangerous hurricane, the most destructive storm to hit southern Belize for 40 years.

"Imagine a fly-mow 20 miles wide, cutting through the jungle and flattening everything in its way," said Maj Knopp. "Remember the hurricane that struck parts of southern Britain in 1987 and imagine that 15 or 20 miles wide."

Most of the victims were American tourists enjoying a diving holiday on the 120ft boat *Wave Dancer*, which had sought shelter in a dock when the storm hit the shoreline.

"*Wave Dancer* had gone to Big Creek to get out of the way," said Maj Knopp.

"What they had not realised was that the hurricane had turned south and they got hit head-on. The boat was ripped away from its moorings and turned over."

A call was put out for volunteers to search for survivors in the boat.

"*Wave Dancer* capsized at 10pm, so it was eight hours before they even had daylight on the scene," said Maj Knopp.

Members of the 38 Engineer Regiment-led diving team helped police to make the search and Capt Tim McClune and a local man, Billy Leslie, found two bodies in the boat.

At the same time a helicopter from 25 Flight, Army Air Corps, which supports the Belize training unit, searched adjoining mangrove swamps and located seven more bodies.

Capt Natasha Bennett, SSgt Billy Macdonald, Cpl Steve James and Cpl Greg Burnlees helped Belize police recover the corpses.

D and D soldiers played a key role in co-ordinating emergency food and water distribution over the following seven days. B Company was deployed to Placencia and D Company to Punta Gorda.

Lynx and Gazelle helicopters from 25 Flight delivered food, water and medical teams to outlying villages cut-off by floodwater.

Maj Knopp has seen three hurricanes in Belize at close quarters, but said this was the worst in his experience.

"When it happens we close everybody down and get them into places of safety. We wait it out until it has gone, otherwise it would be as bad as sticking your head up on a range."

Major killed in helicopter crash

MAJ Vanessa Lang, AGC(SPS), an officer on the HQ 5 Division Media Ops staff, was killed when a helicopter crashed on a reconnaissance flight in Sierra Leone on October 19.

She was serving as a press officer with the British Army detachment in Freetown, capital of Sierra Leone, and was a passenger in a Mi-24 helicopter.

Normally based at Shrewsbury, Maj Lang (40) was the widow of an Army officer. They had no children.

Col David Bone, the Chief of Staff at 5 Div, said: "Vanessa was a hugely professional person, but at the same time was great fun. Her death is a great loss. Everyone who knew her will be very shocked and our thoughts are with her family at this time."

Other occupants of the helicopter survived the accident.



Professional and fun: Maj Vanessa Lang

Cameraman Ian dies in accident

SGT Ian Liptrot, Gren Gds, whose photographs regularly appeared in *Soldier*, was killed in a road traffic accident last month.

After eight years serving as the London District staff photographer, Sgt Liptrot had recently been posted back to the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards.

His work brought him into contact with the national media and the Royal Household and many guardsmen had reason to be grateful for the photographic record he produced of their part in State and ceremonial events.

Sgt Liptrot's most recent assignment was to cover the battalion on exercise in the mountains of Norway.

He was due to have been married at the end of last month.



Sgt Ian Liptrot

'No evidence' for Suez medal, says minister

VETERANS of the Suez Canal Zone have been rebuffed again in their long-running campaign for formal recognition.

In a written answer to Parliament, Dr Lewis Moonie, Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans said there were no plans to recognise Suez service during the period 1951 to 1954.

"The matter was reviewed in 1998 by the then Minister for the Armed Forces, who found no evidence that he believed would enable him to persuade the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals to overturn their policy of non-retrospection, or to revoke any of the decisions made at the time or following various departmental reviews since 1990," Dr Moonie wrote.

"No such evidence has since come to light."

He was responding to a question from Michael Trend, MP for Windsor.

● As reported in *Soldier's* coverage of the 50th anniversary of the Suez Canal Zone emergency, it remains the only active service campaign since 1945 not to be recognised with a medal.

Land on the run



Check this: A team of six from HQ Land Command at Wilton ran the 70 miles from Wells to Exeter as part of a John o'Groats-to-Land's End relay to raise funds for the Clic – Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood – charity.

From left to right are Col Neil Fairclough, Maj Fiona Reid, Sgt Chris Harvey, Emma D'Alton and Flt Lt Will Thurrell, who hope to collect at least £1,200. Maj Ian McDougall, who completed the line-up, is missing from the photograph.

● A team from HQ 160 (Wales) Brigade raised £1,600 for Clic by completing the 75-mile leg between Great Welland and Bristol. The Brecon runners were Maj Jan Waring, AGC(RMP); Maj Willie Swinton, SG; Maj Andy Yates, RLC; Capt Giles Timms and and WO1(SSM) Giles Timms, both Para; WO1 (ASM) Dave Oldham, REME; and WO1 (GSM) Neil Prince, RA.



IN BRIEF

● To the sound of buglers from 1 KORBR, the flag of the Adjutant General's Corps was lowered in Episkopi, Cyprus to signal the dis-establishment of the Army's only surviving command pay office. The ceremony, left, marked the AGC Staff and Personal Support

Branch's split with the command pay office and the departure of the last Commander SPS, Lt Col Ishbel Thomson. Responsibility for the Cyprus CPO, which was formed in 1940, has been transferred to the Command Secretariat. Picture: Cpl Chris Redford

● Ammunition technical officers from 321

Guards' tribute to terror victims

New Yorkers respond to Buckingham Palace's unique changing of the guard

BRITISH Army musicians performed to huge acclaim in New York at the personal invitation of the city's charismatic mayor.

The Band of the Coldstream Guards and the Pipes and Drums of the 1st Battalion, Scots Guards flew to America in response to a request from Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

He had seen on television the unique changing of the guard ceremony outside Buckingham Palace on September 13 – two days after the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon – at

which the band played the American national anthem during a special act of remembrance ordered by the Queen.

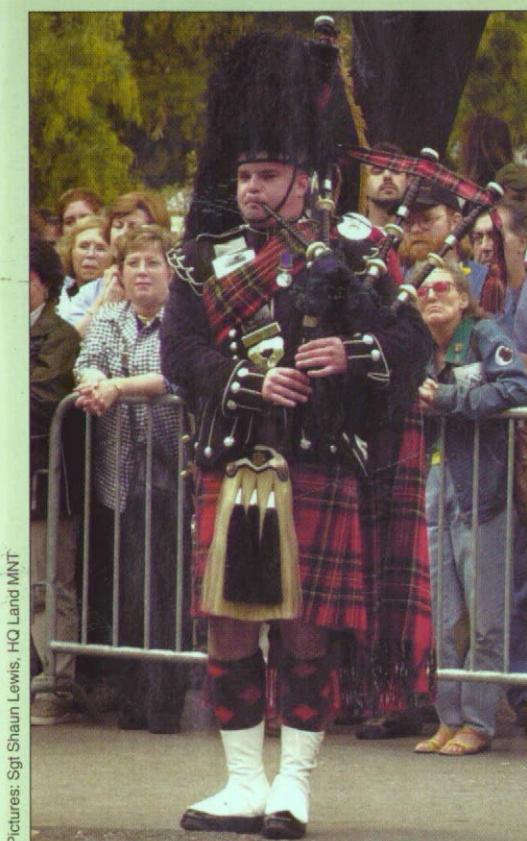
● A piper from the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch, based in Kosovo, played *Amazing Grace* at a memorial service in Pristina for the victims of the attacks. The regiment has long-standing links with the US and Black Watch pipers played at the funerals of both President Kennedy and his widow. Its Pipes and Drums perform for the President on the lawn of the White House during their regular tours of the States.

● Seventy-two soldiers from York-based 2 Signal Regiment ran, cycled and rowed the 3,400 miles that separate Imphal Barracks in Fulford and New York to raise money for the families of those killed in the attack on the World Trade Centre.

Nine teams of signallers clocked up the miles without leaving "old" York. They used exercise machines at two city locations to complete the event in 36 hours while colleagues with buckets collected donations from passers-by.



Warm welcome: NYPD officer Robert Numssen, left, greets Musn Jonathon Truscott,



City lament: A piper of the 1st Battalion, Scots Guards plays to an appreciative crowd in New York



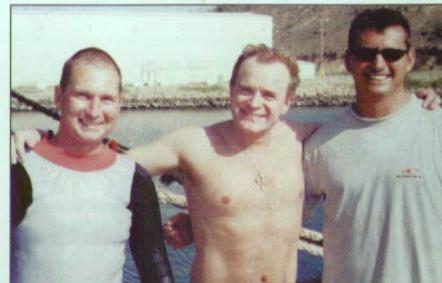
Shoulder to shoulder: New Yorker Marlina Goodman (8) holds the hand of Capt Martin French, adjutant of 1 SG, while the Pipes and Drums perform in the city

Loggies in Omani beach rescue

WO2 Aidy Gilbert and SSgt Frenchy Sanders of 6 Supply Regiment RLC were about to take comedian and TV presenter Bobby Davro diving off the Omani coast when they became involved in a race against time to save two local youngsters in danger of drowning.

The swimmers had been swept by strong currents out of the bay off a beach near Camp Sword, the British Army's Exercise Saif Sareea base at Salalah.

WO2 Gilbert and SSgt Sanders, both experienced at working with rescue services, put on dive gear and swam to the headland, where two people were clinging to needle-sharp rocks being pounded



Rescuers: Bobby Davro, centre, with WO2 Aidy Gilbert and SSgt Frenchy Sanders

by the waves. With the Royal Omani Coast Guards arriving on the scene,

SSgt Sanders took a 14-year-old boy off the rocks and passed him on to WO2 Gilbert, who towed him all the way back to the beach. SSgt Sanders went back for the second man and pulled him to safety. In doing so he sustained minor injuries and wrote off his air tank on a rocky outcrop.

The alarm had been raised in Camp Sword by a sailor on the supply ship RFA *Diligence*, who saw the swimmers in trouble but could not reach them because of the strong current.

Bobby Davro was in Oman to complete a CSE show for British forces.

● Saif Sareea pictures – Pages 39-41

Contract troops may wear Omani medal

BRITISH soldiers eligible to receive the Sultan of Oman's 30th Renaissance Medal have been given permission by the Queen to accept and wear it.

Her decision affects personnel on loan service or contract with the Sultan of Oman's armed forces on Oman's National Day in November last year.

The medal (also known as the 30th National Day Medal) takes precedence, in order of the date of award with all other foreign medals, immediately after all Commonwealth orders, decorations and medals. Qualifying service for the medal does not count towards the qualifying criteria for the Accumulated Service Medal (ACSM) or other UK medals.

Welsh adventure



Outdoor action: Cpl Julian Canfield, left, and LCpl Neil Herbert from Farnham-based A Company, 3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment are pictured with 13-year-old Matthew Little, a patient at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, during a recent Airborne Adventure project in Snowdonia National Park.

Based at Capel Curig training camp in North Wales, the project provides adventurous holidays for young victims of crime and children suffering from serious illness. The Territorial Army soldiers from Farnham volunteered to help run the camp.



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LEARNINGFORCES



The Army is establishing an Army Learning Centre network wherever large numbers of soldiers are garrisoned. This makes it possible for the military population to take advantage of the wide range of personal development opportunities available in support of the Learning Forces Initiative.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Going for it: Fus Brian Nickson, centre, is cheered on by colleagues in B Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers while taking part in the Ballykelly 1,000 – during which the lads ran, rowed and cycled 1,000 miles in 24 hours, all without leaving their base. B Company raised more than £1,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund and the RUC Benevolent Fund.



Boots off: As a sign of respect, footwear must be removed before entering the new Hindu temple opened at Hullavington Camp in Wiltshire, home of 9 Supply Regiment RLC.

The mandir, or temple, will be used by Gurkha soldiers who form part of 94 Stores Squadron, and their families. From left are Pte Nirmal Ingnam, Pte Mohan Rai, Mrs Sunita Limbu, Mrs Jog Limbu and Gurkha pandit (priest) Atmaram Sherma. The unit will become part of The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment when it is formed in May.

Two more R Irish battalions merge

A NEW battalion – the 2nd – of The Royal Irish Regiment formed last month in the latest phase of the reorganisation of the regiment's home service units.

An amalgamation parade was held in Palace Barracks, Belfast on October 4 to mark the event, as the city-based 7th Battalion merged with the Antrim-based 9th Battalion. The changes are not connected with Northern Ireland's normalisation programme.

Lt Col Mark Campbell, CO 2 R Irish, said: "Within any regiment a merger of battalions will always be tinged with sadness. However, we are clear this merger will produce in 2 R Irish a single battalion that will be better structured and equipped to face the challenges of the future.

"For as long as the police continue to

require our support, 2 R Irish will be on hand to serve, and will do so with impartiality, commitment and dedication."

A message from the 9th Battalion, which dates back to April 1970 when the 1st (County Antrim) Battalion, The Ulster Defence Regiment was formed, said it was a sad day as the battalion prepared to march into regimental history.

"As the 9th (County Antrim) Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment moves from the Infantry line of foot, we bid farewell and look back with pride on a job well done. Faugh-a-ballagh."

Two other home service battalions – the 3rd (County Down and County Armagh) and 8th (County Armagh and County Tyrone) – are due to amalgamate at the end of January to form 3 R Irish.

Islands' freedom

THE British Garrison is to be granted the freedom of the **Falkland Islands** in gratitude for the liberation from Argentine invasion in 1982 and its continuing defence of the territory. The ceremony will take place on June 14, on the 20th anniversary of the surrender of Argentine forces.

Gurkhas go on air

GURKHAS in Catterick can listen to their own locally-produced radio show, hosted by Gurkha soldiers and their wives and their own pandit (priest). The mix of local news and Nepali music goes out on Gurkha Garrison Radio each evening. It will also be launched on www.garrisonradio.com

Blistering pace

CAPT Dean Kelly-Smith REME, pictured, of 26 Regiment RA in Gutersloh, ran the Berlin Marathon to raise DM 4,680 (£1,550) for a local children's surgical ward. After only two weeks training, he finished in 3hr 53min.



Anyone for Kenya?

THE 1st Battalion, The Highlanders is preparing to deploy to Kenya for Exercise Grand Prix from January 6 to February 27 – and it needs reinforcements. Range, jungle warfare and adventurous training instructors, mortar safety staff, photographers, mechanics, electricians, armourers, drivers, medics can apply to the adjutant, Capt Chris Irving, on 0131 310 5570; (mil) 94748 5571, (fax) 5671.

Part-time signallers to be given a full-time role in Bosnia

A COMPOSITE Territorial Army signal squadron drawn from several units, believed to be the first since the Second World War, has been formed to deploy to Bosnia.

Led by Maj Andrew Smith, a barrister, the unit of four officers, 55 part-time soldiers and ten Regulars is due to fly to the Balkans on November 17 for a six-month tour in

support of British Forces operating in the theatre. Drawn from units within Corsham-based 2 (National Communications) Signal Brigade, the members of the specially-formed 97 Signal Squadron completed three weeks of special-to-arms training after passing through the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre.

Over the past nine months the squadron has "bonded" during a series of training weekends put together by 37 Signal Regiment (Volunteers), the lead unit in the formation of 97 Sqn.

Anyone wanting to follow the progress of the new squadron can do so by logging on to www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/97sigsqn

Balkan briefs

• Troops from 10 Transport Regiment RLC have left their Colchester barracks to begin a six-month tour in Kosovo. Based in Pristina, they will supply food, ammunition, weapons and equipment to troops in theatre and keep open lines of communication between Kosovo and the Greek port of Thessaloniki.

• NINE complete computer systems, accessories and printers have been given to a college in Podujevo thanks to the efforts of SSgt Pete Hall. While serving with The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Light Aid Detachment in Kosovo last year he realised that local schools were handicapped by the lack of IT equipment, so on his return to Germany he set about doing something to help.

His Computers for Kosovo appeal resulted in the Heide School offering hardware, software and desks and later making a donation to pay for accessories. As well as the nine complete systems, SSgt Hall was also able to send five Acorn kits to Podujevo.

• MEN of the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment returned to the UK from Essential Harvest, the weapon-collecting operation in Macedonia, on October 2. Meanwhile, 1 Para has flown to Kenya for a six-week exercise.

Building for the future



A small Sipovo building firm is set to expand... with a little help from SFOR personnel. Milorad Topic, who constructs houses from timber, was able to buy two pieces of mill machinery with money supplied through the UK Battle-group office by the British Department for International Development (DFID).

Pictured with Mr Milorad, right, are (from left) Lt Col Bruce Jackson, Canadian Armed Forces, WO2 Steve Kelly, 1 RHF, and WO2 Gert Butler, RE, and the DFID-provided table saw-jointer at his home workshop in Sipovo. The equipment should allow him to double his annual production of five hand-planed and fitted homes a year to ten, vital for the many returnees picking up the pieces as normality begins to return to the region.



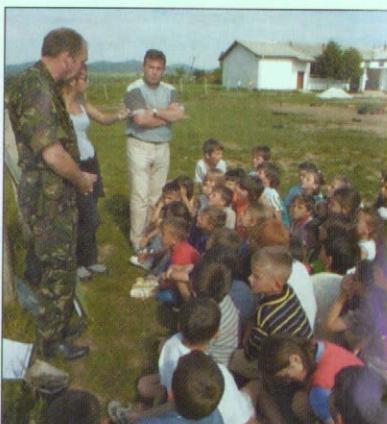
In hot water: Lt Gareth Lloyd of 2 HQ Squadron shows off the versatility of the Engineer Diving Team kit during a demonstration by Pristina-based 32 Engineer Regiment Group of their skills and capabilities. Among the VIPs who watched the sappers using their specialised equipment were Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon, Gen Sir Mike Walker, Chief of the General Staff, and Maj Gen Robin Brims, GOC 1 (UK) Armoured Division.

Team spreads word on mines menace

MINE experts in Kosovo can carry out soldier-to-child training after the British Mines Awareness Training Team (BRITMATT) in Kosovo earned accreditation in mine awareness education, a first for the British Army.

Under the command of 32 Engineer Regiment and headed by WO2 (SSM) Michele Cicconi, the BRITMATT team received its UNICEF-sponsored accreditation during a visit to Karaj Milutin School in the Serbian enclave on Gracanica, south-west of Pristina.

WO2 Cicconi and his team of two travel all over Kosovo to train military and civilian organisations in mine awareness. They also run a busy programme for schools during term time. "I'm very proud to be involved with such a rewarding cause," said WO2 Cicconi, of R Mon RE(M). "I'm part of a small organisation trying to spread an important message."



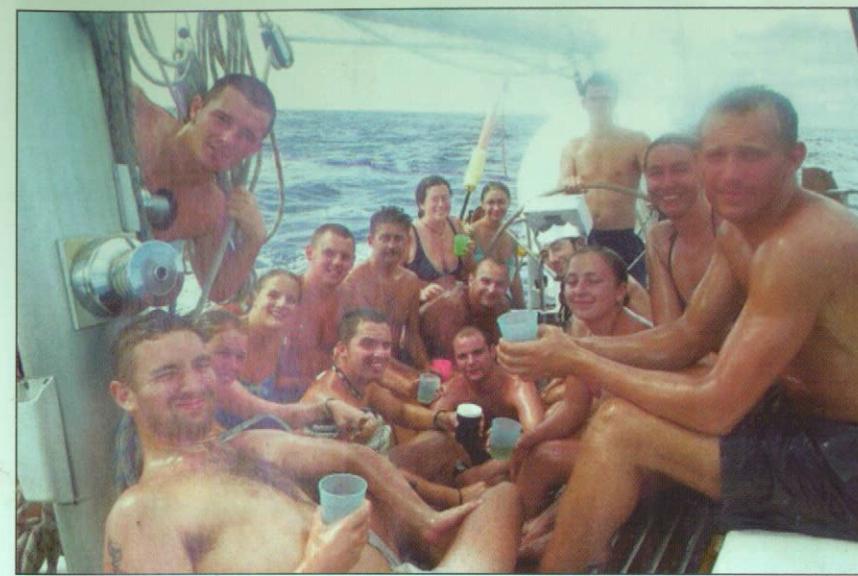
Deadly serious: BRITMATT's Sgt Paddy McCullough, left, talks to a school near Podujevo about mines

IN BRIEF

• Peter Wyhinny, director of the VW commercial division, presents the keys to one of three minibuses to WO2 Pete Burke, top, LCpl Neil Basil, middle, and SSgt Paul Spinner, of the REME regional recruiting team. The ceremony at REME HQ at Arborfield renewed links between the giant German car-builders and the corps



Picture: Graeme Main



Line astern: Crew members on the first leg of the British Army Antarctic Expedition chill out after a crossing-the-equator ceremony on board the ketch John Laing. Newcomers to the region were dunked in a bath of cooking oil, honey, oyster sauce, shaving foam, flour and sea water. The crew later opened a bottle of bubbly then, as the yacht hove-to, enjoyed a brief swim to wash off the oily film left by Neptune's visit. At this point in their voyage to the Antarctic, the crew were 1,700 miles from Rio de Janeiro.

Modified SA80 passes the test

SA80 A2, the modified version of the Army's individual weapon, was officially unveiled by Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram at the School of Infantry, Warminster, last month.

After 13 changes involving its gas system, firing-pin, breech block and bolt, cartridge extractor and ejector, recoil springs, gas plug and cylinder, cocking handle, hammer, magazine and barrel, the weapon has proved its reliability during prolonged trials in extreme climates and conditions.

An operational stock of 10,000 A2s is now available to the Army and another 5,000 will be ready next month. Rapid deployment units will begin to receive them in the New Year and the whole Army should be using them by 2004. In all, about 200,000 weapons will be modified under a programme costing £92 million.

The "mean rounds before failure" figures were: Alaska (cold/dry) - IW 31,500, LSW 43,200; UK (temperate) - IW up to 31,500, LSW 16,000; Brunei (hot/wet) - IW up to 31,500, LSW 9,600; Kuwait (hot/dry) - IW 7,875, LSW 8,728.

which began in the aftermath of the Second World War. The late Maj Ivan Hurst, a REME officer, helped to get the bomb-damaged VW plant at Wolfsburg back in production, leading to the company's post-war revival.

• With a contribution from the Quartermaster's Department of 2 RGR, Shorncliffe's distri-

bution outlet raised £160 for the SSAFA-Forces Help Big Brew Up event.

• A four-mile circular nature walk through Friday Woods training area at Colchester has been opened to the public. The signposted path was a joint initiative between the MoD, English Nature and the local council.

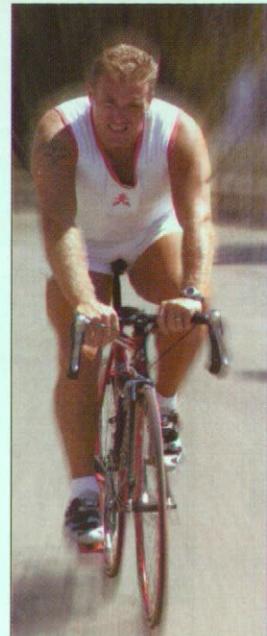
Tony's back on his bike for charity

PHYSICAL training instructor WO2 Tony Boyd, who broke both legs and fractured his scull in a climbing accident in Kenya five years ago, was the driving force behind two charity cycling events in Cyprus.

Since his accident the PTI, now serving with the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment at Episkopi, has helped raise more than £100,000 for charity, much of it for cancer research.

Cycling formed a major part of Tony's painful rehabilitation after he had spent five months in a wheelchair. Not long afterwards, he was a member of a nine-man team who rode round Britain's coastline to raise £50,000 for Imperial Cancer Research.

His Cyprus rides were to collect money for Episkopi Primary School and Open Arms, a charity which helps support the families of Service personnel with cancer.



Ride: WO2 Tony Boyd

SSAFA break gives kids special holiday

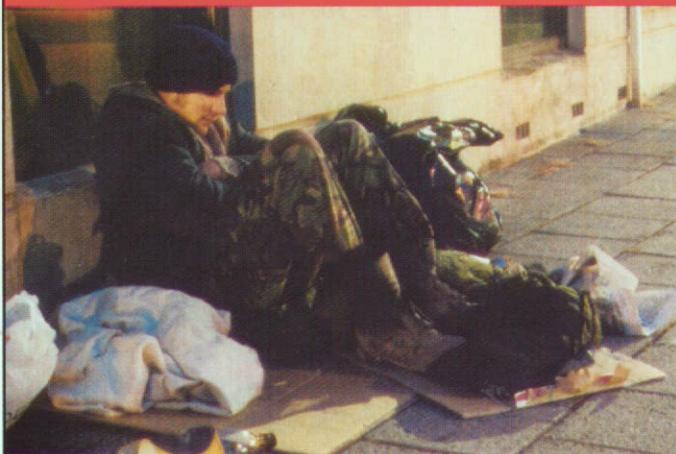
A RECORD number of 33 children from across Western Europe enjoyed the annual SSAFA-Forces Help special needs holiday. They were taken to the Hotel LaHaye in Valkenburg, Holland, where the project began nearly 20 years ago.

Twenty-one adult volunteers escorted the children for the week of adventurous and challenging activities. An ambitious programme, which included climbing, abseiling, caving, archery, ten-pin bowling and swimming stretched the youngsters - aged five to 12 - to the limit.

The annual event, which costs up to £20,000, is designed to give the children a holiday and their parents and siblings a short break from caring duties.

• Maj Peter Pain, WOs Stephen Laidler and Ali Nash and Sgt Darren Bryce, all REME serving at Arborfield and Bordon, were planning to run in this month's New York Marathon to raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity. The four men have already raised more than £10,700 for GOSH through a series of sponsored events.

Thanks to the ABF a soldier's 3 year survival course came to an end.



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Sounds good: Pte Matthew Madden, LI, trumpets the opening of Soldier Sam's, the children's play area in the Dalesman Club in Catterick Garrison. Enjoying the music – and the ball pool – is three-year-old Kieran from a nearby estate. The need for an adventure play area was identified by Army wel-

fare staff in Catterick, who obtained funding for the £240,000 project from the Army Central Fund and the Army Welfare Service. Other ambitious AWS projects in the pipeline include "upmarket" youth and community facilities and family support and parenting skills classes.

Picture: Chris Barker

Otterburn gets green light for better roads

LONG-awaited approval of MoD plans to upgrade roads on the Army's environmentally sensitive Otterburn site in Northumberland means the area can be developed for AS90 and MLRS training up to regimental level.

Although the training area lies within the Northumberland National Park, it has been used as an artillery range since 1911.

But plans to develop the road system, hard standings and some structures so that the Army could train soldiers to use its AS90 gun and Multi-Launch Rocket System ran into opposition from the environmental lobby when they were unveiled in 1992.

Wide-ranging impact assessments, consultations with the park authorities and the county council and a full-scale public inquiry were completed before Stephen

Byers, the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, announced the provisional go-ahead last month.

His approval, subject to terms and conditions, will allow the Army to develop the infrastructure at Otterburn, making it possible for the Army to introduce effective training of AS90 and MLRS units at regimental level.

Improvements in the pipeline include upgrading 57km of tarmac roads, laying 10km of stone track and constructing a maintenance facility and extra accommodation.

Throughout the drawn-out appeals process, the Army has maintained its commitment to enhancing public access to the training area and managing conservation sites while meeting its training needs.

Hanna signs up

Garrison Radio has signed up DJ Hanna Sillitoe, right, to a permanent contract after her trial breakfast show went down well with audiences in the Catterick area. She will also present a weekend programme. Hanna had worked previously on two regional radio stations.



War stories: If you took part in the Falklands War Soldier would like to hear from you. Tell us in no more than 150 words your most vivid recollection and we'll include it in a special feature to mark the 20th anniversary next year. Let us have your story, a photograph and full details of yourself and your unit, by January 31.

Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● What is more, the boy would be attaching himself to the one profession in which the British lead the world. This is not a piece of false patriotism. British Servicemen are, by pretty general consent, the best in the business. – A N Wilson commenting in the *Sunday Telegraph* on reports that one of the Prime Minister's sons was contemplating a career in the Armed Forces.

● Tony Blair has called in Gen Sir Charles Guthrie, retired Chief of the Defence Staff, to advise him during the international conflict. – *Independent*

● Dozens of part-time soldiers have been receiving hoax call-up letters asking them to take part in the war against terrorism. A number of Territorial Army personnel and ex-Servicemen across Scotland received the letter – claiming to be from the Lowland Reserve Forces in Glasgow – printed on what appeared to be official headed notepaper. – *Daily Star*

● The launch of US-led military action against Afghanistan is likely to accelerate the withdrawal of US troops from the Balkans as Washington seeks to redeploy its forces. – *Financial Times*

● British troops on exercise in Oman, who will be called on to fight in the front line of a war against Osama Bin Laden, have been forced to buy their own battle kit because of Ministry of Defence cutbacks. – *Mail on Sunday*

● Former soldier Mark Willerton, 29, who was accidentally shot in the head by a colleague cleaning a rifle at Birglen, Germany, in 1992, has been awarded £1,150,000 damages. – *Daily Mirror*

● Washington and London are considering the possibility of a United Nations-backed peacekeeping force to be deployed in Afghanistan to secure the country should the Taliban regime collapse. – *Times*

● Europe's ambitious plans to declare its new rapid reaction force operational by the end of the year are being shelved, despite pressure for more defence co-operation to tackle terrorist threats. The European Union remains committed, however, to its main goal of assembling a rapid reaction capability of 60,000 troops for peacekeeping and crisis intervention tasks by 2003. – *Independent*

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Drilled to perfection

A military parade involving soldiers from 30 countries and very little time to rehearse. It's a good thing there was a British RSM on hand

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

ASK troops from 30 nations to take part at short notice in a high-profile parade and the potential for disaster looms large.

The resulting concoction of confused languages and variable standards of drill could be enough to make even the hardest sergeant major quake at the knees.

Step forward WO1 (RSM) Graham Hight, of The Royal Scots, who is obviously made of sturdy stuff.

When Lt Gen Michael Dodson, US Army, handed command of Nato's Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia to fellow countryman Lt Gen John Sylvester, a ceremony had to be organised.

No big deal you might say, but when guests include ambassadors, high-ranking dignitaries and the international media, you want to make sure it will be all right on the day.

Just to raise the stakes, Admiral James Ellis, US Navy, commander Allied Forces South, and Gen Joseph Ralston, US Air Force (SACEUR) would also be there. All in all, there was huge potential for serious embarrassment should something go wrong.

But HQ SFOR had no worries because running the show was WO1 Hight, who brought to the event a level of expertise second to none.

Not least of his problems was the language barrier.

"We have more than 30 nations in Camp Butimer, all with different disciplines, different dress, different languages and different military standards," he told *Soldier*.

But WO1 Hight had been

in post for six months and had already made his presence felt.

"When I arrived I saw soldiers walking about smoking, hands in pockets, and with no headdress," he recalled. "I went to see the Chief of Staff and put my points to him about camp discipline. We agreed a set standard in this camp and everyone now attends a newcomers' brief when they arrive and I set the policy."

It wasn't easy, with nearly 1,500 military personnel and locally-employed civilians, but WO1 Hight cracked it.

And so to the changeover ceremony.

"It is big news in Bosnia and Sarajevo," he said. "Bosnians like our presence here and are interested in who the commander is. For the media it is very important that we get it right."

Security was provided by a Turkish company, military police from Ireland and Spain and *carabinieri* from Italy.

Soldiers for the parade were drawn from units serving with Multi-National Divisions South-East and South-West.

With a shake of the head he relied one horror. "When we finished the

All in all, there was huge potential for serious embarrassment should something go wrong'



Setting high standards: WO1 Graham Hight

first parade rehearsal I got them to go through a bit of marching as well," he said. WO1 Hight wasn't impressed.

"So the watchword was KISS – Keep It Simple, Stupid. All I asked them to do was to march into position and I would do the rest for them."

Adding to the mix was a colour party of seven involving five nationalities and a just-arrived US Army band.

"It is different marching to a band and as soon as they started, everyone was out of step so we had to start again."

In the event the parade passed off smoothly. WO1 Hight was delighted with the performance of British Servicemen in particular. "Without a doubt the British soldiers' drill is better than the others. We have maintained in the British Army the discipline that is needed to carry us through.

"Our guys often set the standards for those watching them. I'm pleased with the way the British conduct themselves in their daily duties about the camp."

● Lt Gen John Sylvester, now on his third tour of Bosnia, is a veteran of the Vietnam and Gulf Wars.



Playing it safe

Operation Gauntlet, which aims to consolidate arms sites in Bosnia, is well under way

Reports: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

MAJ Robert Thompson kept a watchful eye on his Serb counterpart as crates of ammunition were counted, secured and transported from a small factory to a purpose-built arms depot.

The major, commanding R Company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets, was in Kotor-Varos, a small town about an hour south-east of Banja Luka, and he and his Paderborn-based soldiers were helping troops from the Serbian element of the entity army move ammo from their weapons storage site at the northern edge of town.

The factory outbuilding used by 109 Reserve Brigade of the First Corps of the Republika Srpska Army – the VRS – was both unsuitable and unsafe for the storage of ammunition.

Under Operation Gauntlet, weapons and ammunition sites of all the entity armed forces are being moved to safe and secure locations.

Back in Banja Luka, Maj Dougie Cochrane, KOSB, the divisional ops officer, explained what it was all about. "As

part of the Dayton Peace Accord, all the armed forces in Bosnia were told to put their weapons and ammunition into storage sites," he said. "There are a significant number dotted around the country and we have 129 in the Multi-National Division (SW) alone. There were concerns over

the safety of some sites, so Maj Gen Rick Hillier (the Canadian commander of MND(SW), wanted the number reduced."

(Command of the division, in which there are more than 1,600 British troops, has since passed from Maj Gen Hillier to Maj Gen Tony van Diepenbrugge of the Netherlands.)

Although advice on the storage of ordnance – including such basic stuff as

keeping it at least 400 metres away from the nearest houses – was widely dispensed, it was often ignored.

"We looked at all 129 sites and found most didn't comply with health-and-safety requirements and that was our main tool for getting action," said Maj Cochrane.

When help was offered to move the weapons as a joint project between SFOR and the entity forces, it was seized upon. Once the transfers began, horror stories emerged: in one location explosives were leaking across a floor piled high with detonators. Rather than dealing with the situation, the local unit had simply closed the door for five years.

"We assisted them with that, as well as transport, mechanical handling equipment, and advice," said Maj Cochrane.



Keeping watch: Maj Robert Thompson

Weapons and ammunition were moved to properly prepared locations. One, a purpose-built site at Mrkonjic Grad was being used to store blankets and beds.

The RGJ troops helped to reduce the 129 sites to just over 50.

Back in Kotor-Varos, Maj Thompson and his team shifted small arms ammunition, 120mm mortars and grenades.

Ammunition technical officer, SSgt Taff Evans, 11 EOD Regt, RLC, reckoned they have been properly stored on this location.

"A lot of the materiel is of Warsaw Pact origin and we haven't found any in a poor state of repair," he said.

C Company's contribution was just another small step on the long road to making Bosnia a safer place.

Bridge to normality



Move 'em out: Maj Dougie Cochrane

WHAT may be the last bridge to be rebuilt by the UK in Bosnia has been named after LCpl Chris McLeish, who was killed in Mrkonjic Grad in 1996, writes Lt Col Robin Hodges.

Cpl Lee Belcher and his section from 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron were faced with the not inconsiderable challenge of bridging a 30m gap over the Vrbas river. The original structure had been destroyed during the war, isolating a mining community.

"It was a great task for the section," said Cpl Belcher. "We practise this regularly, so to construct one for real over war-damaged abutments and with a restricted launching area gave us a real sense of achievement.

It is hoped refugees will be drawn back to the area to open up the mines again. The UK provided the 32m Maybe and Johnson bridge, which was handed over to the mayor of Jajce by Canadian Maj Gen Rick Hillier, Commander MND(SW).

Easy does it: Cpl Lee Belcher, back to camera, directs operations over the Vrbas

Picture: Cpl Paul Rowland



Delicate operation: Soldiers from 2 RGJ joined Republika Srpska troops to move ammunition from an unsafe storage site at Kotor-Varos

Czeching out

A DECISION by the Czech Government to withdraw its battle-group from the north-western sector of MND(SW) means extra work for British soldiers in the area.

The Czechs have removed their equipment from Ljubija base, northern Bosnia, and shut down the site. They are to concentrate their Balkans effort in Kosovo, leaving just seven liaison officers behind to work in Bosnia.

Their departure to KFOR has meant Canadian forces taking on extra duties in the south of the Czech sector while the British take on the north.

In particular, the change will impact on Gurkha and Household Cavalry Regiment soldiers deploying to the area for the winter and earmarked to take responsibility for the British bit of the Czech patch. No extra British troops are being deployed to Bosnia as a result of the Czech decision.

"It will extend our area quite considerably," said Lt Col Stuart Sowray, REME,



BRITFOR chief: Lt Col Stuart Sowray

chief-of-staff at BRITFOR. "One of the great strengths for the UK element to SFOR is that we can undertake operations outside our area without constraint."

Under the new arrangements, the British base at Sanski Most, home to UK forces since 1996, is to be returned to the local landowner from whom it was leased, and the artillery battery will move to Sipovo.

A new troop house is under construction at Prijedor, about 50km north-west of Banja Luka, for the Gurkhas while the HCR will move into premises at Bos Dubica on the Croatian border. The main British bases remain at Banja Luka, Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo.

One of those handling the take-over from the Czechs before the Gurkhas and HCR arrived was 2nd Lt Gavin Younger, of A Squadron QDG.

Subjected to savage ethnic cleansing



Mapping it out: Cpl Geordie Maddison of 3 Troop, A Sqn QDG, Lt Jan Blazek and WO Jiri Hladik check their location on a map in Prijedor

during the war, the area was devastated. Today a very large number of returnees, many of them Muslims, are trying to re-establish their lives.

The Gurkhas and HCR have a tough act to follow as the Czechs were well liked and could work without interpreters. It will be a particularly interesting challenge for the soldiers from Nepal.

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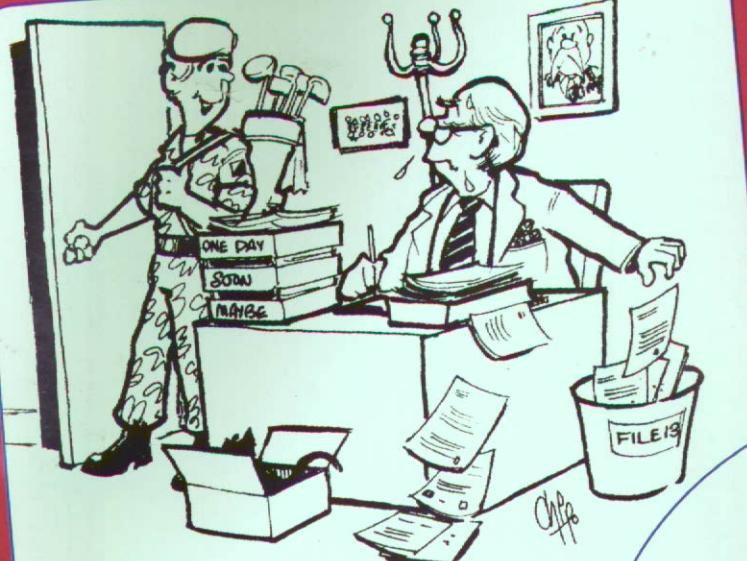
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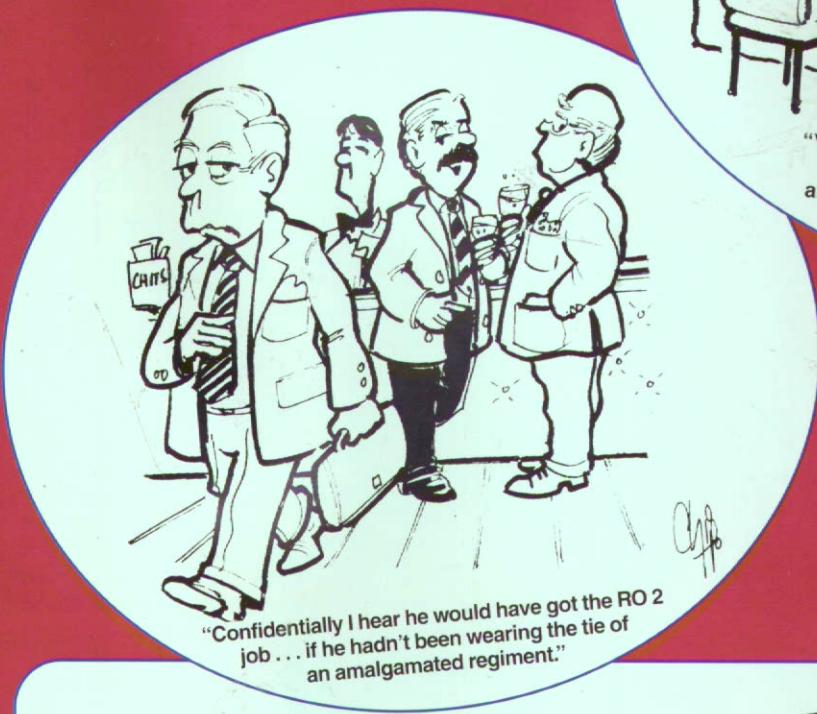
Chuckle with Chip



"Remember the old saying? 'All work and no play makes Jack a Retired Officer'?"

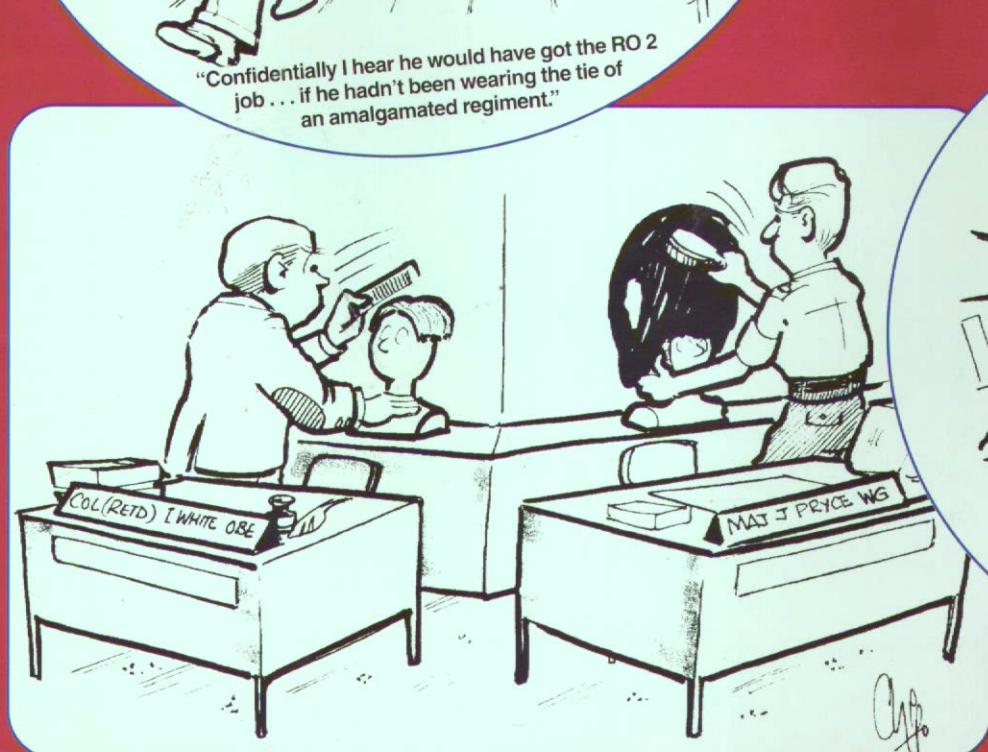


"You're right, Colonel . . . I think the Army does undervalue its Retired Officers . . . now run along and make the tea, there's a good chap."



"Confidentially I hear he would have got the RO 2 job . . . if he hadn't been wearing the tie of an amalgamated regiment."

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Waiting, writing, hoping

During these anxious times Service families left at home may feel next to useless. Nothing could be farther from the truth

Report: Anthony Stone
Picture: Steve Dock

SO much has changed since September 11. The world is a more dangerous and anxious place and no section of society feels this more acutely than soldiers and their families. As ever, when their country needs them, the Army will step into the breach to defend liberty and democracy.

But what about the families left behind when their men and women are deployed abroad? "The worst thing for people who wait at home is for them to feel that there is nothing they can do," said Lorna Almonds Windmill, a former captain with the Royal Corps of Signals.

She is well-acquainted with the difficulties Service families face and has just written a book about her father, Jim Almonds, one of the wartime founders of the Special Air Service.

"The families left behind don't know what their loved one is doing and they don't know what risks they are taking," she said. "In my mother's case I think she imagined him coming back with all sorts of injuries. One night she would dream that he had his leg blown off, another night that he was blinded."

"But it's not just wives who wait, but brothers, mothers and sisters. All the research I have come across shows that men on their own do not rehabilitate as well as men who have wives and families."



Special effect: Lorna Almonds Windmill pictured next to David Shepherd's painting *Evening in the Desert 1942* which features SAS founders David Stirling, her father, Jim Almonds, and Paddy Mayne. Her father was away from home for three "blank" years

Marriage has a protective effect for men who are in a combat situation. They survive better if they know they have a loved-one to come back to."

Lorna's family has been immersed in the Army for generations. Her brother and husband are former senior Army officers. She accompanied her husband on postings to Singapore, Cyprus and Berlin, where she was involved in Army voluntary and social activities. She has a niece serving in Oman with the RAF Regiment and another serving with the Army in Bosnia.

"My mother was the only one who was not in the Army; she did a courageous job in a different sense," she said.

Since leaving the Army, Lorna has carved out a career in the Civil Service and is currently director of finance for the Department of Trade and Industry's Employment Tribunals Service.

Her wealth of Army experience means she is well placed to appreciate the extraordinary strains Service separation can place on families. She knows only too well that coping with a spouse who has deployed overseas is one thing, coping with them on their return is another.

"It is about dealing with the gap in knowledge," she said. "In my mother's case my father had been away for three years, but when he came back he still could not tell her what he had been doing

or even where he had been. If you have too many blank areas in a couple's relationship that can't be talked about it has a separating effect."

Jim Almonds was a changed man when he returned home. Considering what he had been through, it would have been remarkable if he had not.

Captured by the Italians, Jim spent a year in a PoW camp but twice managed to escape. His first attempt was punished with seven months' solitary confinement.

"A person needs a lot of understanding if they have been through something quite traumatic, especially if it has been prolonged," said Lorna.

And never forget that in this high-tech, mobile phone, digital age, nothing beats an old-fashioned letter. "It is impossible to calculate the effects a letter from a loved one can have," she said. "The longer they are away the more their minds become prey to doubts about whether their families still care for them."

Lorna believes there is a parallel to be drawn between the situation faced by the founders of the SAS and today's global terrorist threat. Then, as now, soldiers were faced by an evil and powerful aggressor who had no respect for the normal codes of war or rules of engagement.

Gentleman Jim, The Wartime Story of a Founder of the SAS (Constable, £18.99).



New dawn: And in the morning we will remember them. The young trees are living, growing things which stand, not as mute memorials to loss, but rather they speak out in confirmation of life

Saplings stretch their fingers

Officially opened earlier this year, the National Memorial Arboretum is growing in stature

Picture: Steve Dock

BY 7am the birdsong of the dawn chorus has faded and the saplings greet the new day dressed in perfect silence and early morning mist. Thin autumn sunshine bathes their young branches as a gentle breeze rocks them slowly as if gently waking an infant from a deep sleep, writes **Anthony Stone**.

It will be many, many seasons before the trees planted at the National Memorial Arboretum reach maturity, but already a sense of tranquillity surrounds the plots as invasively as the early-morning dew.

David Childs, the arboretum's director, explained the thinking behind the project.

"My generation had done little to acknowledge the great sacrifice that a whole nation had been willing to make to guarantee that we would live in peace and freedom. Fifty years after the end of the Second World War it seemed right to create a living tribute that would for ever acknowledge that unrepayable debt."

"It would be a thank-you to them but designed in such a way as to be a gift for the future so the generations as yet unborn could be reminded of the efforts that were made."

Starting originally with 75 acres, this has now been expanded to 150 acres on land between Lichfield and Burton-on-Trent in Staffordshire, within the boundary of the National Forest.

A tree represents every extant regiment and corps of the British Army. Some units have their own plots on which trees have been selected for their particular associations with a regiment's history. The veterans of the wars fought in Korea and Burma, for instance, have trees native to those countries. Some 60 species have so far been planted.

The Royal Navy and the Royal Air

Force are also represented, as are the police, fire service and merchant navy.

Each Serviceman and woman killed in Northern Ireland has been remembered by the planting of an ash tree. Boulders from each of the counties of Ulster sit among them and, after another planting season, when they are well bedded in, the plot will be dedicated.

Mr Childs said there is still plenty of space available. "I would be delighted to hear from regimental associations whose regiments have been amalgamated and which are no longer in existence," he added.

Passing the torch

THERE is a danger that our sense of connection with the First World War, which ended 83 years ago, is slipping away with the passing of the years. Veterans of the Second World War, who fired their last shots more than half a century ago, are already in their seventies and eighties.

To keep alive the sense of loss and sacrifice, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is making renewed efforts to increase awareness of the debt owed to those who died fighting for the freedoms we enjoy today.

Peter Francis of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission says it wants Servicemen and women, schoolchildren and youth groups to take an interest in

the burial places of war dead in their own areas, to visit the graves and become involved in maintaining them.

The Commission depends in the UK on others to maintain war graves, as most cemeteries are controlled by civic authorities. Some specialised care is given by CWGC staff, but routine maintenance is carried out locally.

"Early signs are promising: individuals, schools, cadet groups, Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force units have come forward to assist but we need more volunteers," said Peter. If your unit can help give him a ring on 01628 634221 or e-mail him at peter.francis@cwgc.org

Information about the Commission and its work can be found at www.cwgc.org

You can register debt of honour

THE Commonwealth War Graves Commission's promise is to keep alive the names of all who made the ultimate sacrifice by caring for their graves and memorials at 23,000 locations in 148 countries.

It is also achieving this by making its archive of 1.7 million commemorations accessible via the internet.

For many years the CWGC offered a service to people looking for details of the place of commemoration of a friend, comrade or loved one. Its records were a powerful way of giving history a human face, of engaging people in the importance of what those men and women did.

In recent years demand for this information had grown enormously, so to give greater access the CWGC began to computerise its records in 1995 and made them available on the internet three years later.

Since then its Debt of Honour Register has given worldwide access to information about the Commonwealth's war dead. Its database allows people to search on a surname basis for anyone who died during the two world wars.

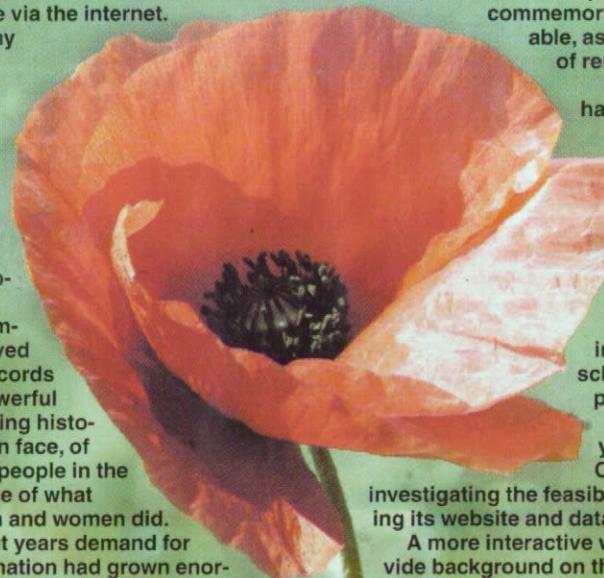
Once a positive match has been found, details on their place of burial or commemoration are available, as is a certificate of remembrance.

Simple to use, it has been an enormous success. The website averages a phenomenal 250,000 hits a week, many of them by youngsters involved in school or family projects.

Now, three years on, the Commission is investigating the feasibility of relaunching its website and database in 2002.

A more interactive website will provide background on the Commission's services and history as well as more on the history of the two world wars. There will also be a greater degree of support for teachers and students.

● To mark Remembrance Day this year why not log on to the database, follow the simple instructions, choose a name, and say "thank you"? The Debt of Honour Register is available at www.cwgc.org



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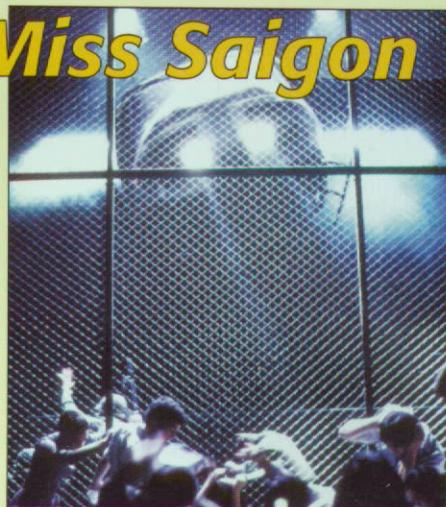
The smash-hit musical, an epic love story set in Vietnam in 1975 in the days

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leading up to the American evacuation of Saigon, starts a UK tour in Manchester this month.

Just send your answer to the question below on a postcard addressed to *Miss Saigon* Contest, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU, to arrive by November 30. First correct entry drawn at random wins the VIP night in Manchester (date and time to be arranged). Usual rules apply.

Question:
What is Saigon now called?



Through the eyes of a child

A CHILD of the Samburu tribe takes a close interest as a British Army Gazelle helicopter lifts off from Archer's Post during an exercise in Kenya.

This memorable image makes Maj Nick Henderson, of the 1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards deployed in Londonderry, the second winner of the *Soldier* amateur photographic competition.

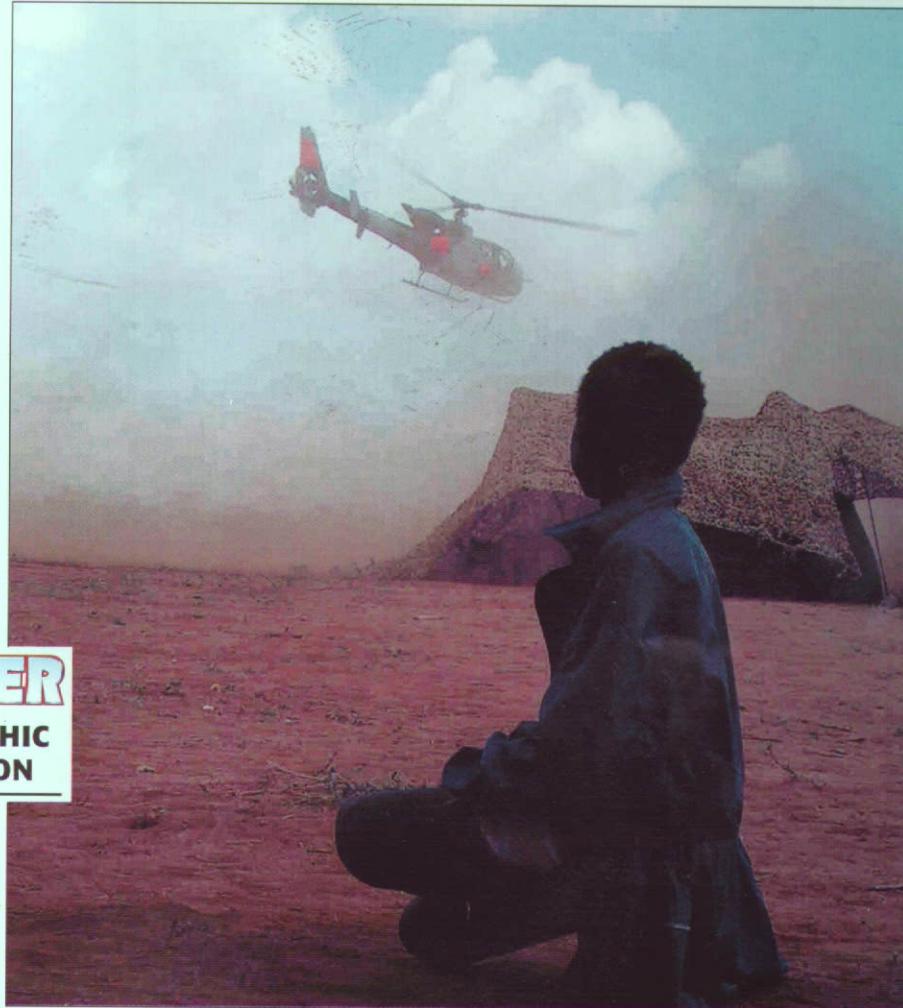
Mike Weston, our chief photographer, said of the picture: "The use of shade from a tent on the child and the posture of the child lead the eye towards the point of interest. The red patches on the Gazelle also draw the eye through the cloud of dust, giving the picture a strong impression of depth."

Maj Henderson, OC No 1 Coy, wins a £25 photographic gift voucher and his picture will go forward to be judged in February for the *Soldier* award in the 2001/2 Army Photographic Competition – a prize valued at £250.

Our monthly contest is open to any reader who is NOT a professional photographer. Send your entries – preferably prints up to 10x8in – to the Chief Photographer, *Soldier*, Parsons House, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. Include a self-addressed envelope if you would like your entries returned.

Alternatively, you can also e-mail them to mweston@soldiermagazine.co.uk indicating "Soldier Photo Comp" in the subject box. Photographs may not be

**SOLDIER
PHOTOGRAPHIC
COMPETITION**



entered more than once. Deadline for the December competition is **November 9**, and for the January issue, **December 3**. Don't miss it.

And remember, entries for the British Army Photographic Competition, which closes on **February 8**, will be particularly welcomed from dependants as well as serving and retired Regular Army, TA, cadets and Army-employed civilians.

For more details, visit the Army website on www.army.mod.uk/apc2001.htm or

obtain them from unit admin offices, media ops staff, DCI Army 80/1 (July 27), or the competition desk on 020 7218 1508 (ATN 9621 81508).

● Our judges also liked a streetlight-lit night shot of Londonderry entered by WO2 Mark Etherington, 1 Coldm Gds, and a moody image of a Warrior in Bosnia and a time-exposure with flash of GPMG sustained fire in Norway taken by Maj Malcolm Russell RAMC, who was also a near-winner in our October competition.

Mountains of agony

Military skills event proves to be a tough challenge for the Brits

Pictures: Steve Dock

EVER fancied a jolly in Switzerland? If you have, don't volunteer for the next Swiss Raid Commando, due in 2003.

As the British Servicemen who took part in this year's event around Lake Zurich will testify, it is not for the faint-hearted.

Thirteen four-man teams from Regular and Territorial Army units took part, as did two from the Royal Air Force Regiment. Best-placed overall was a combined entry from 100 Regiment RA (V)'s 307 Battery (South Notts Hussars) and 207 Battery.

Many of the British competitors were, by their own admission, under-prepared for the event, which began with a deceptively difficult test of military knowledge and skills. Each raider (as team members were known) was given a Mary Poppins-type bicycle and a map marked with the locations of 34 activity or knowledge stands spread over 100km.

On the word "go" it was a case of "on yer bike", pedal as if your life depended on it and pick up as many points as possible in the next eight hours or so. One stand was in a lake, making it particularly difficult and time-consuming.

Getting to grips: Cpl Jon Hogg zeroes his Swiss-issue army rifle on the 50m range

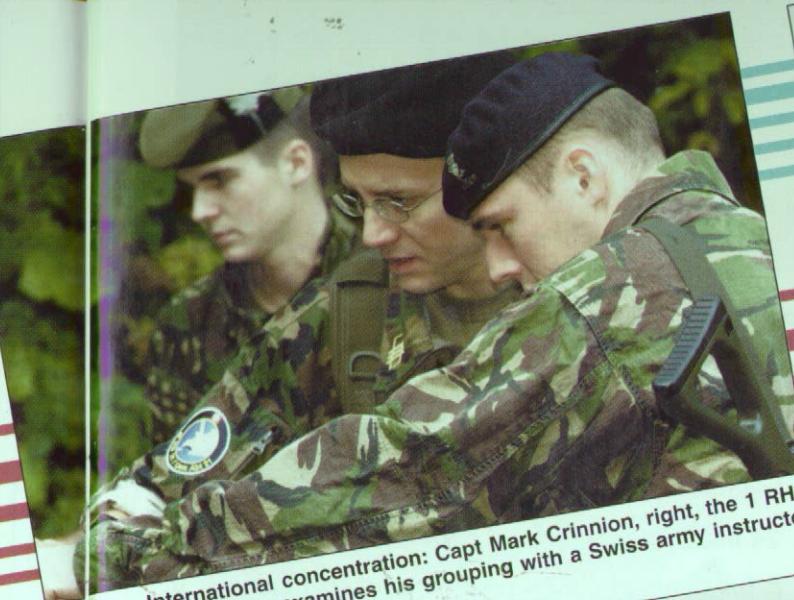
Phase two of the competition involved the raiders dodging Swiss Army motorised and foot patrols to complete a 40km mission, much of it over rugged terrain at night. A team from ATR Lichfield decided to pull out after their leader sustained broken ribs when he fell 50ft down the side of a mountain.

Other British results were: 19, 144 Para Med Sqn; 40, Honorable Artillery Company; 47, 1 RRF; 50, ITC Catterick; 58, 1 R Irish; 71, 34 Sqn RAF Regt; 72, 1 R Irish B; 84, HAC B; 88, 144 Para Med Sqn B; 93, 100 Regt RA (V); 103, 1 RHF; 114, 16 Sqn RAF Regt; 131, 1 RGBW.

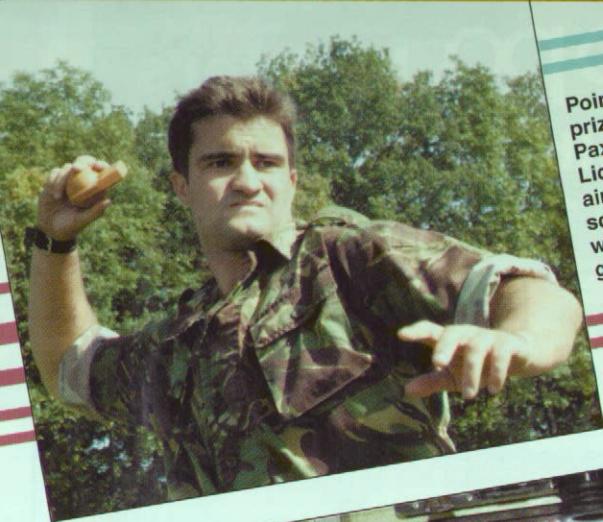
Swiss teams, highly trained for the event, filled most of the top places.

Details of the next Swiss Raid Commando can be found at www.sra.ch. Anyone interested in a similar event planned for Norway next year should contact Capt Espen Loland on 0047 91192757.

And for the first time the competition is being taken out of Europe. A USA-style Swiss Raid Commando is being put together for late September next year.



International concentration: Capt Mark Crinnion, right, the 1 RHF team leader, examines his grouping with a Swiss army instructor



Points make prizes: Lt Ed Paxton, ATR Lichfield, left, aiming to score points with training grenades



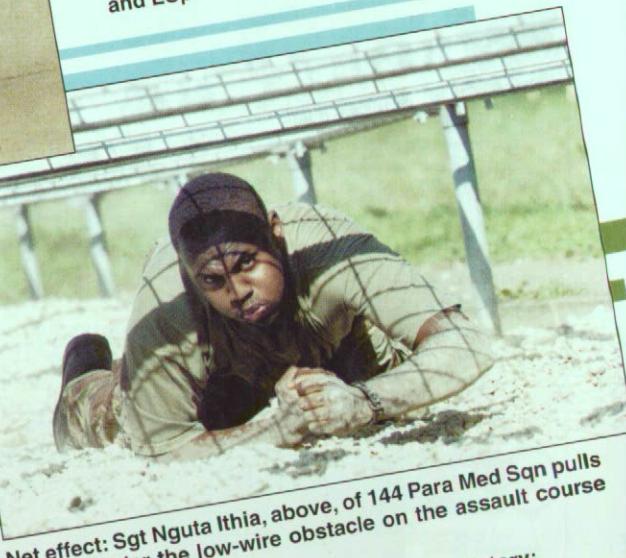
Up and under: Above, LBdr Mark Demmery, 100 Regt RA(V), tackles the aquatic obstacle course



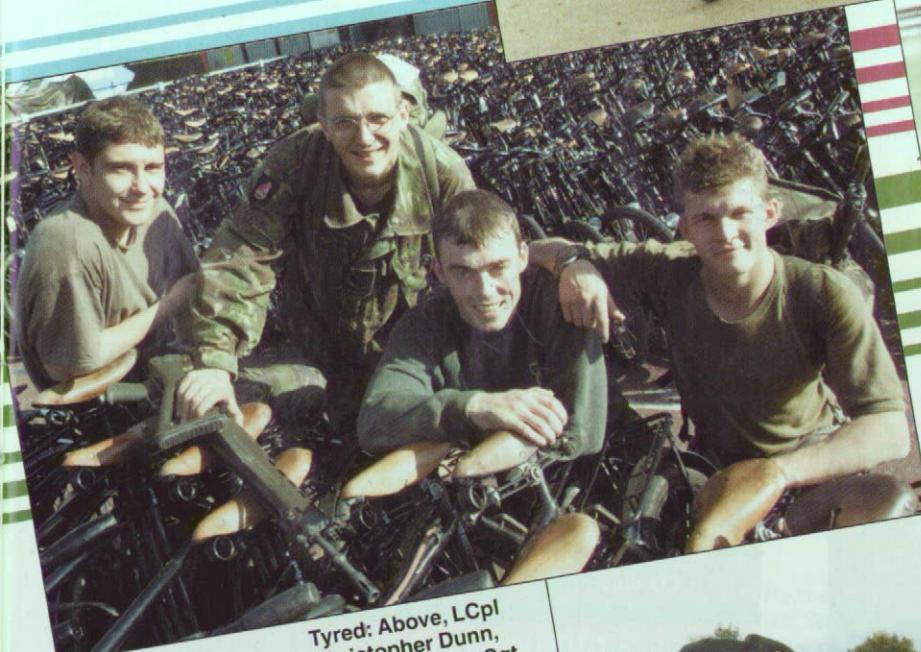
Pedal-power: Maj Iain Bailie, 1 R Irish, right, scorches the freeway on phase one of the competition



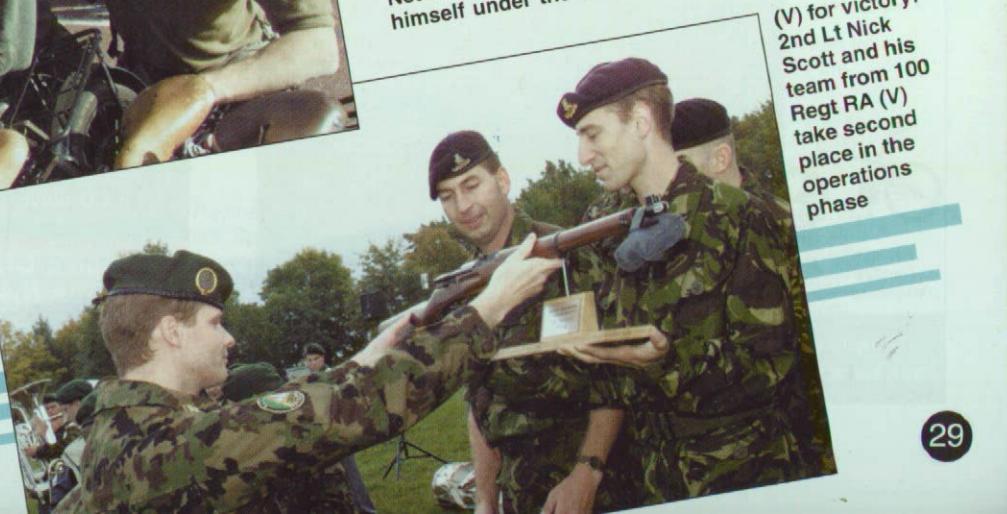
Squaring the circle: Above, Capt Paul Miller, LCpl Matt Pallas, Sgt Mark Morgans-Hurley and LCpl Paul Tucker, from 1 RGBW



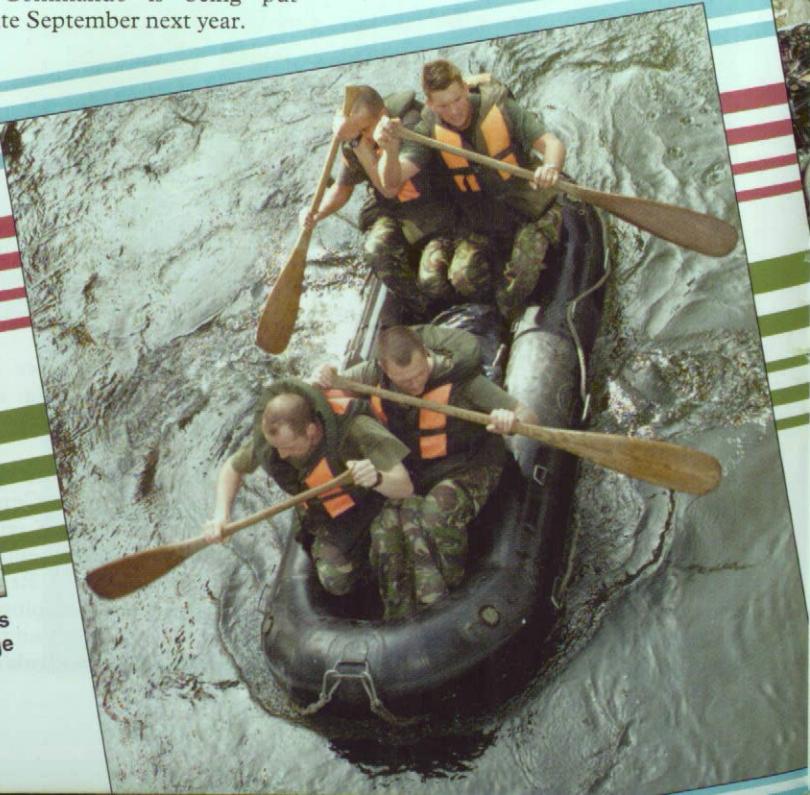
Net effect: Sgt Nguta Ithia, above, of 144 Para Med Sqn pulls himself under the low-wire obstacle on the assault course



Tyred: Above, LCpl Christopher Dunn, LCpl John Hunt, Sgt Steve Hornsby and Fus Steve Wrench, from 1 RRF



(V) for victory: 2nd Lt Nick Scott and his team from 100 Regt RA (V) take second place in the operations phase



Paddle-power: A team from 1 R Irish, left, set off on a 3km row

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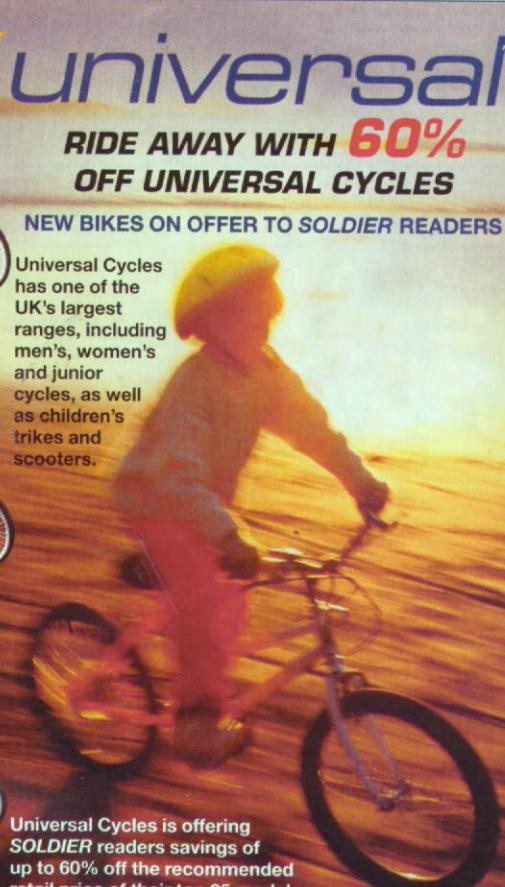
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Peacekeeper shows new shape of CVR(T)



For hire or rent: Repaircraft plc is offering fleets of the S2000 Scorpion Peacekeeper on fixed-price hire or lease schemes to forces on humanitarian missions

Picture: Steve Dock

ALSO on display at DSEI 2001 was a Future Cargo Vehicle prototype, right, made by Thirsk-based Multidrive Ltd and US company Stewart and Stevenson, which supplies thousands of trucks to the US Army.

Air-portable and able to operate off-road, the prototype comes with its own hydraulic drawbar and ground anchors so that it can pull



itself out of sticky situations. The high-mobility tractor can be configured with a variety of body systems.

designed to easily replace the rubber bladder tank found in standard CVR(T)s.

More than 5,000 names – including "Hammy" from a six-year-old with an indestructible hamster – have been suggested for the Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle (MRAV) to be built under a European collaboration. It is known in Germany as the GTK (*Gepanzerte-Transport-Kraftfahrzeuge*) and in the Netherlands as the PWV (*Pantser Wiel Voertuig*). A shortlist of names is being drawn up.

Designed to operate in areas where there is a reduced threat of direct fire, MRAV will replace the FV430, CVR(T) and Saxon utility vehicles.

BATTLES WITH A CATT DRAW CLOSER FOR ARMY'S ARMOURED UNITS

The world's largest and most sophisticated simulator, the Army's **Combined Arms Tactical Trainer** (CATT) has passed the first crucial rounds in its user and acceptance trials. CATT, which is located at Warminster on Salisbury Plain and Sennelager in Germany, is set to revolutionise armoured battle-group warfare simulation.

The £250 million system, designed by Lockheed Martin, replicates the interiors of vehicles such as Challenger 2, Warrior and Scimitar, allowing hundreds of troops to hone their battle skills via nearly 170 networked combat vehicle simulators. There is a premium on reality, with engines overheating if left idling too long, supplies and repairs entering the equation and infantry commanders dismounting to continue the battle on foot.

A mine clearance volunteer in the Near East escaped with broken bones in his foot when he stepped on an anti-personnel mine, reports AIGIS Engineering Solutions Ltd of Derby. The lucky man was wearing a pair of AIGIS's **Mineboots** at the time. Trialled in several countries, the Mineboots are said to engender "considerable confidence" among mine-clearance teams.

Lockheed Martin/Raytheon's **Javelin** and Matra BAe Dynamics' **Spike** systems have been invited to compete for a £300m-plus contract to supply the British Army with its next generation of "fire-and-forget" anti-armour guided missiles.

As reported in Kitstop (Aug), the winning system, which will replace Milan as the

Army's lightweight tank-buster, is expected to enter service in 2005.

Three companies have been invited to tender for a contract to run the MoD's **airfield support services**, responsible for cargo handling, fire and crash rescue, and aircraft fuelling and clearance at MoD 105 airfields scattered around the world.

A £230m contract to provide the Army with state-of-the-art night vision for nearly 700 armoured vehicles has been awarded to Thales Optronics. **Battlegroup Thermal Imaging** (BGTI) is a key element in modernising the Warrior and Scimitar fleets and will allow commanders to view the battlefield in all weather, at night and through smoke.



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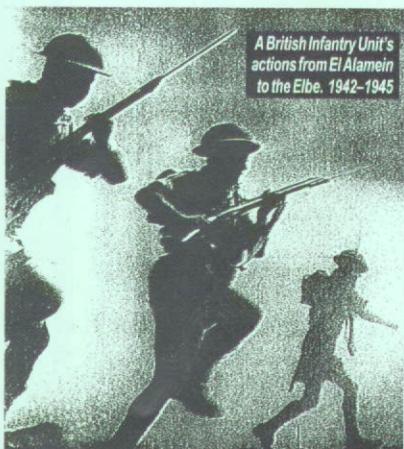
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All-American hero: Dexter Fletcher plays the part of Sgt John Martin in *Band of Brothers*

Picture: BBC



Acting Sergeant

Interview: Andy Simms

WHEN *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* star Dexter Fletcher auditioned for a part in the BBC's new wartime drama *Band of Brothers*, he had not reckoned on ten days at an American-style boot camp.

Co-produced by Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks, and based on the best-seller by eminent historian Stephen Ambrose, the ten-part series recounts the exploits of Easy Company, 506 Regiment, 101 Airborne Division, US Army during the Second World War.

Before filming started on the multi-million pound production, Fletcher and other leading members of the cast were sent to Longmoor Training Camp in Hampshire for a crash course in soldiering.

"We were put under the command of a Vietnam veteran and told that boot camp was going to be tough and that there would be no reprieve," explained Fletcher, who plays the part of Sgt John Martin in the series.

"We were given fast-track training. You can't learn to be a soldier in ten days but you can learn some of the basics.

"It was a bit of a bun-fight to be honest. There were 60 of us running around with M1s and Thompsons, recklessly shooting at each other after being out on watch all night," he said. "We didn't know what we

were doing and it was a baptism of fire."

Denied access to the outside world and the comfort of a hotel room, Fletcher quickly developed an understanding of Army-life.

"There is not much privacy – that was the first thing that struck me about being a soldier," he said. "You quickly have to get used to barrack life and guys farting and burping in the bed next to you."

"Generally I quite enjoyed it. I enjoyed mucking in with everyone else and being part of a team. Spielberg and Hanks wanted us to have a team mentality and that was something we developed quite quickly," he said.

"I could have done without the early mornings or late nights, and I found myself getting backache from carrying my weapon all day – but I am sure it is nothing compared to the real thing."

On set there was no let-up in the military discipline instilled in the actors during their stay at Longmoor.

"We would have to line-up on parade at six o'clock every morning before filming and they'd sometimes march us down to the set," he said. "After six or seven months we did it instinctively."

"It's all a bit gung-ho when you're playing at it, but when you speak to some of the war veterans you realise just how lucky you are to be doing just that – these guys had to live through it."

FEED back



THE Chief of the General Staff's Briefing Team, led by Lt Col Stephen Kilpatrick, pictured, gives you the chance to have your say. In this column we answer some of your most frequently-asked questions.

But before we give more feedback, we need to correct the answer we gave on home benefits (Oct). The **Get You Home** (stability assistance) package IS available to soldiers, single or married, who either own a house and do not wish to rent it out, or who pay a long-term rent for a house which they hope to maintain. The "not" in line four, should have read "now".

It's a long way to Brize ...

Q Why, when we are based at Shorncliffe, do we have to travel all the way to Brize Norton or Lyneham to deploy on operations? Why can't the RAF come to Manston?

A We raised this, politely, with the RAF who told us they have a Main Operating Base policy whereby troops move to the two airheads mentioned, rather than the aircraft calling at Manston. Although frustrating for you, it has allowed greater investment at these sites. There are also fuel and baggage handling costs, and crew duty hours to consider.

Out of Sierra Leone

Q Why did we fly back from Sierra Leone by the most inconvenient route at the most unsociable time?

A Again the RAF was asked for comment. They said it is not bloody-mindedness on their part. They have to consider diplomatic clearance, airport opening times, landing fees and crew duty time. They take our point ... but don't hold your breath.

Officers treated the same

Q Why are officers treated differently for compassionate leave?

A This really is a misconception and the guidelines for compassionate leave are clear. Each case is allocated to a category (A, B or C) depending on the relationship with the individual concerned. The rules are applied irrespective of rank. You should note that since November last year, the death, imminent death or very serious illness of siblings and step-siblings of Service personnel and their families have attracted compassionate leave and travel.

• A summary of the team's latest report is to be circulated to COs, who will be encouraged to let their soldiers see it. If you don't get a copy, ring WO2 Owen on 94261 5309.

Darling of the Dawn Patrol

Like others before her, this popular BBC broadcaster started her career with BFBS

Interview: Ray Routledge

SHE's bubbly, funny and cheerful – a breath of fresh air in the morning. To BBC Radio 2's early-rising audience, collectively known as the Dawn Patrollers, she is the one they wake up to.

For more than 20 years, Sarah Kennedy has entertained British TV and radio audiences with her wacky brand of humour. She follows in the illustrious footsteps of Cliff Michelmore, David Jacobs and Raymond Baxter because like them she learned her trade with the British Forces Broadcasting Service.

"As a youngster the only things I was good at were drama and English – there was no way I could be a scientist," she said at her London home.

"Someone suggested radio production, but I didn't have any university qualifications," she recalls. "I asked myself, 'How do you get into radio?'"

Her answer was to apply to the BBC, but she was turned down. BFBS also said no, until the determined Sarah said she'd work for no pay. It was an offer BFBS couldn't refuse and the humble start of a career that has since made her a welcome guest in the homes of millions of strangers.

She supplemented her non-existent BFBS salary by working as a speech and drama teacher, travelling every Thursday to the Forces Broadcasting Service in Smith Square.

"And then a miracle happened and the Treasury gave the MoD money for eight trainee posts and, I think out of sheer compassion, I got one of them," she said.

It meant working abroad. "I remember Ian Wolf, who was a wonderful Polish eccentric, ringing my mother to ask if it was really all right for them to send me to Singapore.

"Mother said it would be lovely. I had to get out my old school atlas to find out where Singapore was. And that was it."

She remembers her days with BFBS in Singapore with great affection. "It was a wonderful training. You did everything, from tennis matches to film cov-

Book idea 'opened the floodgates'

A chance remark by a friend that he had once been dangled from the knee of Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin at Colombo Airport gave Sarah the idea for a book which will be on the shelves in time for Christmas. She turned to her listeners for anecdotes about meeting famous people.

"The floodgates opened," she laughed. "I knew Dr Crippen's cleaner", 'My great-grandfather arrested Dr Crippen' and 'My mother was the housekeeper to Rudolf Nureyev' are some examples of what have come in."

The resulting book was *Brief Encounters*, published by Hodder Headline at £6.99.

Readers' stories contributed to two previous books, *Terrible Twos* and *Terrible Pets*. Sarah has also published a novel, *Charlotte's Friends*.

Win a copy

We have a signed copy of *Brief Encounters* to give away. For a chance of winning, answer the following question:

In which TV show did Sarah Kennedy appear with Henry Kelly, Matthew Kelly and Jeremy Beadle?

Answers on a postcard marked "Sarah Kennedy competition" should reach us no later than December 1. Usual *Soldier* competition rules apply.

And so, along with her BFBS work, she became tutor to the Prime Minister's son. Sarah's Dawn Patrollers will not be surprised to learn that all did not go entirely smoothly

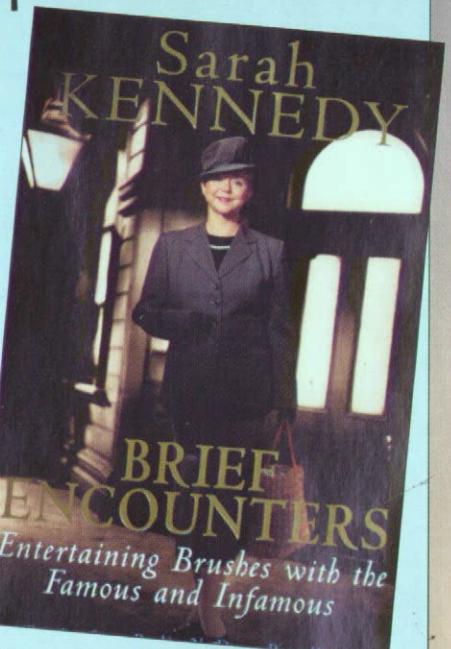
erage, and early-morning programmes."

She started to be noticed and was surprised one day when the phone rang to find the caller was Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister, asking if she would teach his son English.

And so, along with her BFBS work, she became tutor to the Prime Minister's son. Sarah's Dawn Patrollers will not be altogether surprised to learn that all did not go entirely smoothly.

She recalls one potentially embarrassing incident. "I forgot one day that I was meant to be going for an English lesson and the station librarian reminded me.

"I seized the book nearest to me (it was Desmond Morris's *The Naked Ape*; I wasn't to know that Desmond was to become my best friend in later life).



Returning to England, Sarah landed a continuity job at Radio 2. It was time for her big break.

"I was 28. One day I looked at myself in the mirror and thought: 'If you don't get into telly now, mate, you've lost it.'"

Now back on radio, where it all began, Sarah has a fiercely loyal audience for her Monday-to-Friday, 0600-to-0730 stint on Radio 2.

"I think Terry Wogan and I make a decent fist of it in the morning," she reckoned. And, indeed, she must be doing something right because she picked up the prestigious Sony Gold Award in 1995.

While her early-morning start limits her social life, Sarah enjoys weekends with her partner, Adrian, at their retreat near Stratford-upon-Avon.

She acknowledges her debt to BFBS. "I owe a huge amount to them . . . they gave me my break. Today you can go on courses, but in those days there was nothing. I owe everything to them."

As for those early mornings: "It is awful if you have the flu or something, but most of the time I'm as happy as Larry."

Clearing the legacy of hate

The latest in a series on what TA soldiers do when out of uniform

A Territorial Army soldier is at the centre of the immense operation to rid Bosnia of its legacy of minefields, writes Ray Routledge.

Capt Lenny Bryan, who spent 18 years as a Regular soldier in the Royal Engineers and left as a WO2, now serves with Birmingham-based 225 Plant Squadron, part of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia).

Right now he can be found in Bosnia – with his civvy hat on – working for a United Nations organisation dedicated to helping the country get to grips with the millions of lethal mines hidden beneath its soil.

After leaving the Regular Army in 1994 Lenny obtained a degree in engineering and business at London University.

Promoted lieutenant, he went to Bosnia to work on welfare projects, spending six months each in Gorni Vakuf and Mrkonjic Grad.

Now he's back in Bosnia as the senior technical adviser to the Republika Srpska Mine Action Centre (MAC) in Banja Luka.

The centre falls under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Lenny's job is to raise local expertise to the point where the Western aid agencies can pull out.

His work includes logistics, transport, recruitment policy and advising the director of the MAC.

The UNDP, which is responsible for demining activity in Bosnia, has accredited 43 commercial companies to take on clearance work. They are employed because local military resources are under-equipped, poorly motivated and usually unpaid. "That is not the way to clear mines," he said.

The task is so huge Lenny reckons it could take another 50 years to complete. The UNDP has more than 13,500 records of minefields within the Federation and another 18,220 in the Republika Srpska. For other killing fields, records simply do not exist.

Death and injury from explosions are commonplace: more than 350 people have been killed and nearly 1,000 hurt since 1996.

Despite the depressing size of the operation and almost constant news of fatalities, Lenny is glad to be helping. "When I see some people returning to cleared sites, I feel I am making a difference."

• If you have an interesting job, ring Ray Routledge on 01252 340753 or e-mail him at routledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Making a difference: Mine man Capt Lenny Bryan



Zulu War 1879

An evening with acclaimed historian, David Rattray

Lecture Dates

Tues 30th Oct *University of Birmingham*
Contact: R Price Esq **0121 603 9000**

Wed 31st Oct *The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst*
Contact: Brigadier N M Prideaux **01252 340421**

Thurs 1st Nov *Kensington Town Hall, London*
Contact: Colonel JMA Ross **020 7591 2055**

Fri 2nd Nov *The Lady Mitchell Hall, Cambridge*
Contact: Captain A Armstrong **01223 263582**

Mon 5th Nov *The Linenhall Library, Belfast*
Contact: Lieutenant Colonel AJ Cramsie **028 7034 4407**

Tues 6th Nov *The Physician's Hall, Edinburgh*
Contact: Colonel I Shepherd **0131 310 5132**

Wed 7th Nov *Curtis Hall, Newcastle University*
Contact: Brigadier JJ Gaskell **01904 662868**

Thurs 8th Nov *The Great Hall, University of Nottingham*
Contact: Colonel MD Reynolds **0115 957 2103**

Sat 10th Nov *The University of Wales College, Newport*
Contact: Major PJ Vyvyan-Robinson **01874 690156**

The most renowned battle of the ferocious Anglo Zulu War of 1879 between native Africans and the British Army, immortalised in the film 'Zulu', will be among those covered by internationally acclaimed historian, David Rattray, in his forthcoming lecture tour. The talks will be taking place at the end of October and early November at venues around the UK on behalf of The Army Benevolent Fund - the Army's national charity.

David Rattray is in a unique position to retell the events of the Anglo Zulu War as he spent his childhood in Zululand. With his academic background and position as a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, he is widely acknowledged as a leading authority on the battles of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.

The events of January 22 1879 are remarkable for the outstanding bravery of the Zulu warriors at Isandlwana and for the great courage of the 139 British soldiers during the defence of Rorke's Drift. The Zulus were facing modern artillery at Isandlwana, armed primarily with spears and hide shields, but through sheer determination and discipline, wiped out the strongest of three British columns in just two hours. The British soldiers successfully defended the Rorke's Drift post despite being substantially outnumbered by the Zulus and salvaged some of the military honour that had been lost at Isandlwana.

To relive these famous battles in British military history, book your ticket now and join David Rattray for one of his fascinating talks.

www.armybenevolentfund.com

The ABF is the Army's national charity and is committed to the welfare of Army and ex-Army personnel and their families. (Registered Charity No. 211645)



**ARMY
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Going for gold

Revealed at last – the medal to mark the Queen's 50 years on the throne. It's on its way soon, but not to everyone ...

Report: Ray Routledge

Pictures: Mike Weston and Royal Mint

THE Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, to be issued to qualifying Servicemen and women next year, has been unveiled at the Royal Mint at Llantrisant in South Wales.

It is the fifth such medal to be issued, the first being to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. The latest award celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne in 1952, when she succeeded her father, King George VI.

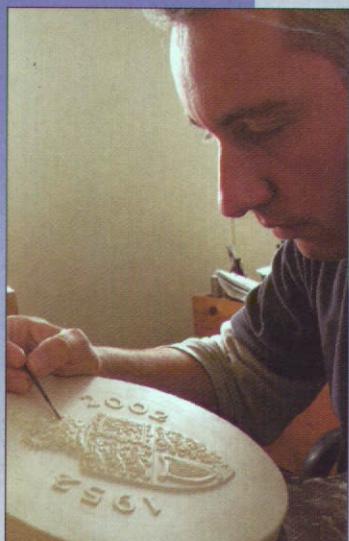
Of the 181,000 hand-crafted medals struck for the three Services, about 100,000 will go to the Army. To mark the Monarch's Silver Jubilee in 1977, the Regular and Territorial Army received 4,800 between them. Despite the huge increase in numbers, the new allocation is not without controversy.

Project officer Maj Stephen Tuck, Gren Gds, said the exact qualifying criteria for each category in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and Army, including reservists and cadets, had not been finalised.

"They will be announced in a DCI (Defence Council Instruction) as soon as the decision is made," he told *Soldier* during a visit to the Mint.

What is already known is that the minimum qualifying period for full-time soldiers is five years' service as at February 7.

With the Royal Mint working overtime to strike 15,000 a month, the issue of the medal worldwide will be a massive undertaking. "Of those, 8,500 will be delivered



Precise craftsmanship: Gordon Summers works on a plaster model of the medal at the engraving department of the Royal Mint

to the Army Medal Office each month starting in January to be issued to entitled personnel. Our target is for all medals to be dispatched by the end of next year," said Maj Tuck.

Priority will be given to units taking part in ceremonial events to mark the jubilee. "In the main, the medals will be issued to units *en bloc* rather than to individuals," added Maj Tuck.

The first official day on which medal and ribbon may be worn is June 4.

Although the Royal Mint can produce more than ten million coins a day, the jubilee medal is a major undertaking for the organisation at its factory a few miles north of Cardiff, according to production director Brian Smith.

"It marks the latest in a long line of medals struck by the Mint, the first being the Waterloo Medal back in 1815," he said.

"The Golden Jubilee Medal presents a



In all its glory: The Queen's Jubilee Medal obverse, left, and reverse

logistical challenge because it is almost double the number we have previously produced in a year. I have quadrupled the size of the department to cope with it."

Each 25gm medal, which will cost the Army about £21, is made of 75 per cent copper and 25 per cent nickel, finished with two microns of gold.

The Royal Mint recommends that the medal is not cleaned with Brasso, which will remove the gold finish. Its advice is to use Goddard's Silver Dip or Silver Cloth.

Units wanting to order miniatures in bulk from the Royal Mint can take advantage of discount prices.

"It's up to the individual units to make their own arrangements for miniatures, but I would assume that quartermasters will make a bulk order which can be sold on," said Maj Tuck.

The miniatures can be ordered on-line from jubmin@royalmint.gov.uk



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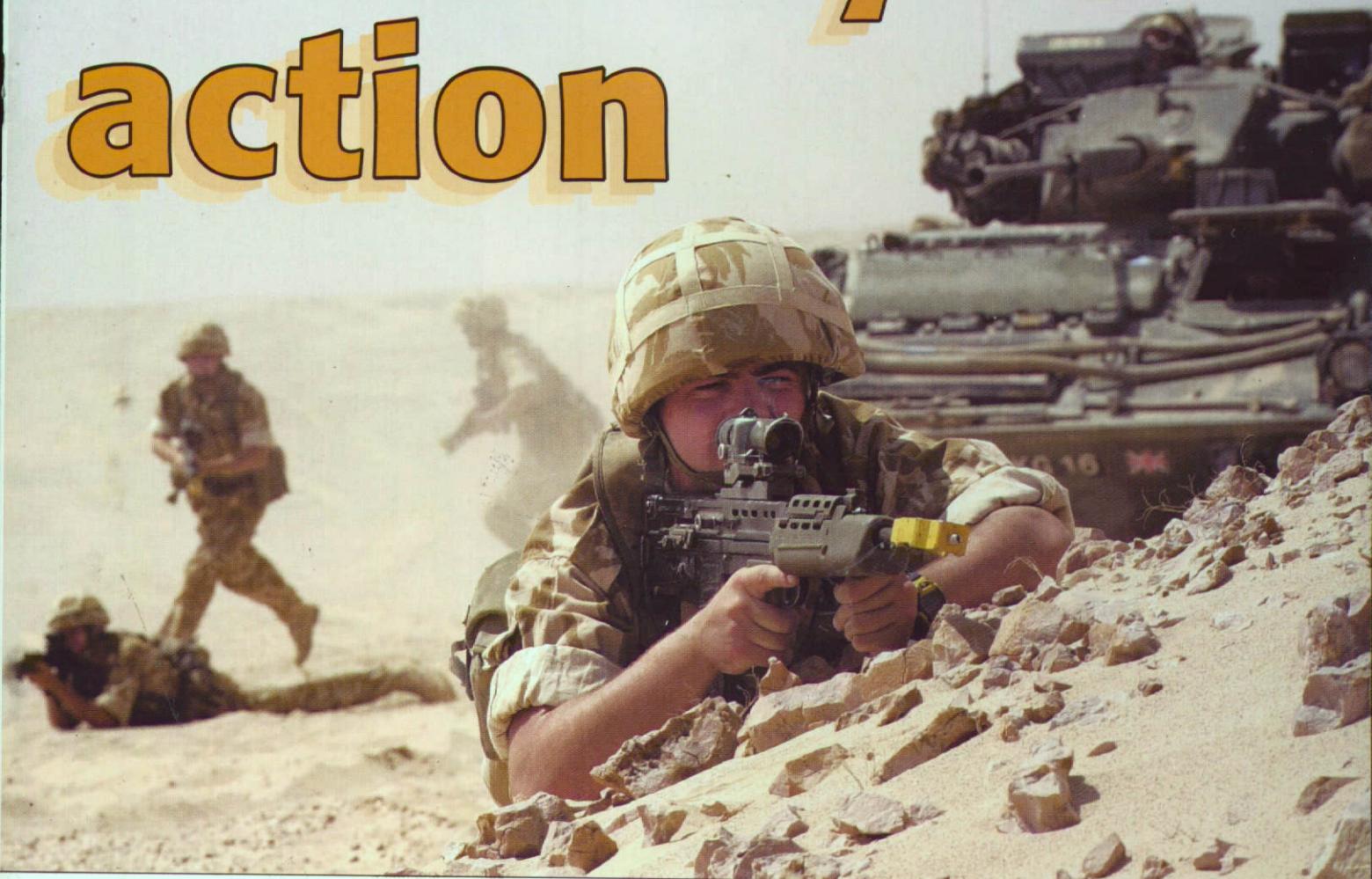
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Stand by for action



Front line: Troops from No 4 Company, 1st Battalion, Irish Guards hone their mechanized skills in the Omani desert north of Thumrait

With the war against international terrorism escalating daily, the biggest gathering of British Armed Forces since the Gulf War was given a new significance

Report: Ray Routledge

Pictures: WO2 Pete Bristo, HQ Land

SAIF SAREEA 2, the Anglo-Omani exercise on the Arabian peninsula, moved into top gear as *Soldier* went to press.

In daytime temperatures which rose as high as 50 degrees C, thousands of British Army soldiers and their Omani counterparts swung into action as months of training in two earlier phases of the exercise came to fruition.

Saif Sareea, the largest British exercise since the mid-1980s, also involved a Royal Navy carrier group – including the biggest deployment of minehunters since

the Falklands War and amphibious assets – and more than 50 RAF aircraft.

Ground forces included 66 Challenger 2 main battle-tanks among more than 400 armoured vehicles. Nearly 23,000 British Servicemen and women joined 13,000 personnel from the Royal Omani forces.

Running alongside the main action were command-post and simulated exercises in what co-ordinator Wg Cdr Dick Forsyth RAF described as "a bit of a Rubik's Cube".

For some soldiers who have been in Oman for most of the summer, their six months living in the desert, in primitive

conditions and pestered by sandflies, scorpions and snakes, has been a test of endurance. They have been encouraged to drink up to seven litres of water a day to prevent dehydration and heatstroke.

While the heat has affected everyone, chefs are reported to have endured particularly high temperatures in some cook-houses.

A hole in the ground, flies and an overpowering smell have been the hallmark of toilet conditions. It has been a testing introduction to desert warfare.

● A report on the main exercise phase will appear in *Soldier* next month.

More on following pages

Testing times in Oman

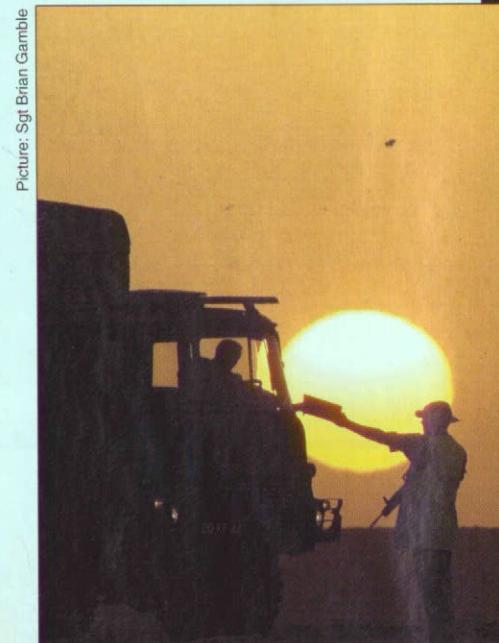
WRITTEN by staff at Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) at Northwood, the "story" of Saif Sareea 2 involves the fictional Middle Eastern country of Alwham (Arabic for fantasy) attacking oil fields in northern Oman and Britain coming to the rescue.

Oman was logical choice

BRITAIN'S ties with Oman go back more than 200 years. Given the high calibre of the Sultan of Oman's forces and the first-class training facilities on offer, the country offered a logical choice for Britain's Armed Forces to get used to living – and fighting – in a harsh desert environment.

Saif Sareea also provided a thorough test of Britain's capability to wage war at long range.

Spot on: Members of a target acquisition group "spot" where rounds fall for the mortars, below



Picture: Sgt Brian Gamble



Picture: Sgt Brian Gamble



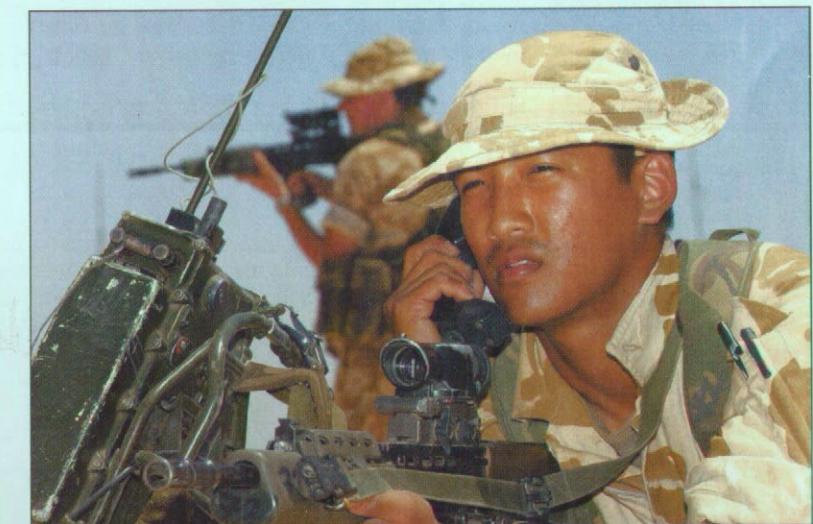
Stand easy: Soldiers with D Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers return to Camp South after a hectic day on the exercise area, above

End of another perfect day: The setting sun silhouettes an Army lorry at Camp South as the driver is met by a soldier on guard duty, left



Picture: Cpl Paddy Hill RAF

On line: Sig A J Gurung of 1st Armoured Division Signal Regiment listens to a message coming over his headset, below



Top-level talks: Prime Minister Tony Blair in the desert command centre for an intelligence briefing by Lt Rob Cloke, left, and Lt Alice Bromage

PM visits front line

AS United States-led night air raids pounded Taliban positions and the al-Qaeda terrorist network in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Tony Blair visited British Service personnel deployed a few hundred miles away in Oman.

He told 300 British and Omani soldiers they could be in the "front line". "For all of you, you never know when you are going to be called upon to fight, to risk your lives," he said.

After a curry and ice-cream lunch in the mess tent at al-Shaa'fa, about 150 miles south of the capital, Muscat, he was briefed on the training which faces British and Omani troops during Saif Sareea 2.

• A Serviceman told reporters that the Prime Minister had remarked to him that one of his sons was considering a career in the military.



Desert forces

1 (UK) Armd Div:
HQ;
4, 5, 12, 32 and 39 Regts RA;
1 Div Sig Regt.
HQ 1 Armd Bde
4 Armd Bde
RDG;
9/12th L;
QRL;
1 IG;
1 Hldrs;
21 and 35 Engr Regts.

Also:
4 AAC
30 Sig Regt;
23 Pioneer Regt;
22 Fd Hospital RAMC;
1 and 4 CS Med Regts RMC;
1 GS Regt RLC;
7 and 8 Tpt Regt RLC;
17 Port and Maritime Regt RLC;
1, 3 and 6 Bns REME;
101 and 115 Pro Cos RMP.



Geri gives troops what they really really want

SEVERAL thousand British troops and RAF personnel were treated to a live show in the desert by pop icon Geri Halliwell.

The show, one of the most ambitious ever hosted by Combined Services Entertainments, was compèred by comedian and impersonator Bobby Davro and featured pop band Steps.

But even Geri had to give way to football: her performance was delayed so that thousands of squaddies could take in England's vital World Cup qualifier against Greece, beamed direct from Old Trafford on to giant screens on the open-air stage.

Many soldiers travelled eight hours to take in Geri's raunchy stage performance, which lasted 45 minutes.



Well worth while

Expedition to East Africa leaves legacy that will sustain a remote community for generations

Report: Capt Liam Webber
Pictures: WO2 Pete Bristo

PEOPLE in a remote eastern Ugandan community have good reason to remember cadets from Tayforth University Officers' Training Corps who arrived in their village this summer.

Thanks to the students they now have clean water.

Members of Tayforth UOTC, drawn from four Scottish universities – Dundee, Stirling, St Andrews and Abertay – decided that they would spend the summer break doing something worthwhile, and turned their attention to Uganda.

"I'm joining the Army when I finish studying, so I thought I'd give the expedition a go," said 2nd Lt Tom Matthiae, who is studying economics at Dundee and has his eye on The Cheshire Regiment.

Sgt Dave Balmer and Officer Cadet Rob Agnew arranged for the students to help the Busoga Trust charity finish wells in and around the village of Nabakoss in the east of the country. The digging was started by Water Aid in the early 1990s, but money to complete the project dried up when the charity pulled out.

Unfinished wells quickly fell into disrepair, clogging up with animal carcasses, vegetation, and rubbish. The open holes were a danger to children.

OC Naomi Robinson, reading psychology at Dundee, said: "Water drawn from the well in Nabakoss was dirty. You could see how filthy it was."

Each was about 20ft deep and up to 6ft across. Brick-lined, they filled naturally from the water-table. Before they could complete the job begun by Water Aid, expedition members had to remove rubbish, pump out contaminated water and disinfect the inside.

Villagers made bricks and mixed cement to construct a cap for their well. This large concrete disc was lowered over the hole and a metal pump bolted on. A fence



Water baby: UOTC cadets Melissa de Wolff and Raza Jaffery share the joy of the new well

Unfinished wells quickly fell into disrepair, clogging up with animal carcasses, vegetation, and rubbish

was put up to protect the site from animals, and drainage ditches dug to ensure water coming out of the well does not lie stagnant to become a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

The task required technical expertise and organisation. While the Busoga Trust supplied tech-

nicians to oversee the engineering side, the students provided the enthusiasm to get local people involved.

"It can be a bit annoying when you get a huge crowd standing watching you work," said 2nd Lt Bill Calderhead,



A job well done: Officer cadets line up for a photo in the Ugandan village of Nabakoss



Thrill-seekers: Students try white-water rafting on the White Nile, above



Getting down to the job: Student Alice Rawdon-Mogg works in the well shaft, 30ft below the surface, left

AGC (SPS). "Our job was to get as many villagers involved as possible. They quickly picked up the idea that as soon as the well was finished they would have clean water and pitched in."

Busoga Trust technician Sam Muziah explained: "Each well has a committee and it will be their job to make sure that it is properly maintained. Between 300 and 800 people will use the Nabakoss well. If it lasts for two generations that number goes up to thousands."

The work was made more poignant when the students learned that the 11-month-old daughter of one of the villagers had died of typhoid contracted from contaminated water.

Expedition members also had a chance to try out one of the star attractions of Uganda's emerging tourist industry – white-water rafting on the White Nile.

They also spent time climbing Mount Elgon, at 4,321m Africa's third highest peak. Their guide was Azulukam Wobudeya, who spent most of the Idi Amin era smuggling coffee into Kenya

and knows his way around Mount Elgon better than anyone.

The Tayforth party spent three weeks in East Africa, living under canvas and cooking for themselves. The officer cadets set up an outdoor shower made from a bucket with holes punched in the bottom and Tom Matthiae tried to improve matters by constructing a wooden seat over the hole-in-the-ground toilet. It collapsed one night, although no one owned up to sitting on it at the time.

Bill Calderhead, an accomplished musician, entertained villagers with a "blow on the pipes" one evening, but the response was not one he expected. "I took my bagpipes down to the edge of the White Nile and started to play," he said.

"A farmer watched for a while, then told me that because of the noise he had thought that I was washing a reluctant animal in the river."

While the cadets, now back at university, will have long memories of Uganda, the legacy of their visit will remain with the villagers of Nabakoss for generations.

Manage Your Money

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

Christmas is a coming . . .

THAT time of year is approaching fast. Advertisers encouraging us to spend, children's TV making us think we are Scrooges if we don't spend at least £50 on each gift.

The kids are on about what they'd like to have as if it's what they're going to get. And with interest rates so low, it's tempting to buy now and pay later.

If you are already anxious about what you owe on credit cards and catalogues, it's hard to make a decision amid so much emotion. You want to have a good Christmas, but can you have a good time without getting into debt . . . or further into debt?

The good news is that you can. It takes planning, straight talking, courage and a conviction that relationships are more important than what we spend on presents.

Gifts are not the only expense. Food and drink budgets take a hammering. Travel, heating and the telephone bills may rise.

Budget for Christmas

If you're a regular reader, you probably expected this suggestion: make a budget. Sit down with a cuppa, paper, a pencil and a rubber (so you can change it) and a calculator. If you're married or have a partner, do it together if you can.

Now take a deep breath. First list: write down the names of everyone you're going to send a card to – it all adds up.

Second list: write down the names of everyone you're going to buy a present for. Now write how much you would like to spend. Add them up. Don't be shocked.

The third list is so you can estimate food and drink and travelling costs.

How much?

We all underestimate what Christmas costs. Most often we spend what we think we need to and count the cost in January. Make this year different. If the price is too high, cut costs. Do we really need to send all these cards? Can we write a newsletter or make cards to keep costs down?

Look carefully at the presents list. How can we cut back? Try to be realistic. It seems hard at Christmas, but try to differentiate between "wants" and "needs".

Let friends and family know money is tight. This won't hurt as much as you think. Talk to your children. They'll understand if given the chance and they may help make presents and have ideas to keep spending down. And they will still have a good time.

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Cooper the trooper

National Service was a stepping stone to the top for boxing legend

Interview: Andy Simms

DESPITE being so proficient in the skill of bobbing and weaving, National Service was one obstacle that Sir Henry Cooper made no attempt to duck.

Indeed, the chance of joining the Army was one that he and his twin-brother, George, grabbed with both boxing mitts in 1952.

"National Service was just something that you had to do and we accepted that," the former British, European and Empire heavyweight champion told *Soldier*. "And besides we were keen to join because we knew that we'd get a chance to box for the Army."

Born and raised in South London, the twins' love affair with boxing began at the tender age of nine when their father, also a former soldier, "got on his hands and knees and taught us the fundamentals".

Boxing became a way of life from that day on and by the age of 18 Henry and George had become big names on the amateur scene. Henry, in particular, was already catching the eye of the boxing writers of the day, winning his first ABA title at light-heavyweight in 1952 and being selected to represent his country at the Olympic Games in Helsinki.

But despite his success as an amateur in civvy street, Henry knew that a spell in the Army represented a chance to hone his skills and prepare for a career as a professional fighter.

"In those days all of Britain's brightest boxing prospects were in the Army," he said. "So I knew that if I could win fights in the Army I would be good enough to turn pro and earn a living out of boxing."

In those days all of Britain's brightest boxing prospects were in the Army

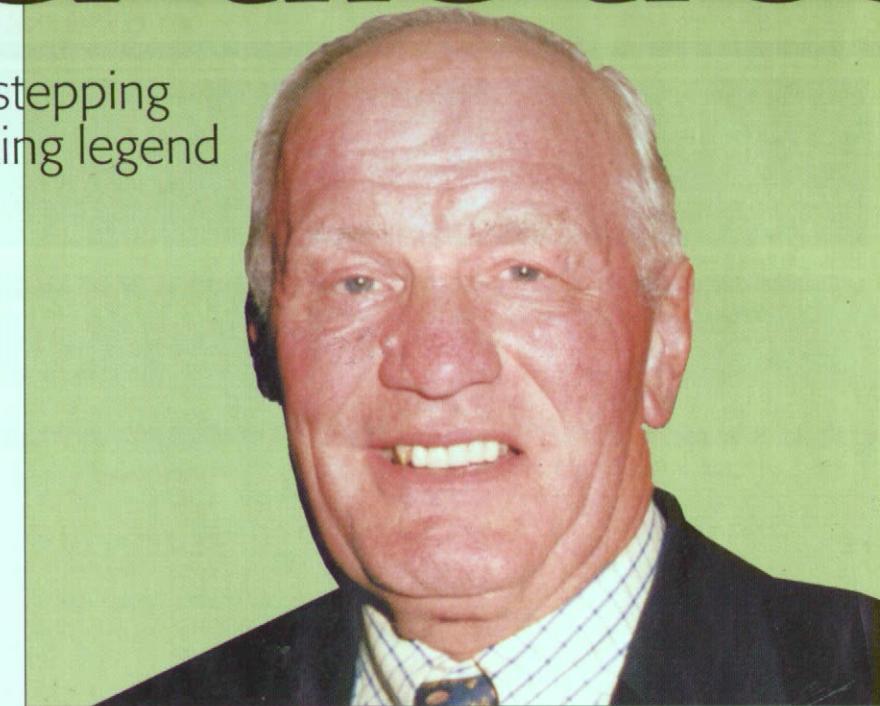
Henry was posted to 4 Battalion, Royal Army Ordnance Corps in Deepcut, near Aldershot – a unit renowned for its boxing prowess.

But before he could don a pair of gloves for the battalion, he had to complete seven weeks of basic training at Blackdown, Surrey.

"I came back from the Olympics on the Sunday and I was in the Army by the Thursday – that was something of a culture shock," conceded Henry.

But it was a shock lessened by the company of his brother. "George and I joined the Army together and joined the same battalion, and when you've got a brother you've got a friend."

Back in Deepcut the Army endeavoured to teach the twins a trade as drivers although



Britain's finest: Sir Henry Cooper ruled the domestic heavyweight division for more than a decade but is now associated with a jab of a very different kind, helping to promote the Government's flu immunisation campaign

Picture: Personal Appearances

they spent increasingly less time behind the wheel, favouring the battalion's boxing gym to the cabs of their four-tonne vehicles.

"I was soon boxing for my battalion and the Army. I loved it. All the boxers were in one barrack-room and were given special privileges.

"We had to go on parade each morning but aside from that we were excused from duties and spent all day training.

"We were 18 and in great shape, running over the tank course in the morning and sparring all afternoon. George and I were fitter than most of the physical training instructors."

Inside the ring Henry put his famed left hook – known as 'Enry's 'Ammer – to good use, winning both the Army and Inter-Services light-heavyweight title, and helping his battalion to two Army team championships.

"Every battalion had good boxers but 4 Battalion, RAOC was just a bit special.

"Most of our boxers were good enough to represent Great Britain. We had guys like Georgie Whelan and Joe Erskine – champions in an out of the Army."

"When I turned professional it was always my ambition to win a Lonsdale belt outright," said the three-times Lonsdale belt winner. "All things considered I guess I didn't do too badly."

As well as using boxing to furnish his trophy cabinet, Henry also found a way

of turning the amateur sport into a profit-making exercise.

"As amateurs you only ever won prizes for winning bouts," explained Henry. "If you won a senior bout you would be presented with something like an electric coffee percolator or a canteen of cutlery.

"I must have had 30 to 40 percolators so I used to flog them off in the sergeants' mess. I'd get a fiver for each one and there was one sergeant who used to raffle them off on a nice little earner."

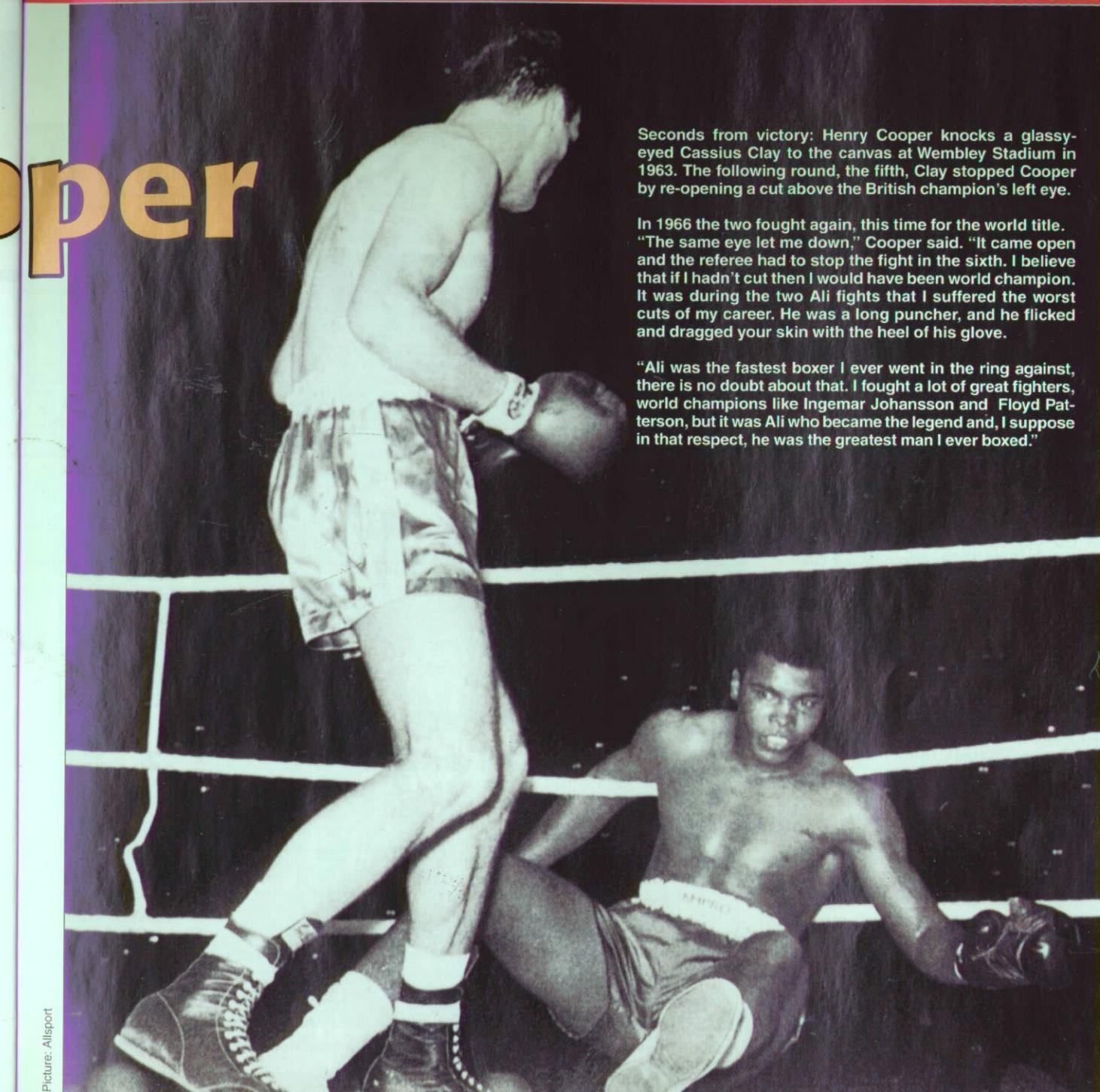
But despite having money in his pocket, Henry was still determined to try his luck in the professional ranks and, after completing two years of National Service, he left the Army in 1954.

"The Army served my career well. It kept me active and I was boxing three or four times a month," he said.

"Above all else it gave me variety. I met guys from across the country – boxers I could judge myself against and learn different training methods from."

Five years after hanging up his uniform Henry began a ten-year reign as British heavyweight champion and went on to become the dominant European heavyweight of the 1960s.

"When I turned professional it was always my ambition to win a Lonsdale belt outright," said the three-times Lonsdale belt winner. "All things considered I guess I didn't do too badly."



Seconds from victory: Henry Cooper knocks a glassy-eyed Cassius Clay to the canvas at Wembley Stadium in 1963. The following round, the fifth, Clay stopped Cooper by re-opening a cut above the British champion's left eye.

In 1966 the two fought again, this time for the world title. "The same eye let me down," Cooper said. "It came open and the referee had to stop the fight in the sixth. I believe that if I hadn't cut then I would have been world champion. It was during the two Ali fights that I suffered the worst cuts of my career. He was a long puncher, and he flicked and dragged your skin with the heel of his glove."

"Ali was the fastest boxer I ever went in the ring against, there is no doubt about that. I fought a lot of great fighters, world champions like Ingemar Johansson and Floyd Patterson, but it was Ali who became the legend and, I suppose in that respect, he was the greatest man I ever boxed."

Stitched-up by Cassius Clay's trainer

DURING a professional career that spanned 55-bouts, Henry Cooper exchanged blows with some of the biggest names in world boxing, but one of his punches is celebrated above all others – the left hook that floored a brash 21-year-old named Cassius Clay at Wembley Stadium in 1963.

Clay, who became Muhammad Ali and world champion a year later, entered the ring against the British champion with a growing reputation and with the Louisville lip already working in overdrive.

"I knew he had an Olympic gold medal and knew that he was a good boxer but I still thought I had the ability to beat him," said Cooper. "I had him complaining in the first round, I had his nose bleeding, and was doing a lot of damage inside."

"The referee sent a steward to the dressing rooms to get a new glove and at Wembley that's over 150 yards from the ring – Ali was

referee to break every time we got together."

Despite sustaining a cut above his left eye, Cooper dominated the early rounds and looked to have secured a famous victory when, in the dying seconds of the fourth, one of his trademark left hooks sent Clay crashing to the canvas.

But, saved from the referee's count by the bell, Clay benefited from more than two minutes of recovery time as his corner complained of a ripped glove – a tear British fight fans believe was caused by Clay's trainer, Angelo Dundee.

"Dundee did split that glove – he has openly admitted that to me," Cooper told *Soldier*. "He saw that the stitching on Ali's right-hand glove had been stretched and so he ripped it open and called the referee over."

"The referee sent a steward to the dressing rooms to get a new glove and at Wembley that's over 150 yards from the ring – Ali was

given a two-and-a-half minute break and for an athlete that is all the time you need to recover.

"I was sitting in my corner wondering what was going on but my eye was so badly gashed that my corner used the extra time to stop the bleeding."

When the boxers finally returned from their respective corners for the fifth, Clay had recovered and stopped Cooper by re-opening the cut above his eye.

And despite Dundee's admission of guilt Cooper remains philosophical about the nature of his defeat.

"Pro boxing is completely different to the amateur game. The amateur game is a sport and the professional game is a business," he said. "That is why you pay top dollar for the best managers and trainers. If something like that had happened to me then I hope that Jim Wickes would have done the same for me."

Howards' power-up

Champion eyes world title lift

ONE of The Green Howards' new recruits has more power behind him than most – a European power-lifting title and two world records testify to that.

Pte Graham Winter, who has just completed a course at the Army Foundation College in Harrogate and joins the 1st Battalion, The Green Howards at the beginning of this month, is the European under-23 power-lifting champion and holds the world record for the dead lift of 179kg and for the squat lift of 150kg.

Graham's other noteworthy achievements include lifting Rhino from television's *Gladiators*, who weighs in at 18-stone, and the lesser weight of the man who recruited him – Sgt Andy Kidger.

The 17-year-old will be looking to add to this already impressive résumé when he takes part in the world championships in Cape Town, South Africa later this month.

Capt Steve Mincher of the regimental recruiting team said: "This is a quite magnificent achievement by a young man, and we are proud that he will represent The Green Howards, the Army and the country at the world championships in South Africa.

"The regiment is always keen to encourage its soldiers to reach the highest possible level in their sports."



He ain't heavy: Sgt Andy Kidger (GH) hitches a lift from new recruit Pte Graham Winter

RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . .

ATHLETICS: ATR Winchester inter-company competition – 1, B Company; 2, A Squadron.

Army marathon championships, men's individual champion – SSgt Des Murray (JSSU Cyprus). **Women's champion** – LCpl Paula Wales (47 Regt RA Wksp). **Veteran's champion** – Maj Douglas Brisco (DLO Andover). **Major Unit champions** – 3 R Irish. **Minor Unit champions** – RMB Chivenor.

FOOTBALL: Army Youth 3 Scottish Youth 1; Army 4 Prison Service 3.

Massey Trophy – AAC 1 RLC 1; AMS 0 AAC 7; Infantry 1 APTC 2; AMS 2 RE 4; R Signals 3 RLC 2.

Army Youth Challenge Cup final – ATFC Arborfield 3 AFC Harrogate 2.

Army (men's) six-a-side championships, semi finals – 27 Regt RLC beat 7 Sig Regt 4-3; 3 RSME Regt

beat 22 Engr Regt 3-1. **Final** – 3 RSME Regt beat 27 Regt RLC 3-1.

Infantry six-a-side championships, quarter-finals – 3 Para beat 7 R Irish 2-0; 1 LI (A) beat 1 IG on penalties; 1 RWF beat 1 Kings 4-1; 1 Hldrs beat 1 Kings (A) 1-0.

Semi-finals – 1 LI (A) beat 3 Para 3-1; 1 RWF beat 1 Hldrs 3-1. **Final** – 1 RWF beat 1 LI (A) 1-0.

HOCKEY: Halberds hockey club (102 Logistic Brigade) tour of Barbados – Halberds 1 Barbados All Stars 1; Halberds 0 Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force 4; Halberds 0 Wizards 7; Halberds 2 Eastern Stars 4; Halberds 4 Bajan Combomeres 0.

RUGBY UNION: 1 RRW 31 Royal Navy U21s 25.

SAILING: APC regatta winners – Maj James Hall and Col Mark Pountain.

SHOOTING: English Small-bore Shooting Union beat Combined Services by 132pts; Police Athletic Association beat Army 3-2; Combined Services beat Great Britain by 218pts.

Army clay target individual championships – 1, Capt Darrell White (RGJ) 190pts; 2, Spr Gerry Brown (RE) 182; 3, WO2 Stuart Ferguson (RE) 181.

Army clay target team championships – 1, 3 R Irish (317pts); 2, ATR Pirbright (311); 3, Defence School of Transport (296).

Inter-Services long range small-bore rifle championships – 1, Army (21pts); 2, RAF (14); 3, TA (13).

Inter-Services target pistol team championships, air pistol – 1, Army (6,614pts); 2, RAF (6,585); 3, RN (6,254). **Centre fire pistol** – 1, RAF (3,039); 2, RN (2,920); 3, Army (2,824). **Individual champion** – Cpl Robert Doak (R Irish).



Cut-back king rules

MORE than 30 water-skiers battled it out for the silverware at the Army water-ski championships.

Now in its sixth year, the tournament, held at the National Watersports Centre in Nottingham, featured events in three different disciplines – slalom, trick and jump.

Among the winners was Maj Mark Winston-Davis (LI), pictured above, who steered his way to the pro-slalom title.

◆ Full results were: Pro-class slalom – 1, Maj Winston-Davis (LI); 2, 2nd Lt Lloyd Owen (1 Coldm Gds); 3, CSgt Nutter (LI).

Inter-class slalom – 1, Capt Thompson (4 R Irish); 2, Cpl Clements (33 Field Hosp); 3, Pte Jones (1 WFR). Novice (1) slalom – 1, Cpl McGowen (4 R Irish); 2, Cpl Brown (280 Signal Sqn). Novice (2) slalom – 1, Mne Porter (RM); 2, LCpl Goalt (4 R Irish).

Jump event – 1, Pte Moore (4 R Irish); 2, CSgt Nutter. Trick event – 1, Cpl Clements; 2, Cpl McGowen.

Mark's many happy returns

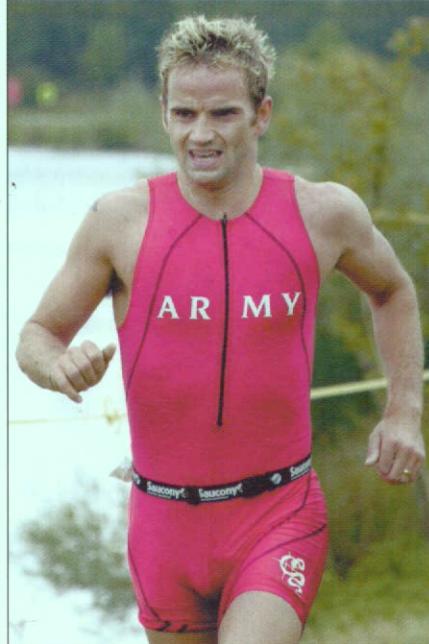
ONE of the Army's top athletes celebrated a return to full fitness by taking first place at the Army sprint triathlon championships at ATR Bassingbourn.

Cpl Mark Livesey (50 Commando, RE), pictured right, showed no signs of the knee-injury that had kept him out of athletics for over a year as he led home the 100-strong field in a time of 1hr 1min.

"I had to take time off due to a problem with my knee-cap," he said. "But I recently represented the Army in the British Inter-Services championships and I came first in the Army competition, so I think I can safely say I'm back on form."

Joining Livesey on the winners' podium was OCdt Katy O'Brien (RMAS), who scooped gold in the women's race and 20th overall with a time of 1hr 9min 57sec.

The competition involved a 750-metre swim, a 20km cycle and a 5km run.



SHORTS

Double win Down Under

THREE members of the Army alpine ski team helped the Combined Services to scoop two major trophies during a tour of Australia.

Capt Charlie Hewitt (RA), Sgt Dave Cooper (QRH) and Sgt Stevie Reece (RE) made up half of the six-man team that won both the Royal Australian Air Force championships and the Australian Defence Force championships.

In a league of their own

THE Royal Signals marked the inaugural fixture of the new women's inter-corps football league with a 4-2 victory over AMS.

A brace from Sig Claire Donald, and one goal apiece from Sig Tam Ingledew and Sig Vicky Moran, fired the Signals to the top of the Price Waterhouse Coopers-sponsored league.

FOOTBALL TABLES

MASSEY TROPHY

| | P | W | D | L | GD | Pts |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| AAC | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 4 |
| RE | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| APTC | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| R Signals | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| RLC | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 1 |
| AGC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Int Corps | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Infantry | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | -1 | 0 |
| RA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| RAC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| REME | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| AMS | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | -9 | 0 |

* Results up to and including October 18

ARMY SIX-A-SIDE GROUP A

| | P | W | D | L | GD | Pts |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 27 Regt RLC | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 13 | 16 |
| 22 Engr Regt | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 13 |
| 4 R Irish | 6 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 12 |
| 38 Engr Regt | 6 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 12 |
| 1 RSME | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | -5 | 4 |
| 1 PWRR | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | -10 | 3 |
| 2 Sig Regt | 6 | 0 | 1 | 5 | -18 | 1 |

ARMY SIX-A-SIDE GROUP B

| | P | W | D | L | GD | Pts |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 3 RSME | 7 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 13 | 19 |
| 7 Sig Regt | 7 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 15 |
| 36 Engr Regt | 7 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 10 |
| 1 Hldrs | 7 | 3 | 0 | 4 | -4 | 9 |
| 21 Sig Regt | 7 | 2 | 3 | 2 | -3 | 9 |
| SEME | 7 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| 1 Coldm Gds | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 | -9 | 5 |
| 7 Para RHA | 7 | 1 | 1 | 5 | -7 | 4 |

Where there's a will... there's a wave

Storm clouds fail to wash away emerging Army sport

Report: Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

FEW sportsmen can claim to be as dedicated to their sport as the 17 soldiers who assembled on the west coast of Wales for the inaugural Army surfing championships.

Anyone who arrived at the tournament with preconceptions of golden sands, avenues of palm trees, Pamela Anderson look-alikes and perfect surf will have been sorely disappointed.

Pembrokeshire in the autumn is far removed from the idyllic setting of the Californian coastline portrayed by *Baywatch*.

Held over the course of a week, the championships were plagued by unseasonal bad weather, with persistent rain and heavy fog hampering visibility, and water temperatures plunging to an uninviting four degrees.

Rugby and football matches have been cancelled in far milder conditions, but that did not stop the group of surfers from taking to the waters of St George's Channel in search of waves.

Indeed, the adverse weather could do little to dampen the spirits of the event organiser, Sgt Jase Fern (14 Signal Regiment), who has made it his personal quest to introduce a sport, thought to have originated in the 18th century, to the ranks of the British Army.

Fern was first bitten by the surfing bug in 1999 during a four-month detachment to the Falklands, where he met Cpl Roy Major (RAF).

"At that time Roy was ranked number 14 on the UK circuit and was one of the driving forces behind getting surfing recognised in the RAF," said Fern. "He



On the crest of a wave: Founder of the Army Surf Riders Union, Sgt Jase Fern

let me have a go on one of his longboards on condition that on my return to the UK I would attempt to form an Army club, with the ultimate aim of holding a true Inter-Services competition."

One year later the Army Surf Riders Union was formed, and although an Inter-Services competition is still some way off, the sport which requires a steady balance is now finding its feet in the Army.

"I think a lot of people thought I was just a madman who lived on a beach when I first started to try and drum up support," he added. "Your average

stereotype of a surfer is someone with long blonde hair who smokes a lot of drugs, but nobody like that exists in the Services – we are just people who enjoy the sport."

◆ **Winners of the 2001 Army surfing championships were:** Novice – LCpl Derry Evans (14 Sig Regt); bodyboard – LCpl Al Hayes (2 LI); shortboard – 2nd Lt Rupes Forrest (WG); longboard – Sgt Jase Fern (14 Sig Regt); mini mal – Sgt Fern.

◆ Anyone interested in joining the Army Surf Riders Union should contact Sgt Jase Fern on Mil 94359 5774.



November 2001 SOLDIER

Essential kit

Surf-wear is hyper-fashionable but a rider's dress is about more than just brand names

BOARDS – There are three main types of surf-board, the mini malibu, shortboard and longboard. The type of board you have depends on your size and weight, and the type of riding you want to do.

Smaller boards require good surf (hollow waves) and are the preferred choice of trick riders.

Longboards are more suitable for larger surfers and can be used in most conditions.

Expect to pay anywhere in the region of £200-£500 for a new board.

WETSUITS – Forget surfing in the UK without one. Standard 3mm thick wetsuits are fine for the summer but it is advisable to invest in a 5mm suit for the winter months.

Custom-made suits are usually the most effective but can be very expensive. Prices range from £100 upwards.



GLOVES – An optional extra. Help to keep the cold at bay.

LEASH – Attaches the surfer to his board. A vital bit of kit as it not only prevents riders from losing their boards but also acts as a lifeline to their only buoyancy aid.

BOOTS – Another heat-saving measure. Also protect the feet against rocks and coral, and give the surfer added grip on the board. Around £20.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to November ...

ANGLING: 1 – Army shore championships (Dover).

ATHLETICS: 7 – Army relays (Tweseldown); 17 – Army tetrahathlon championships (RMAS); 18 – Combined Services v England (Margate); 23-24 – National biathlon championships (TBC).

BASKETBALL: 25 – Army v Solent select (Aldershot).

BOXING: 1 – London v Army (Fitzroy Lodge, London); 9 – Army v Wales (Brecon); 16 – South East London v Army (Croydon); 17 – ABA (England) novice quarter-finals (Maida gymnasium, Aldershot); 19 – Army v London (Royal Lancaster).

CANOEING: 3-4 – Land command wild-water racing championships (River Tees, Barnard Castle, County Durham).

CYCLING: 4 – Combined Services mountain bike championships, round four (Blandford); 18 – Combined Services mountain bike championships, round five (Blandford).

FOOTBALL: 4 – Army youth v Aldershot Town youth (TBC); 6 – Army v Essex FA (Aldershot); 10 – Dorset/Wiltshire youth v Army youth (TBC); 13 – Wiltshire v Army U21s (TBC); 17 – Army youth v Somerset youth (TBC); 18 – TA (NI) v Army (NI) (Northern Ireland); 19 – Middlesex FA v Army (TBC); Army U21s v Portsmouth FC (TBC); 22 – Gloucestershire women v Army women (Gloucester); 24 – Army Crusader FC v Liverpool Ramblers (Aldershot).

HOCKEY: 7-8 – Combined Services championships (Larkhill); 28 – 4 Div women's 11-a-side championships (Aldershot).

JUDO: 18 – East Anglian Open (Norwich).

LAWN TENNIS: 3 – Men's veterans v 45 Club (Aldershot); 17 – Aldershot Tennis Centre v Army women (Aldershot); Men's veterans v English Law Society (Aldershot); 24 – Men's veterans v VCGB (Aldershot).

REAL TENNIS: 14 – Holyport v Army (Holyport).

RUGBY UNION: 6 – Combined Services v Barbarians (Portsmouth); 9 – Dubai Sevens (Dubai); 28 – Army v Harlequins (Aldershot).

SHINTY: 3 – Edinburgh University v The Highlanders (Away).

SQUASH: 2-4 – Combined Services individual championships (HMS Terneraire); 12-14 – REME individual championships (Aldershot); 16-17 – AGC championships (ATR Winchester); 19-21 – Inter-corps championships (Aldershot); 29 – Oxford University v Army (Oxford).

SWIMMING: 28 – AGC championships (ATR Winchester).

TUG OF WAR: 24 – Northern Ireland indoor championships (Northern Ireland).

■ Got a date for the diary? E-mail the details to fixtures@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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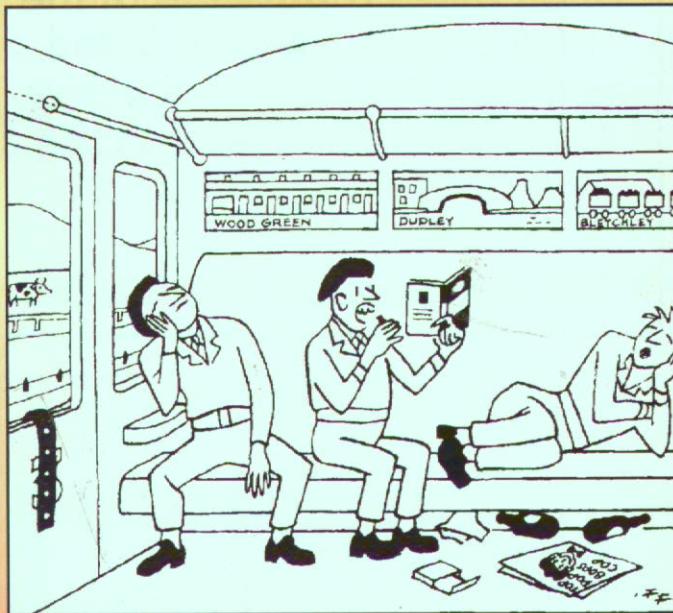
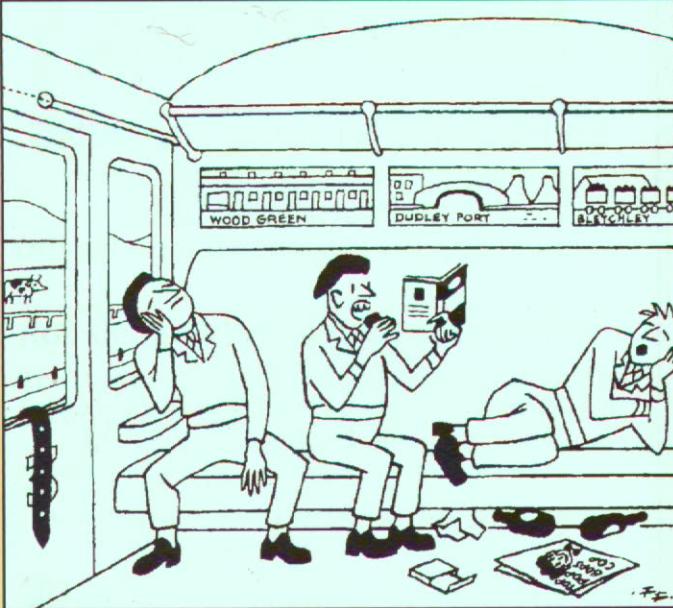
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No 720



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

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

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

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the January 2002 issue.

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September issue (No 718): First correct entry drawn was from Sgt W J Fulton, of Northern Ireland, who wins £100. Second and third were Sgt D K Hanvey, of 16 CSMR, Op Bessemer, and Sgt T Dowson, 12 Tpt Sqn, 1 GS Regt, PRB, Gutersloh, who each win a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: Top of tree; giraffe house; man's pipe; male soldier's hair and pocket; woman soldier's skirt; railings; teas notice; elephants markings; arrow under gazelles sign.



Freeze frame

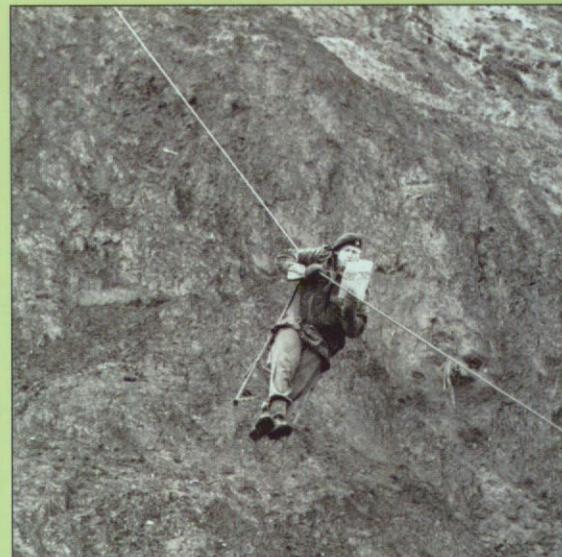
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Write your own funny caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in July 1952. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply and entries should reach us by November 30.



FUNNIEST caption for the September competition (left) was, in our opinion, "There's no need to shoot him just because he's got knobbly knees!" from LCpl Birch, A (Fusilier) Coy, West Midlands Regiment, Birmingham.

We also liked "Damn it, man, Pay 2000 wasn't that bad!" from Sgt Brendan McMahon of 150 Pro Coy RMP in Catterick; "Now, because of all the Army cut-backs, I want you to say 'bang', OK," from Cpl McGrath of



1 LI in Edinburgh; and "The correct challenge is 'Alt, who goes there?', not 'Where the

do you think you're going, mate?" from Colin Hunt of Bodmin, Cornwall.

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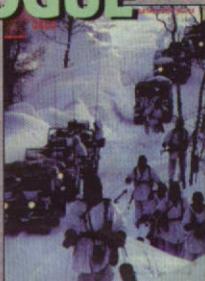
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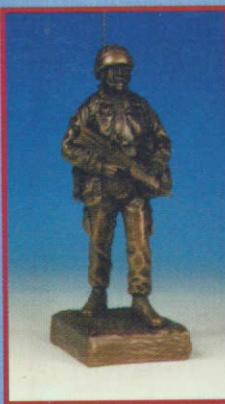
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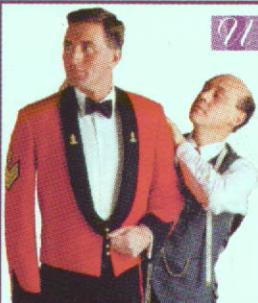
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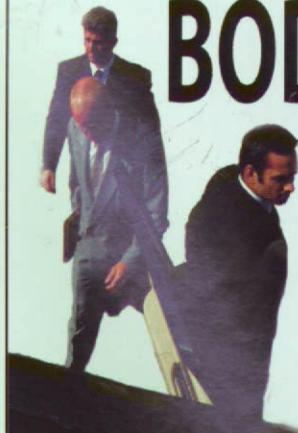
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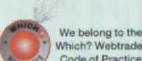
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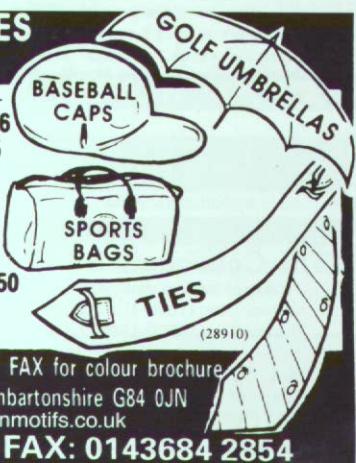
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Sherill, 40-year-old, 5'3", slim build with blonde hair. Enjoys socializing, evenings in with friends, music and football with her son. Seeking tall, slim and funny pen pals who enjoy writing and receiving letters 35-45. P962

Susan, 46-year-old, 5'2", slim with auburn hair and blue eyes. Enjoys dancing, music, clubs, and eating out. Seeking pen pal with GSOH, 42-52 P963

Judith, Christian lady 5'6", slim, attractive blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys country walks, reading, music, singing, church activities and cycling. Seeking pen pals, late 40-50. P964

Tracey, 34-year-old, 5'4", slim, attractive, intelligent, bubbly blonde with two children. Enjoys music, films, reading, days out, cycling and swimming. Seeking pen pals, 30-37. P965

Mel, 27-year-old, petite with light brown hair and hazel eyes. Enjoys socialising and keeping fit. Seeking outgoing and friendly personality pen pals, any age. P966

Jayne, 35-year-old, auburn hair and blue eyes. Enjoys alternative therapies, animals, countryside, pubs, clubs and eating out. Student, fun personality and good sense of humour. Seeking pen pals, 25-37. P967

Julie, 36-year-old, 5'5", fair skin with blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys cooking, sports, travel and being me with no airs and graces. Seeking honest, sensible down-to-earth pen pals who enjoy a good laugh, 36-39. P968

Liz, 40 year-old, 5'3", with blonde hair, Enjoys watching football, travel, old pubs, countryside, walking, reading, most music and car boot sales. Seeking genuine replies only, 40-55. P969

Suzie, 43-year-old, 5'1", brunette, single mum with two children. Enjoys football (armchair), socialising, interior design, cooking, cinema and eating out. Seeking pen pals for friendship initially, any age. P970

David, 42-year-old, slim, 5'10" with dark hair. Successful single business man with a quality lifestyle. Enjoys holidays, pop music, DIY, gardening and dining out. Seeking kind and considerate lady pen pals, under 40. P971

Debbie, 39-year-old, 5' medium build with short light brown hair and blue eyes. Non-smoker, GSOH who likes living life to the full. Enjoys music, dancing, walking, people, writing and travelling. Seeking pen pals, 40-45. P972

Nicola and friends, enjoy pubs, clubs, cinema, football and Formula 1 racing. Seeking male pen pals with similar interests, 20-35. P973

Yvonne, 32-year-old, 5'11", with light brown hair and hazel green eyes. Single with GSOH. Enjoys cinema, reading, gardening, crafts, quiet country pubs and loves pets/animals. Seeking single, honest, caring and genuine pen pals with similar interests, 31-38 serving worldwide, photo please. P974

Annie, 40-year-old, Irish lady, tall, blonde beauty therapist with green eyes. Enjoys travel, theatre, swimming and the cinema. Seeking pen pals, 38-48. P975

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On March 1 2002. The 3rd (County Down and County Armagh) Battalion and the 8th (County Armagh and County Tyrone) Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment will disband to form the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment on March 2 2002.

Anyone who has presented items to either the 3rd or 8th Battalion or associated Messes, and would like those items returned, should contact the Battalions on the telephone numbers stated below within 28 days of this notice.

3rd Battalion Officers' Mess: Portadown 02838 360437
Sergeants' Mess: Portadown 02838 360415
8th Battalion Officers' Mess: Armagh 02837 529355
Sergeants' Mess: Armagh 02837 529238

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Reference: SJH/167727/CD(T)

The Royal Fusiliers Museum Trust. The charity commission has made a scheme to amend the trusts of this charity.

A copy can be seen for the next month at: City of London Headquarters The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, H.M. Tower of London, London.

Or can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference.

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DEATH NOTICE

On Saturday September 8, 2001, **GUDRUN BRISBANE BEM**. (Gudi to her friends), passed away. All those who knew and loved her will have their treasured memories, as I have, her dear friend and companion Maureen Unwin, Hiddingserweg 86, 59494 Soest, Germany. Rest in peace Gudi. I love you.

11/01

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REUNIONS

8 Regiment RCT/RLC: Reunion Nov 17. Contact J Aspinall at jimmyasp@hotmail.com

1 Platoon (Windsor), Royal County of Berkshire ACF: Reunion for all ex-staff and cadets, Nov 28. Details: SMI Harris on 01753 863430, e-mail bdharris@blueyonder.co.uk 2002

35 Battery RA Foundation Day: 237th anniversary on Feb 22-23 at Rapier Barracks, Kirton-in-Lindsey. Details from WO2 (BSM) Lavis on 01904 668469.

National Service Veterans Alliance: Reunion at Britannia Hotel, Coventry, Mar 16-17 (new dates). Contact Ken Wakeman on 020 8850 2246.

4 Coy, 3 Bn Coldstream Guards (1950-55): 11th reunion dinner, Derby, Apr 13. Contact Harry Westgarth, 49 Rokeby Park, Hull HU4 7QE, e-mail harry@westgarth.karoo.co.uk or ring 01482 503649.

AMS rugby dinner: May 24 at Aldershot. Details from Maj Shaun Knott, Browning Barracks, Aldershot or 01252 349534 (mil 9422 4534) or e-mail oldboyknott5603@aol.com

Mess presentation: The Corporals' Mess, 1 Battalion REME: wants to hear from ex-members, including RLC and AGC personnel, who did not receive a presentation from the mess. Whether you were a fully paid-up member of the presentation fund or not, you may be entitled to a presentation. Contact Cpl Brian Keegan, HQ Coy, 1 Bn REME, BFPO 36 or phone Osnabruck mil (94866) 3896. Claims must be made by January 31.

Hampshire at war: Patricia Ross is to extend her oral history of Hayling Island during the Second World War to include all of the county of Hampshire.

Individuals, regimental associations and museums or archive sources who have tales to tell can contact Patricia Ross c/o Hayling Island Library, Elm Grove, Hayling Island, Hants PO11 9EE or e-mail her direct at pat.ross@kingsengland.com

Colourful tale: Copies of *The Story of Colours in the Royal Marines*, produced by the Royal Marines Historical Society, are available from the Souvenir Shop, Royal Marines Museum, Eastney, Southsea, Hants PO4 9PX (price £7, or £8 inc p&p).

The 128-page special publication (No 23 from the society) was brought out to coincide with the recent award of new Colours to 40, 42 and 45 Commandos at Plymouth.

APPOINTMENTS

Brigadiers: A P Deed to be ACOS JHQ SE Izmir, Turkey, Aug 31; J C Campbell to be Dir Studies, RMCS Shrivenham, Sep 3;

Colonels: P Gosling to be Dep Comd BRITFOR Kosovo, Aug 27; G A Nield to be Ass Dir Capability Strategy DEP, Aug 28; D S Robertson to be Ass Dir Defence Catering Gp 2, Sep 1; T C S Bonas to Nato Defence College, Aug 29; P V Budd to be Comdt Army School of Catering, Aug 31.

G S Brown to be Comd Equipment Support HQ 2 Div, Oct 1; P A Gray to be Comd REME TA, Oct 8; P B Williams to be COS UN Congo, Sep 29; C R F Rider to be Planning Officer.

Cadets remember

Army Cadet Force members from Bedfordshire laid a wreath at the Menin Gate during a visit to the First World War memorial and cemeteries. More than 100 smartly turned-out cadets took part in the Last Post ceremony at the Gate and toured trenches and tunnels used during the fierce fighting on the Somme. One cadet discovered the headstone of a relative at a Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the area.



Granite plinth records Sachsenhausen victims



Remembered: The British Ambassador to Germany, Sir Paul Lever, joined members of the Royal British Legion to unveil a memorial on the site of Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin. The granite stone plinth, for which £4,000 was raised in the UK and Berlin, is inscribed with the names of 20 members of the British and Commonwealth forces known to have been interned in the camp.

Most were members of the Special Operations Executive and Special Services Commando involved in two operations in Norway – Musketeer (Sept 1942) and Checkmate (April 1943). They were executed at Sachsenhausen or nearby.

Relatives of some of those who died were present at the dedication ceremony.

Mines of Vimy

STUDENTS of First World War front lines may be interested in a new video on the fighting tunnels of Vimy Ridge. *One of Our Mines is Missing!* is a 73-minute story of the search for a mine laid 85 years ago. Many are known to have lain dormant since the battle, which raged between 1916 and 1917.

It is available from Fougasse Films Ltd, 7 Essex Close, Eastcote, Middx HA4 9PX or 020 8429 8061 or andyprada@fougassefilms.co.uk (price £12.99 plus £1 p&p).

OCE UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Sep 4.

Lieutenant Colonels: R A Attard RLC to DCTA, Sep 24; Bijaykumar Rawat RGR to UNAMSIL, Feb 25; R H Boddington WG to HQ London District, Dec 3; A L S Boswell, A and SH to JTFHQ SL, Oct 4; W H Buckley, R Irish to PJHQ, Jan 7; D N Challes RA to RMCS, Sep 12; P G Cox RLC to DA Albania, Sep 29.

E R Duncan, Int Corps to UNAMSIL, Oct 22; J L Fletcher, R Signals to HQ ARRC, Apr 11; N W Gill, R Signals to D/Bowman, Aug 28; W J Hemmings RE to Italian HRF HQ, Oct 29; R E L Hodges, Kings to HQ ITG, Jan 7.

P D T Hollins, Para to HQ 2 Div, Jan 20; S P Hunt, R Signals to JACIG, Aug 20; A J Loudon, R Irish to HQ KFOR, Sep 20; S K Macrostie R Signals to MONUC, Dec 17; M D W Mangham RGJ to HQ SFOR, Sep 5; A R B Oatts AAC to APC, Nov 7; J E Passmore RE to BMM Kuwait, Jan 5; P T Roberts GH to LWTC, Sep 17; M G Scott PWRR to HQ Land, Sep 3; A J S Storrie, D and D to MONUC, Oct 15; C J L Terrington, Int Corps to BLO USA, Sep 14; I Thompson AGC(SPS) to RMCS, Nov 13; C L Tickell RE to HQ Land, Aug 6; S J Turpin, R Signals to SANGCOM, Apr 27; P A Warden RLC to DPA, Dec 3; G H Wheeler RWF to HQ NI, Sep 17.

SEARCHLINE

Did you take part in the campaign to liberate the Falkland Islands? Tell *Soldier* in no more than 150 words your most vivid memory for inclusion in a special feature to mark the 20th anniversary of the war next April. Remember to tell us which unit you were serving with. Let us have your words, a photograph and full details of yourself, by January 31.

David Nolan, the grandson of Leonard Nolan (Royal Fusilier, First World War) is asked to contact msimon@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Avon ACF 1980 onwards: Reunion planned for ex-cadets and instructors from all companies. Details from Jodi Foster née Davenport 07870 932805.

Ex-pupils **Morcott Hall School** are asked to contact Sally-Anne Johnson, who co-ordinates the bi-annual reunion at pjsaj@aol.com

Janine Hopewell (née Maillardet), ex-pupil Morcott Hall and former Royal Military Police 1988-92, wishes to hear from old friends and colleagues. Tel her at 01908 379698 or e-mail daz_n_j9@lineone.net

AMF(L) Troop RE (1970s and 80s), Longmoor, Tidworth/Perham Down. First reunion a success, still seeking more members. Details from Tony Goodall, tel 07623 140777 or tony_goodall@talk21.com

Gary Howard is seeking **Matthew Clarke**, attached 2 Fd Regt RA, Munster 1980s, last known location Kirton in Lindsey 1988. E-mail garyhoward@gibnyex.gi

Lyla Howard (née Stevens), ex-St James School, Ashton-under-Lyne, wishes to contact **Sgt Keith Taylor**, ex-5 Heavy Regt RA, 1988. Or e-mail garyhoward@gibnyex.gi

Copy of video **Sarajevo – The Year of Living Dangerously**, circa 1993-94, sought. Contact Mick McDermid at mmcdem@aol.com

Ex-5 Inf Wksp REME, 5 Fd Wksp REME and 5 Armd Wksp REME: 3 Bn REME(G), 5 GS Coy are compiling an archive of information and memorabilia from above units. If you can help by donating originals or copies contact SSgt Haig, 3 Bn REME (G), BFPO 22 or 0049 5251 101805 Paderborn Mil 3805.

Families and descendants of soldiers of the **Royal Engineers (Transportation)** who lost their lives during the Second World War are sought by The Stanier 8F Locomotion Society, which is compiling names for a book of



East Midlands Territorials have launched a search for the **gunners** who beat Rommel at Tobruk. Those pictured, left, were serving with the **Royal Horse Artillery** during the siege in 1941. If you are among them, or know of any others, ring 0115 927 2251 or write to Capt Bob Privett, South Notts Hussars, TA Centre, Hucknall Lane, Bulwell NG6 8AQ.

On November 8, Nottingham will be honouring the men who garrisoned the Libyan port during the six-month siege 60 years ago. They defied the Luftwaffe and three tank divisions of the Afrika Korps.

remembrance and planning a Service of Dedication. Go to www.8fsociety.co.uk or write to Col D W Roland Dorrator, Waterloo Road, Caythorpe, Grantham, Lincs NG32 3DX.

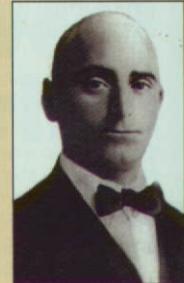
Adam Church, ex-Shoreham ACF, now in BFG, is asked to contact former cadet K Hadrell on kazzmaniandevil@hotmail.com

Parachute Regimental Association (East Anglian Branch) for all serving and ex-members of the regiment. Contact P Wilson, 15 Beaconsfield Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 6BN or telephone 01255 435843.

Researcher into all aspects of **British Army training**, particularly in Belize, Cyprus and Kenya, would like to hear from gunners or range conducting officers. Fax 0870 138 3197 or e-mail davidmtaylorz@hotmail.com

Escapees from German prison camp No 78, **Fonte d'Amore, Sulmona**, in the Abruzzo region of Central Italy, Sept-Nov 1943, who were helped by an Italian sheep farmer,

Michele Del Greco, pictured, are asked to contact his daughter, Raffaella Del Greco. She is preparing a book about her father, who was shot by the Germans after a summary trial in December 1943, and would be grateful for photographs or information from soldiers he helped. Write to Signora Raffaella Del Greco, Via Roberto Allessandri 24, 00151 Roma, Italy (tel 0039 58200058, but be advised that Signora Del Greco speaks no English).



Service to recall Birkenhead heroes

A SERVICE of remembrance to mark the loss of the **Birkenhead** 150 years ago is to be held on February 24 in the chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and the organisers want to contact descendants of the men on board.

The **Birkenhead**, lost off Cape Town in February 1852, has a place in history as one of the finest examples of British military discipline and courage. Troops, many of them raw recruits, ordered to allow women and children to board the few lifeboats first, stood to attention as the troopship foundered beneath them.

Ten regiments were represented among the drafts of young soldiers on board the **Birkenhead**: 12th (Prince of Wales's Royal) Lancers,

2nd (Queen's Royal) Regiment of Foot, 6th (Royal 1st Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot, 12th (East Suffolk) Regiment, 43rd (Monmouthshire) Light Infantry, 60th King's Royal Rifle Corps, 45th (Nottinghamshire) Regiment of Foot, 73rd Highland Regiment of Foot, 74th Highland Regiment of Foot and 91st (Argyllshire) Regiment of Foot.

Successor units will be represented at the Chelsea service, as will the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, which suffered heavy losses.

Relatives of the 436 men who perished and the 207 who survived are asked to contact RHQ The Black Watch, Balhousie Castle, Hay Street, Perth, PH1 5HR, tel 0131 310 8530.

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 436565

Army Families Federation 01980 615525

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124

Confidential support lines:

UK 0800 731 4880

Germany 0800 1827 395

Cyprus 080 91065

Bosnia 0800 731 4880

Others UK 1980 630854

Operations worldwide Paradigm Homelink Access Number *2999@thePINprompt

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) 01372 841617

Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Families Association 0121 711 3028

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575

National Gulf Veterans and Families Association (0900-1700) 01482 833812; 24-hour helpline 01482 808730

Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011

RBL's Legionline 0845 7725 725

RBL Industries 01622 717202/718484

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Advice Unit 08456 020302

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272;

from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

War Pensions Agency 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

WRVS 01235 442940

DATES

NOVEMBER

- 2: Suez, an evening lecture by Maj Gen M J H Walsh, Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot.
- 10: Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance, Royal Albert Hall.
- 11: Remembrance Day service and parade at the Cenotaph.
- 17-18: Army Arts Society exhibition, Medieval Hall in the Close, Salisbury, 1000-1600. Free entry.
- 25: British Model Soldier Society, Bugle Call 2001, The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath.

❖ Officers and soldiers serving in Heidelberg's small military community at **Joint Headquarters Centre, HQ Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land), 24 Liaison Headquarters and UK Support Unit (Heidelberg)** banded together to raise the money for four TV-videos which have been presented to a local children's hospital.

❖ West Yorkshire Branch of the **Royal Military Police Association** has been given a £2,500 Lottery grant to help it replace its ageing IT facilities and stimulate recruiting. Contact the branch through secretary David Bentley on 01274 678802 or dc.bentley@virgin.net

❖ About 200 ex-soldiers and families were joined by civic leaders to mark the 50th anniversary of the **1st Battalion, The Manchester Regiment's** departure on the troopship *Halladale* to Malaya. A service in the regimental chapel in Manchester Cathedral last month marked the return of the battalion and remembered the 14 men killed in action fighting communist terrorists deep in the Malayan jungle.

A special exhibition on the Malayan emergency of 1951-54 is open in the Museum of The Manchester Regiment in Ashton-under-Lyne until the end of the year.

❖ Lt Gen Cedric Delves, the Deputy C-in-C Land Command, went back for second helpings when he was offered a choice of roast beef, lamb curry and stuffed chicken during a visit to TA chefs completing their field training with Catering Support Regiment. The chefs had to produce a menu for 25.

❖ Nato Deputy Commander Lt Gen Sir Jeremy MacKenzie inspected 22 Scottish veterans who provided a guard of honour for the opening of a museum at Overloon in Holland dedicated to the part played by Scottish regiments in the liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War. The display, created at the prompting of the Liberating Scots Trust, is within the Dutch National War and Resistance Museum at Overloon.

Medal man Taff strikes again

FORMER sapper George "Taff" Harris, the man who commissioned a commemorative "Jordan Service Medal" because he was so incensed that veterans of the 1958 campaign had not been given recognition for a major operational success, has done it again.

Unhappy that old soldiers were being left out of plans to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee, he asked Bigbury Mint, the people who produced his Jordan medal, to come up with a design for a commemorative Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Military Medal. The result was submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's Office at Buckingham Palace and approved.

As with his previous medal, sales of the new jubilee medal (the one pictured right was among the first to be struck in July) will benefit SSAFA Forces Help. Maj Gen Peter Sheppard, Controller of SSAFA, has endorsed the production.

"We have seen and approved both the design of the medal and the ribbon and feel that the result is a tasteful and attractive

medal that ex-Servicemen and women will be proud to own," he said.

"SSAFA Forces Help is proud to say it will benefit financially from the sale of these medals, thanks to Mr Harris's continuing generosity and support for the association.

"Over the past years he has raised a staggeringly large sum of money for us and our gratitude to him and his wife is immense."

Mr Harris told *Soldier* from his Haverfordwest home: "This medal is for veterans as well as anyone serving in February next year without five years' service behind them." He said one brigade association had requested more than 500 order forms.

The Royal Coat of Arms appears on the reverse.

Cost of the full-size medal, with spare ribbon, is £30. A range of ribbon, engraving, bars and miniatures is also available.

● About 2,000 troops from 16



Independent Parachute Brigade based in Cyprus flew to Jordan in the summer of 1958 to support the late King Hussein against an uprising. In 1996 the king approved Taff Harris's request that the veterans be allowed to reproduce his image on their own medal.

www.bigburymint.com

Tribute of brother-in-arms

TERRITORIAL Army sapper Cpl Ian Sword, right, kneels beside the grave of the brother he never knew. In Cyprus with the Military Works Force (Volunteers) to support United Nations units, he was given special permission to visit the cemetery in the divided island's buffer zone.

Spr Mickey Sword was just 18 when he was killed in an accident while serving on the island with 57 Port Operations Squadron RE in November 1959, eight months before Ian was born.

Although Ian, who comes from Merseyside, had been to Wayne's Keep Military Cemetery, Nicosia, on a family holiday, he found the opportunity to pay his respects in the uniform of the Royal Engineers particularly poignant.

The cemetery, which lies within the UN-controlled Green Line separating Greeks and Turks, is well maintained. In a nearby visitors' room manned by Dutch soldiers serving with the UN in Cyprus,



Ian was offered refreshments and the chance to sign a book. Ian is a member of the Territorial Army's 504 Specialist Team RE.

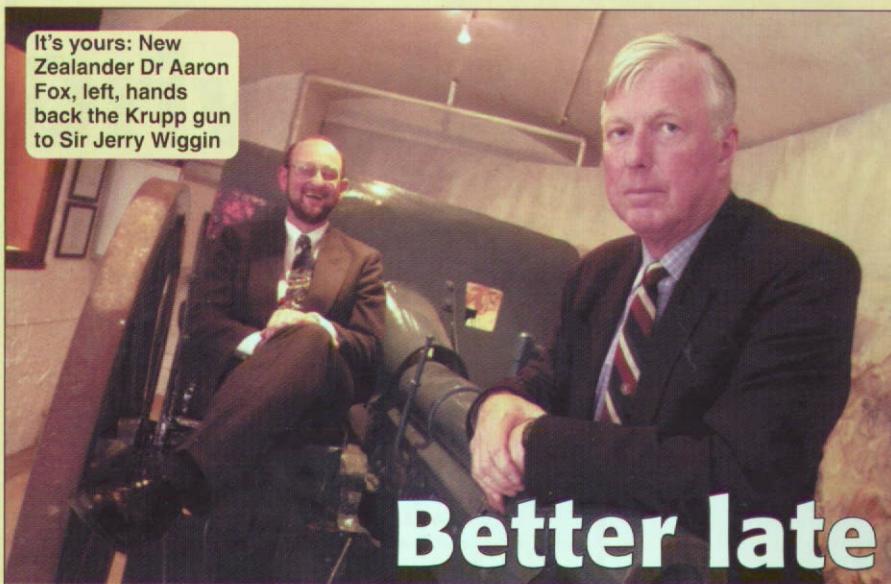
Timely gratitude

SGT Robin Garrard, left, of 7 Air Assault Battalion REME was so grateful to the staff at the Defence Services Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court, near Epsom in Surrey, that he made them a clock from the tail rotor hub and blades of a Gazelle helicopter. It is engraved with the REME badge.

Headley Court restored Sgt Garrard to full fitness following a career-threatening injury.

● Gen Sir Peter de la Billière was the guest of honour at the opening of Headley Court's refurbished Waterloo Gymnasium, damaged in a fire six years ago.





A Krupp gun captured by the Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry 84 years ago in what was probably the last classic cavalry charge has finally found its way into the regimental museum in Warwick.

In November 1917, 120 yeomen charged 2,000 Turkish infantrymen and two battalions of Austrian artillery dug in near the village of Huj in the Sinai.

Their victory, won at great cost, opened the way for Allenby's Australian and New Zealand units to advance on Jerusalem.

Two of the guns were awarded to the British cavalry regiments as trophies of war, but promptly "disappeared" to New Zealand. A few years ago one was re-discovered in a field by Dunedin-based military historian Dr Aaron Fox, who bought it and donated it to the Warwickshire Yeomanry Museum.

His attempts to ship it back to the UK were bogged down in red tape and delay, including an unscheduled stop-over in Belgium, where the piece was inadvertently unloaded and impounded as a weapon of war. Following negotiations between

the British, New Zealand and Belgium governments, the Warwicks finally got their by now fragile trophy in 1998.

After expert and enthusiastic restoration of the 1-tonne 75mm-bore field gun at the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill (Cpl (now Sgt) Gareth Crowe REME did the heavy-metal work, Maj Kevin Lane RA the fussy stuff), the weapon has finally been installed in a special First World War display in the basement of Warwick Court House, home of the regimental museum.

On hand to receive the gun from Dr Fox was Sir Jerry Wiggin, whose father was wounded twice in the 1917 charge.

• The regiment's modern successors are A Squadron, The Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry based in the West Midlands and 67 Signal Squadron (QOWWY) based in Stratford-upon-Avon. The latter wear a fern emblem to mark the Warwickshire Yeomanry's long association with the New Zealand Army.

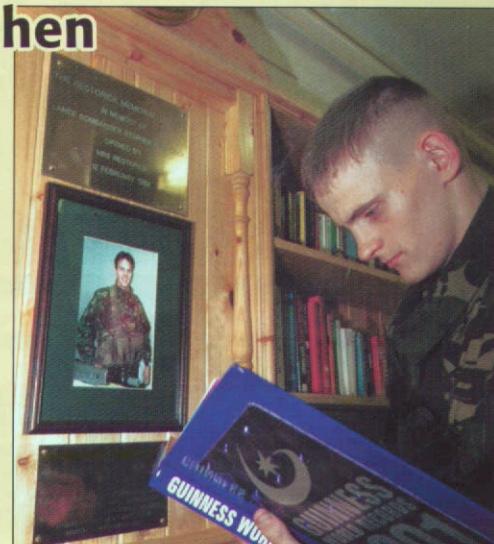
Tributes to Stephen

AS a lasting legacy to future battalions based at Bessbrook in South Armagh, the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment added an internet cafe to the library created in memory of **Lbdr Stephen Restorick**, the last soldier killed by terrorist action in Northern Ireland.

And to replenish the shelves, the battalion contacted publishers who donated 1,200 books. **Pte Alan Randall**, 1 QLR, right, looks at a new addition to the library in front of a picture of Stephen.

• A memorial to Stephen and **Cpl Michael Boddy**, R Anglian, who was killed in Belfast on August 17, 1972, has been dedicated at Bishop's Road Gardens in their home town of Peterborough. It consists of rocks from the Province within a circle of bricks. Water bubbles from the top rock.

Look out for: **A Regimental History of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards** on CD-Rom by Archive Britain. Priced at £11.44, it is available by calling 023 9275 6275 or visiting www.archivebritain.com



Picture: Cpl Matt Woodhouse

Over there: A party of 30 sponsored by HQ London District tramped across the American Civil War battlefields of Antietam – also known as Sharpsburg – and Gettysburg to draw on lessons still relevant to warfare.

Legends of the regiments and corps

29

The Guards Museum, Birdcage Walk



Showing now: "Sherry's" doll and, inset, the Cromwellian Dunbar Medal
Pictures: Steve Dock

Doll went to Berlin

A SMALL pink celluloid doll is one of the more unlikely exhibits on display in the Guards Museum opposite St James's Park in the heart of London.

Thought to be booby-trapped, it was picked up by the late Gds "Sherry" Sharrard, Gren Gds, a Dunkirk survivor who "adopted" the doll and hung it in his tank all the way to Berlin. It was with him at Nuremberg, where Sherry was a guard at the trials.

Look out also for what is believed to be the first medal awarded for a specific action – the Battle of Dunbar on September 3, 1650. The Coldstream Guards are the only surviving unamalgamated regiment to have earned the Dunbar Medal, which bears the head of Oliver Cromwell.

HIRSUTE DUKE

Among artifacts of Field Marshal Arthur, Duke of Wellington, the 15th Colonel of the First, or Grenadier, Regiment of Foot Guards, is a locket of his hair, pictured. Or is it?

Apparently his valet, who was with him when he died, sold so many of the Duke's locks that it is reckoned the victor of Waterloo had more hair than a horse.

Watch out also for a special exhibition opening in February to mark the Queen's 60 years as Colonel of the Grenadiers.

The Guards Museum is in Birdcage Walk, close to Wellington Barracks. It is open seven days a week from 1000 to the last admission at 1530. Entry charge is £2 for adults (children are free). The nearest underground station, at St James's Park, is a few minutes' walk away. You can contact the museum on 0207 414 3271.





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Drives like a dream . . .

Our man's eloquent verdict on 'probably the most beautiful car in the world'

IT happened on March 15, 1961 in the Parc des Eaux Vives overlooking Lake Geneva, writes **Syd Taylor**.

Sparking off headlines worldwide about the sensational new 150 mph Jaguar that looked like nothing else on earth, the E-Type was revealed to the world's press – and a million dreams were born.

No car better reflected its era than the E-Type and it was as much a part of the Sixties as the Beatles and Twiggy. People who wouldn't know a Ferrari from a Ford knew about the extraordinary E-Type Jaguar – the logical culmination of a line of sporting automobiles that began with Jaguar's ambition to succeed in racing.

Quite simply, it was the most exciting sports car ever made.

I got an inkling of what those Geneva Motor Show visitors must have felt when I drove that very same gunmetal grey car. The same car that Jaguar's Bob Berry had driven through the night from Coventry in a mad dash to Switzerland all those years ago – arriving in the nick of time, just as the launch was about to start.

"Good God, Berry," said a furious Sir William Lyons. "I thought you weren't going to get here."

I drove the thoroughly and authentically restored car (which had languished in a barn for 22 years) thanks to the generosity of Nick Goldthorp, director of Classic Motor Cars of Bridgnorth, and to the car's long-time custodian – Jaguar historian Philip Porter. Undimmed by time, the E-Type's charisma is a magnet to the red-blooded everywhere. No car before or since has managed to combine such aesthetic sublimity with such devastating performance in a package priced within the reach of the ordinary man with a twinkle in his eye.

What it was that inspired those mentors of style, Sir William Lyons and designer, aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayers, we'll never know, but images of John Cobb's Mobil Napier Railton and Dan Dare's Anastasia spring to mind.

Whatever it was, Jaguar had out-Ferrari-ed Ferrari and every other supercar manufacturer in terms of sheer desirability of the product – and undercut them on price by an astonishing margin.

It's not the easiest of cars to get into. You straddle a wide sill and sit on a small poorly-shaped and thinly-padded seat



The First E-Type Jaguar

Tech Spec

Engine In-line six-cylinder 3781cc dohc, three SU carburetors, 265bhp.

Transmission Rear-wheel drive, four-speed Moss gearbox (no synchro on first).

Brakes Discs front and back

Suspension Front: wish-

bones and torsion bars, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent with lower wishbones and upper drive-shaft links, anti-roll bar. Coil springs and telescopic dampers.

Weight 1219kg

Performance Top speed 150 mph

1961 price Coupé £2,196 19s 2d; Open two-seater £2,097 15s 10d.

Factnote Between 1962 and 1974, 72,529 E-Types were produced.

pushed back to give just enough room behind the thin wood-rimmed wheel with its drilled alloy spokes and emblem of a jaguar's head at the centre.

Facing you is a haphazard array of toggle-switches and white-on-black Smith's instruments set into an embossed aluminium dash panel, all combining to give the interior its unique character – typical of the days before ergonomic obsessions stole a motor-car's soul.

A glance in the mirror affords a view through the authentic, weight-saving Perspex rear window.

– a view ever so slightly distorted, so that one might imagine seeing the very mists of time deform and ultimately dissolve the present, leaving a rearward perspective that shines with the glory of yesteryear.

As for the driving experience, the dynamics are so unlike the point-and-squirt zippiness of today's sports cars. This car craves a long uncongested road so that, like a lazy cat, it can unwind at leisure – and being an E-Type there seems no limit to the potential of this marvellous car and engine package.

Unlike many other high-performance cars of that era it is tractable and docile, coping well with today's traffic conditions – which is all for the good because the four-speed Moss gearbox, with no synchromesh on first, demands careful changes.

But all that really doesn't matter

because when you open the throttles, the surge of that straight six 3.8 XK 'S' engine – which we now know had bigger valves and was gas-flowed to give another 20-25 horsepower over a standard engine – propels you forward quickly enough to despatch modern hot hatches which invariably snap at your heels.

Brakes, it must be said, don't have an instant effect even though the E-Type was the first ever production car to use discs on all wheels, but persist and eventually retardation follows.

One should not forget that the E-Type appeared at the same time as the new motorways, on which this secret prototype underwent high-speed testing.

If ever a car was designed for such roads it was this: if ever a road was designed for such a car it was the motorway in its glorious unregulated days.

After some magnificent driving and photography we called it a day and returned 9600 HP to CMC. Then the rain came in torrents.

Our last sight of this historic motorcar was through a rain-drenched windscreen – and the shape of probably the most beautiful car in the world wavered – almost dissolving like a phantom: for the Jaguar E-Type is, more than any other car, a dream incarnate.

● Thanks must go to Nick Goldthorp of Classic Motor Cars of Bridgnorth (01746 765804) and to Philip Porter, the owner of 9600 HP, for giving me permission to carry out this test.

Dream on . . .

Eighties throwback

DIGITAL Tables' Lizard Lounge is an authentic reproduction of the tabletop arcade consoles that achieved cult status with titles like Space Invaders and Donkey Kong during the 1980s.

Featuring a smoked-glass top, built-in sound system, two-player control consoles and even a coin mechanism, the Lizard Lounge sports a truly retro-look.

However, internally the table is anything but retro. Rather than using the circuit designs of the original tables, which would limit each console to playing a single game, Digital Tables have opted to employ PC technology.

The table is fitted with the latest high-specification PC and equipped with emulation software capable of playing virtually every original arcade game on the market.

And because the Lizard Lounge runs the latest Windows 2000 operating system, the table can do anything you would expect a top-of-the-range computer to do.

It comes complete with its own wireless keyboard and mouse, so you can run your office, surf the internet, catch-up on your e-mail and even play your collection of MP3 tracks.



Each system is hand-built and can be customised to suit any requirements.

① £2,995, from www.digitaltables.com (0208 7420755).

Switched on . . .

O-MAN! I WISH I HAD ONE OF THESE



PUMP UP THE VOLUME

AN essential piece of kit for the inquisitive, the *Cyber Spy* enhances soundwaves by 40 decibels - allowing users to hear conversations usually out of earshot. The *Cyber Spy* fits neatly in the palm of your hand and can easily be concealed from others.

① £6.95, from www.gadgetshop.com (0800 7838343).



JUST FOR THE RECORD

THE *Rome II* MP3 player allows users to listen to tracks downloaded from the internet on any stereo with a built-in tape player.

Using the adaptor provided, even the most primitive of car stereos can be transformed into a state-of-the-art digital sound system.

Also fully portable, the *Rome II* can store up to two hours of CD-quality music on its 64mb memory.

① £199.95, from www.firebox.com (0870 2414289).

Game on . . .

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE, PC

THE chances are that if you've played the prequel, you've already run out and bought a copy of *Commandos 2: Men of Courage*.

However, for those of you who are currently basking in the heat of Oman or are strangers to Eidos Interactive's award-winning series, read on . . .

As in *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines*, players take control of an élite group of soldiers who must go deep into enemy territory to complete a series of mission-based objectives.

The six characters from the first game have been joined by three new characters: Lupin the thief, Natasha the seductress and Whiskey the dog. Characters now share abilities but have their own personalised, unrivalled skills.

Set against the backdrop of the Second World War, the game's locations, which include the infamous Colditz prison and bridge on the River Kwai, as well as the Eiffel Tower and the Japanese aircraft carrier *Shinano*, are huge and gamers have complete freedom to explore.

Each of the environments is fully interactive – characters can pinch enemy uniforms for disguise, steal weapons and ammunition, swing from overhead cables, climb through windows and swim underwater.

The levels are also littered with jeeps, tanks, boats and even an elephant that can be



used to assist players in their efforts to successfully complete each mission.

Combining action and strategy, *Commandos 2* requires careful planning and investigation. Advanced artificial intelligences make the German soldiers tricky adversaries to outwit – they can see, hear and smell your every move.

But it is the game's state-of-the-art 3D-engine that looks set to book *Commandos 2* the number one spot in the gaming charts.

Fully rotatable internal and external scenarios mean that players can view the game's stunning graphics from the angle of their choice. It looks good and it plays even better.

OUT NOW

VERDICT: Unlike so many sequels, *Commandos 2* lives up to expectations. All the winning ingredients of *Behind Enemy Lines* remain and are complemented by a new 3D engine that gives the game's 12 missions a cinematic feel.

9/10

COMMANDOS 2

SOLDIER has joined forces with Eidos Interactive to offer readers a fantastic *Commandos 2* giveaway.

For your chance to win one of five copies of the game, simply answer the following question:

What is the full title of Eidos Interactive's conflict simulator?

- a) *Commandos 2: Men of Valour*
- b) *Commandos 2: Men of Courage*
- c) *Commandos 2: Men of Gallantry*

Send your answers on a postcard to Eidos Interactive competition, **Soldier**, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by December 1. Usual rules apply.



MECHCOMMANDER 2, PC

MICROSOFT'S *MechCommander 2* puts gamers in charge of a company of gun-toting warriors who have become entangled in a fierce battle for supremacy.

As commander of the mechanised brigade, players observe the battlefield from above and must use their strategic knowledge and tactical skills to shift the balance of power in a war-torn region known as the Chaos March.

Players have a fleet of 16 Battle-Mechs at their disposal, which range from the nimble Raven, equipped with sensors and elec-

OUT NOW

tronic countermeasures, to the massive Atlas, laden with deadly firepower.

Fully three-dimensional, the game's state-of-the-art terrain is completely interactive – you can knock down trees, blow through walls and crush anything that crosses your path.

VERDICT: Whether calling in an air-strike to stall defeat or laying siege to an enemy gun turret, *MechCommander 2* gives players complete control. This is digitization at its best, but remember, if you lose, you only have yourself to blame. 7/10

GRAND PRIX 3 – 2000 SEASON, PC OUT NOW

THIS add-on pack for *Geoff Cramm's Grand Prix 3* features all the real teams, tracks and races of the 2000 championship season.

One for the racing purists, the game boasts the new USA and Malaysia circuits and implements the 2000 F1A rules – including "stop/go" penalties.

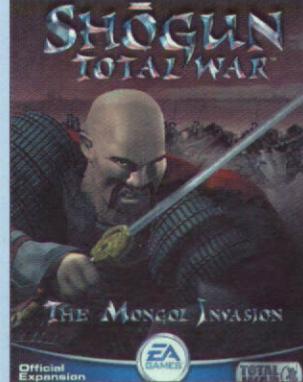
Other extras include more diverse weather conditions, a spectator viewpoint and a wide spectrum of new camera angles.

VERDICT: A slick racing simulator but this latest add-on offers very little in the way of novel gameplay.

6/10



SHOGUN: THE MONGOL INVASION, PC OUT NOW



VERDICT: A true classic and a must-have for strategy buffs.

8/10

FEUDAL Japan is under attack from marauding Mongol hordes in Electronic Arts' expansion pack for *Shogun: Total War*.

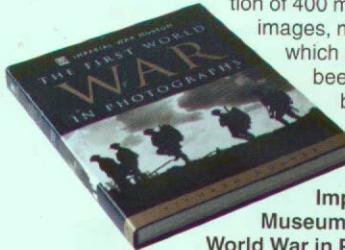
Taking on the role of a clan leader, *Mongol Invasion* gives gamers the chance to defend Japan against the might of Kublai Khan or play as the barbaric invaders. This add-on boasts an array of new and improved features that will reintroduce players to the epic size battles of the original title.

New missions and improved artificial intelligence combine to make *Mongol Invasion* a worthy contender in the battle for top conflict-simulator.

History chronicled in black and white

ALMOST a century has passed, yet the faces that stare out of this book's pages command your attention. They still have the power to look right through you. This magnificent collection of 400 monochrome images, many of which have never been published before, has been brought together in

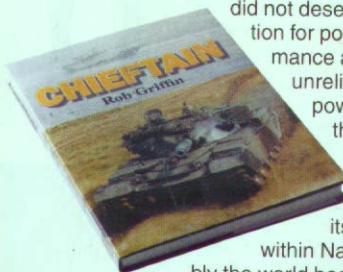
Imperial War Museum: The First World War in Photographs (Carlton, £25). Richard Holmes's follow-up to *The Second World War in Photographs* presents the images year by year and includes sections on the build-up to and aftermath of the war.



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Hail to the unjustly maligned Chieftain

ARMY cadet instructor Rob Griffin spent almost 25 years working with Army fighting vehicles including the Chieftain tank and he puts that experience to good use in *Chieftain* (Crowood, £19.95). He argues that it did not deserve its reputation for poor performance and for the unreliability of its power-pack. On the contrary, he says, it was by far the best of its generation within Nato and probably the world because of its mighty gun and armour, as the Kuwaitis proved in the 1991 Gulf War. The book includes full details of the fate of every one built.

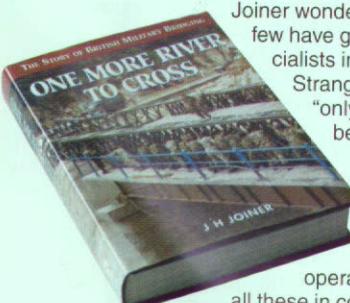


Classic tribute to sapper specialists

FIFTY VCs have been awarded to Royal Engineers, but in his history of military bridging, *One More River to Cross* (Leo Cooper, £25), Col Jim Joiner wonders why so few have gone to specialists in this role.

Strangely, he says, "only six have been awarded for supreme gallantry during bridging and rafting operations, and all these in connection

with operations in France in the First World War". This well-illustrated book will serve both as the definitive record and as a worthy tribute to those who have performed this often dangerous work with great skill and ingenuity.



Not fade away

The extraordinary life-stories of nine Chelsea Pensioners give a revealing insight into what it was like to serve as a soldier in the 20th century

Soldiers: Fighting Men's Lives 1901-2001 by Philip Ziegler (Chatto & Windus, £20).

Review: Anthony Stone

NINE men, nine remarkable lives, one common thread.

They all served in the British Regular Army and became Chelsea Pensioners and each made a contribution to putting the Great in Great Britain. Between them they give a sense of what it was like to have been a British soldier in the 20th century.

Their lives have been so rich, so unassumingly heroic, that one can scarcely believe that such giants are with us now, dressed in scarlet, walking around the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Take Albert Alexandre. Orphaned at six, he started working in a quarry when he was 11. Four years later he falsified his age, joined the Army and fought at Passchendaele – one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War.

He endured months of bombardment and brutal fighting without a scratch. Of the thousand or so soldiers who went into battle with him, more than a third died.

It's not a period on which Albert cares to reflect. "I would not say if I killed a German – that's something that I never said to anyone. I don't like to think about it. All I can say is that it was hand-to-hand fighting and you had to defend yourself."

As a gunner in the Royal Artillery, Albert stayed on and served the Empire in far-flung outposts, encountering such enemies of the Crown as the Fakir of Ipi in Waziristan, northern India.

His personal life after the war was not without tragedy: two of his sons died in infancy. But through it all he has borne his burdens with equanimity. When the author interviewed him, just shy of Albert's 100th birthday, he radiated contentment, despite suffering blindness and poor hearing.

The subjects of this book joined the Army



Now and then: In-Pensioner Albert Alexandre and (inset) serving as a bombardier in 1929

between the years 1917 and 1940. They enlisted when the British Empire, in geographical terms, was at its zenith.

Those were the days when you really could join the Army and see the world. These young men, many from impoverished backgrounds, were dispatched overseas to defend the Empire, serving over great tracts of the earth's surface.

They served in peacetime in India, Ceylon, Malaya, Hong Kong, Malta, Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Aden, the Persian Gulf states, Libya, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Cameroons.

Their experiences and deeds are, by any standards, remarkable. But their true significance rests not on what they have done but in the standards they represent.

Self-discipline, obedience, conscientiousness and loyalty are not the most fashionable of virtues. The Pensioners are not the most fashionable of men. But they are virtues that have served the British Army well over many centuries and will be no less essential in any conflict in the future.

It is unsurprising that the final home for these great men, the Royal Hospital Chelsea, is not remotely gloomy. As their distinguished biographer Philip Ziegler says: "It is a happy place even though people go there to die, though some take 30 years."

Housing such indomitable spirits, how could it be otherwise?

No medals for secrecy

Invasion – Defending Britain from Attack
by Dan Cruickshank (Boxtree, £18.99).

Review: Chris Horrocks

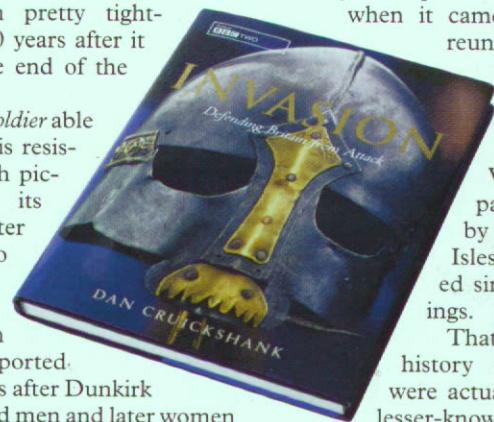
LEAF through this informative and entertaining companion to a BBC2 TV series and you come across a chapter with the eye-catching title "Britain's Secret Army".

So secret was the Auxiliary Force, set up in 1940 as a guerrilla army in the event of a German invasion, that its members managed to remain pretty tight-lipped about it for 50 years after it was disbanded at the end of the war.

Only in 1995 was *Soldier* able to tell the story of this resistance movement, with pictures of some of its would-be heroes, after we were invited to attend a reunion "at one of its operational bases – somewhere in England". As we reported then: "In the dark days after Dunkirk cells of six hand-picked men and later women – from clerks and chief constables to peers and poachers – were trained to go to ground if the Germans invaded, emerging from secret underground bunkers when least expected to cause havoc with the enemy occupiers."

Their need to maintain secrecy under cover of membership of the Home Guard resulted in some unfortunate, if now amusing, misunderstandings.

One wife thought her husband was seeing another woman when he kept disappearing at night without explanation.



There were other negative spin-offs. "Instant death or torture would have been their lot if captured, so no records were kept – which meant they missed out on defence medals after the war," we reported.

We added, not without irony: "This official secrecy also posed a problem years later when it came to tracing them for reunions."

Dan Cruickshank's narrative covers the period from 1066 to the end of the Second World War and puts paid to the belief still held by some that the British Isles have never been invaded since the Battle of Hastings.

That turning-point in our history is the last time we were actually conquered; among lesser-known incursions which we rebuffed took place in 1360 (the French at Winchelsea), 1595 (the Spanish at Mousehole), 1778 (the Americans at Whitehaven) and 1797 (the French at Fishguard).

Thanks to publishers Boxtree we have THREE copies of this book to give away in a competition. Just answer the question below and send it to "Invasion" Competition, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot GU11 2DU by November 30. Usual rules apply.

Question: Who was the last military leader to conquer England?

IN BRIEF

The Full Monty: Montgomery of Alamein 1887-1942 by Nigel Hamilton. A review of this warts-and-all biography, plus an interview with the author and competition to win a copy signed by him, will appear in the December edition of *Soldier*. (Penguin hardback, £25.)

Medal Yearbook 2002 For the first time, the lineage of regiments is included in this essential handbook for collectors, £12.99.

Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free book-search; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Postal address: Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, UK (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 1315). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>

dealers and hobbyists. It also includes an expanded section on current Commonwealth awards. (Token, £16.95.)

Lights Out by Charles Millman. Look no further for a Christmas stocking-filler than this little paperback of gently amusing Army anecdotes. The author has undertaken to make a "sizeable" donation to the Army Benevolent Fund from the proceeds. Cheques/POs

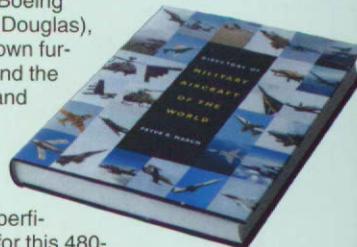
for £5.50 plus postage (45p UK, 92p Europe or £1.53 Zones 1 and 2), should be made out to "The Press On The Lake" and sent to LO, Press On The Lake, Stonar, Sandwich, CT13 9ND.

Forrard: the Story of the East Riding Yeomanry by Paul Mace. After helping delay the German advance so others could be evacuated to Britain via Dunkirk in 1940, those who avoided being taken prisoner formed the nucleus of a virtually new regiment which spent four years training to take part in the D-Day operation. First-hand accounts bring the story to life. (Leo Cooper, £16.95.)

Superb – but you have to know where to look

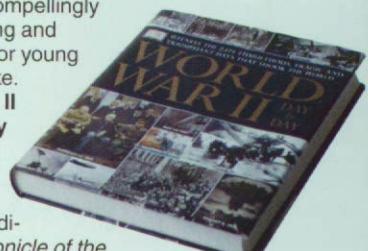
LOOK for the Apache Longbow in Peter March's **Directory of Military Aircraft of the World** (Cassell, £45) and you won't find it under A or even L in the index. You have to know enough to pinpoint Boeing (McDonnell Douglas), then read down further still to find the GKN Westland sub-entry.

But this should irritate only the most superficial reader, for this 480-page book, all-colour for the first time, is a superb guide to all the principal types of aircraft believed to be in service at the time of writing with the world's air arms, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.



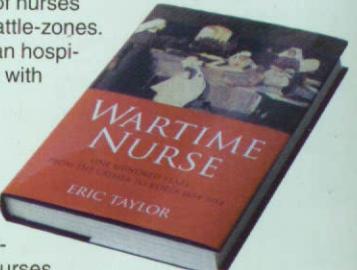
Here is the news – of the Second World War

WHOEVER first came up with the "Chronicle" idea of presenting history, as it unfolded, in an easily-digestible series of tabloid-style newspaper stories in book form deserves an award for services to popular literature. The format is compellingly page-turning and educative for young and old alike. **World War II Day by Day** (Dorling Kindersley, £25), is a revised edition of *Chronicle of the Second World War*, first published in 1990 under the Longmans imprint. Its 718 pages include timeline charts, a who's who of key personnel, and many photographs, maps and posters.



Angels tread boldly into battle-zones

CONFLICT witnesses man's inhumanity to man at its most obscene, but also mankind's noblest qualities. In **Wartime Nurse: One Hundred Years from the Crimea to Korea 1854-1954** (Hale, £19.99), Eric Taylor recounts the exploits of nurses working in battle-zones. From Crimean hospitals seething with cholera and awash with sewage, through to the South African wars of 1899-1902 when nurses calmly dressed wounds in the streets while shells exploded around them, and finally to Korea when nurses were in action officially, this is history steeped in heroism.



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SOLDIER to soldier

Cherish the best

THIS month we as a nation pay tribute to those who have fallen in war.

For some, the act of remembering their supreme sacrifice will call to mind other noble qualities – courage, loyalty, a sense of duty, self-discipline.

These virtues, which shine like beacons from the Chelsea Pensioners whose lives are celebrated in a book reviewed on Page 70, are deemed to be less fashionable in today's society.

If that is true, then it would suggest our Armed Forces have become a breed apart from the society they are called on to defend.

Both the Prime Minister and the Defence Secretary paid special tributes to the Services last month.

◆◆◆

"There is no greater strength for a British Prime Minister and the British nation at a time like this," said Tony Blair, "than to know that the forces we are calling on are among the very best in the world. . ."

The theme was echoed by Geoff Hoon, who said: "We place immense trust in their courage, their sense of duty, and their professionalism. We take immense pride in the fact that they never let us down."

◆◆◆

Writer A N Wilson, commenting on the story that one of the PM's sons wanted to join the Forces, was even more fulsome, saying he had never met a Serviceman whom he had not found "admirable and likeable" and that the boy would be "attaching himself to the one profession in which the British lead the world".

"This is not a piece of false patriotism," he stressed. "British Servicemen are, by pretty general consent, the best in the business."

Wellington said: "I consider nothing in this country so valuable as the life and health of the British soldier."

And there's the rub. If the qualities which we honour in the fallen still exist today, they must be cherished – in the good times as well as the bad.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Too dangerous for speculation

... when it could be so close to reality

I HAVE to confess I find it difficult to write a column about living with the Army at the moment, with the current uncertainties about our participation in Afghanistan.

Given the speed at which events can move, anything I say now could be out of date and inappropriate by the time you read it. Thanks to our slightly longer flash-to-bang production timings, instant response is not a luxury available to us monthly magazine wallahs.

This could not, of course, be more different from our colleagues in the national daily press and broadcast media, who are so up-to-the-minute they almost can't wait for something to happen next.

Once they have done a story from every conceivable angle, they look for the next one – so it's off with the bombing and on with the ground forces, please. And if no one obliges them with some action to report – over and over and over again – they fill the empty spaces with that most dangerous media pastime, speculation.

Dangerous because sooner or later they may get too close to the truth for comfort, and, in the case of our nearest and dearest, for safety.

It doesn't occur to today's news-hungry 24-hour journalists that speculation is not a good idea for any of us. Freedom of the Press, it seems, means they are free to frighten the general public with doom-laden scenarios, worry Service families sick about possible involvement of their loved ones in any action, endanger lives by revealing too much and bore us all rigid with maps, diagrams and gizmos.

Then there's the ghoul factor, commonly referred to now as public interest. In the first weeks of the current crisis the Army Families Federation received several calls from the media asking to put them in touch with Army families so they could share their feelings with the world.

Needless to say, it is not AFF's policy to expose Army families in this way. We politely pointed out that nothing had



Sue Bonney is
Editor of the AFF
Families Journal

happened yet, and that most Army families were doing what they usually do – just getting on with it.

Several persistent phone calls later, a colleague of mine was finally moved to explode: "Listen, it's our job to represent Army families, not exploit them."

And what if things do happen and there is bad news for us? In the days before instant world communication, we were always told "if you hear it on the radio or TV, it's got nothing to do with you".

The Army usually managed to contact families before news reached the Press. Sadly this may no longer be possible. You are as likely to hear bad news via CNN and Sky, probably ringing you up to ask how you feel.

I know there will be many Army spouses and families out there worried about the possibilities ahead.

I know how that feels. All I can offer is what I learned through experience in previous times: take it day by day; trust your soldiers to do their job and trust their training; try to avoid all those news programmes – you'll know when it matters; and rely on each other. AFF is here to help if you need us.

So are your unit welfare officers, the HIVES, the Army Welfare Service, SSAFA Forces Help, and your friends and neighbours. We can't change what is happening. We can only get through it. Whatever "it" may turn out to be.

● The November issue of the AFF Families Journal, pictured right, should now be available from a unit near you.





Don't need this F-word to signify my sex

I WRITE to enquire when the Army Cadet Force is likely to come into the 21st century. I refer to the use of W or F before the rank of female officers and adult instructors.

Prize letter

The ACF appears to find it necessary to label the female of the species. Even the Cadet Training Centre, bless them, call me a W/Capt and put (F) afterwards to make sure we all know what sex I am. They even put a W on name badges in case there is any doubt as to gender.

The Regulars do not find it necessary and neither does the Territorial Army. How would my male counterparts react if their rank was preceded by M? My commission, signed by the Queen, does not use either W or F to signify my sex. — **Capt A Twinn, Middlesbrough.**

▲ Lt Col Martin Newman, Chief of Public Relations (Cadets), Cadets Branch, HQ Land Command, responds:

The use of prefixes to define the gender of female adult leaders and cadets in the ACF has been used in the past to help identify the logistical and accommodation needs of individuals as well as to ensure gender balance on courses and training.

It has been the case particularly at the Cadet Training Centre (CTC), Frimley Park, where it is necessary to ensure that people are placed in the correct accommodation — sometimes

first names can be confusing and lead to embarrassing situations. However, this was only for internal administrative use.

This issue has only recently arisen and orders are being issued to ensure that the ranks of all ACF leaders and cadets are published in the same fashion as the Army and the Territorial Army — without gender identification.

The use of prefixes was for administrative purposes only and in no way reflects on our high regard for our female colleagues who play such a vital role in running the ACF and our excellent female cadets who make a major contribution to the Army image.

It's still too hot out here for regular black boots

I WOULD like to comment on the response given by PJHQ regarding the subject of footwear for troops deployed to Oman at the beginning of September ("Combat boots will be appropriate for Oman's cooler autumn months", Sept).

It stated that this was the cooler season and, therefore, regular issue black boots would be adequate.

Since arriving in theatre the temperature has, to my knowledge, not fallen below 40C. On one day in mid-September we recorded 56 degrees.

These figures don't include the high 70s recorded daily in the field kitchens (respect to the chefs who are doing a fantastic job in extreme circumstances).

Soldiers in issue black boots are at best uncomfortable and at worst suffering complaints requiring medical attention. Perhaps PJHQ could tell us why one soldier — a WO2 — had to discard his issue black boots because the soles and heels melted (we've got a photo to prove it).

Only way home was to pay my own way

WHEN my squadron deployed on Saif Sareea 2 we were told there would be no R&R flights to the UK but we could have five days' local exercise leave (LEL) at the Sallalah Hilton.

When the rest of our regiment arrived a month later rumours were rife that we would get UK R&R. However, for 187 Squadron, four places per troop were allocated and names drawn out of a hat.

We later learned that other squadrons which had just deployed were sending people home on R&R ten days later.

The reply also stated that in extreme temperatures use should be made of air-conditioned areas at all locations. I have so far identified air conditioning only at JFLogC (HQ BRITFOR), whose personnel, ironically, had desert boots.

As a "footnote", standard issue green socks further aggravate feet problems suffered here. — **SSgt Thomas, BFPO 770.**

I AND many soldiers from my regiment felt the need to buy desert boots. Indeed, the regiment, in common with other 4 Armoured Brigade units, has positively encouraged us to do so.

Order forms were even circulated so correct sizes could be ordered by the PRI shop. Why? Because there is concern that issue boots may not function properly in desert conditions.

I think soldiers deploying to Oman have every right to be concerned. As a commander I only hope my soldiers don't suffer foot problems. — **Officer com-**

manding squadron, BFPO 36 (name and address supplied).

AT least one soldier who deployed on Saif Sareea on June 4 was not issued with desert boots. Despite assurances from his CO that he would receive them, my husband has had to make do with regular combat boots as he takes a size 13. — **Army wife (name supplied), Bicester.**

Cost of 'must-attend' functions can be cause of dread in the sergeants' mess

I HAVE been a member of four different sergeants' messes. My average basic compulsory mess bill has been £45 a month (£480 a year), not including the cost of functions or mess dress (average £400 plus subsequent dry cleaning bills).

Many functions are "OTA" — ordered to attend — resulting in bills of as much as £140 (or £1,680 a year). Throw in a summer ball and Christmas draw and the annual figure can easily exceed £2,000.

I have seen newly-promoted sergeants dreading showing their mess bills to their wives, fearing the reaction when they realise that promotion has left them worse off financially.

I've seen a sergeant with four young children pleading poverty to be excused attendance, only to be told that the mess would lend him the money — hardly a sensible solution.

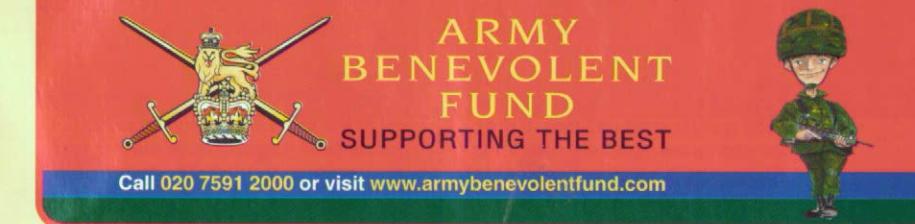
He was told that failure to attend would

PISCATOR



"Here's a hot tip for Saif Sareea 2: Just sprinkle foot and body powder round yer bivvy. It keeps the bugs away."

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result in extra duties. I have seen unhappy soldiers and their even unhappier spouses sitting through functions they could not afford.

As proud as I am to have reached the sergeants' mess, I believe that if sufficient members do not wish to attend a function, it should be cancelled. Let demand, not fear of retribution, decide.

Can a member be forced to attend a function? If not, is "punishment" for non-attendance legal? I have put this question to committee members, but unsurprisingly received no reply. Can you help? — **SNCO (name and address supplied).**

IF I were to be promoted to sergeant, my

pay would increase by approximately £40 a month after tax. However, the extra cost of being a sergeants' mess member is around £50 a month, plus the cost of mess dress and many compulsory functions.

This would effectively result in a pay cut. As I am too old to be considered a potential artificer, my rank ceiling is sergeant (with a few exceptions) and as the job I would do as a sergeant is the same as I am doing now, there is little or no incentive for promotion.

Surely the pay increases between ranks should be greater to take into account the extra costs associated with these ranks. — **Cpl A P Mapplethorpe, Woolwich.**



OFFICER or other rank; serving or civvy... Soldier welcomes your letters. Please keep them brief and to the point. If not e-mailed, we'd prefer them to be typed but if they are handwritten, put names, addresses and in block capitals (not necessary for publication). A prize from the our gift collection will be awarded each month if we judge that a letter merits it. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to amend for length, clarity or style. Anonymous letters will not be considered.

PS...

Clerks are valued

I HAVE some sympathy with SSgt Lee's perception that military clerks feel undervalued (Oct). This is not uncommon in jobs that provide a service and is true of other parts of the Army. He quotes the example of chefs.

It is also true that military clerks often work extremely long hours and we are attempting to address this through our Soldier Manning Strategy Paper published this month. I can reassure him that the work of military clerks is highly valued by the chain of command and it is recognised that their contribution to military effectiveness at all levels is critical.

I would like to correct SSgt Lee on a couple of points. Firstly, we offer the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (NVQs at Level 2) to all our soldiers in Phase 2 training entirely at public expense. We will soon be introducing the Advanced Modern Apprenticeship (NVQs at Level 3) to class 1 soldiers, again at public expense. Secondly, we offer the chance for SNCOs to qualify as NVQ D32/33 Assessors, Management Accountants, Chartered Secretaries and to gain membership of the International Association of Bookkeepers. — **Lt Col D B McCulloch, Directorate of Staff and Personnel Support (Army).**

Wife's view of tours

HAVING family connections in the Royal Navy, I consider Army personnel are lucky to have an R&R package.

I served five years in the Army and was glad of the two weeks' R&R I received mid-tour. Those who went home on the first spaces in the R&R plot still spent nearly five months away. Operational tours are hated because separation causes heartache to families and Service personnel alike.

Where R&R is not available more emphasis should be placed on informing families and more time allocated for phone calls. It doesn't compensate for the strain of long separations but it is the other side to being married to Forces personnel and why there is an X-factor in the pay and separation allowance. — **Army wife, Wilts (name, address supplied).**

My pay didn't rise

REGARDING "Forget Pay 2000, my gripe is LSSA" (Sept), the misinformed writer says "everyone gets a pay rise". As a Class 2 Teleop T G R Signals, my pay stayed the same as a signaller and would only rise when (a) I got promoted or (b) got an annual increase. Luckily I have been promoted, so more money for me.

As for him complaining about LSSA (Longer Separated Service Allowance), I agree that every exercise should count, but as I am currently deployed on Saif Sareea 2 and get paid higher LSSA, my complaints are probably not so strong as his. — **L Cpl Shaun Brierly, 204 Sig Sqn.**



EFI camcorder is £160 more than VAT-free model

I AM serving at Butmir Camp in Sarajevo as the OC of the UK Lynx Detachment. The facilities available are excellent and my only bone of contention is the prices in the EFI (Expeditionary Force Institutes).

They are supposed to be VAT-free, but this is blatantly not the case. I have been looking at buying a digital video camera. The price in the EFI is just over £800 for a Panasonic model. In the EFI there is a camcorder magazine in which the same model is advertised for £749 inclusive of VAT (less VAT it comes to £637).

Why is there a difference of more than £160? – Capt Tim Geering, BFPO 543.

▲ **Mike Sheriff, UK and International Director, Naafi, responds:**

I cannot comment on a specific pricing case in EFI shops. Capt Geering states that EFI prices are not VAT-free; I would like to clarify that we do not charge VAT on goods in EFI shops.

I can assure him that the EFI, the uniformed branch of the Naafi, is there to support UK Forces deployed overseas. We are committed to providing leisure and retail facilities to the Armed Forces at home, at permanent bases abroad and to those on operational deployments worldwide. Naafi returns all of its profits to the Armed Forces either through dividend or by investing in new facilities. In the past 18 months Naafi has invested £1.5 million in new shops and junior ranks clubs in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The majority of personnel appreciate the facilities, the investment and the range of goods at the competitive prices we offer.

Why should Cyprus be twice as taxing?

I'M currently serving with the United Nations in Cyprus and have for the first time ordered goods over the internet to improve my quality of life here.

I have received three packages from the UK which were inspected by the Sovereign Base Area (SBA) Customs and released to me. Just recently, though, another parcel was detained by Customs because they say I owe VAT on it at ten per cent.

This means that I will, in effect, have to pay 27.5 per cent VAT in all as I have already paid UK VAT on the items.

I asked several people why we have to pay twice and no one seems to know. When I spoke to Customs they said that Cyprus VAT and UK VAT are different and that I will have to pay up before they release my parcel.

Please could someone explain why we have to pay 27.5 per cent VAT on our goods and which goods are subject to this tax. – N Young, Sennelager.

▲ **Jim Smart, SBA Customs, Cyprus, responds:**

Most people will be aware that Cyprus is seeking to join the European Union. Until it does, Cyprus VAT is not an EU tax, so VAT paid in the UK (or any other EU state) is of no relevance to the Republic of Cyprus, and tax is accordingly generally payable on imports.

This does mean, however, that a UK supplier sending goods to Cyprus can zero-rate the supply as a direct export from the EU. When placing an order with a UK supplier you should make it clear that you are a non-EU resident and that the goods can be sent VAT-free. If the supplier expresses doubts, refer him to UK VAT Notice 703, which he can obtain from his local UK VAT office.

Many suppliers, especially where low-

value goods are concerned, are not prepared to zero-rate the sale as it is outside their normal routine and seen to be more complicated than just charging VAT.

This applies particularly to internet sales which, being largely automated, are often unable to cope with these circumstances. It pays to insist that goods are zero-rated, but if the supplier doesn't agree your only options are to take your business elsewhere or pay "double" VAT.

As to which goods are subject to Cyprus VAT, the scope is virtually identical to the UK. Commonly imported goods such as children's clothing and books are zero-rated. There is, in addition, a general concession whereby VAT is waived on genuinely unsolicited gifts.

Time for an ombudsman?

DURING my Army career I wrote many letters and spoke to many MPs about the poll tax, and more recently about the council tax contributions now paid by military personnel everywhere.

Let's be clear: I agree that it should be paid while serving in the UK.

But I questioned why civil servants working overseas with the military do not pay council tax in the same way as single and married Service people.

One official reply said the non-payment of poll/council tax was negotiated in a wage agreement. How on earth can a tax be negotiated? A tax is a tax on everyone.

Why should Service people pay council tax while in Northern Ireland where there is no council tax, or in any theatre of operations or on exercise outside Britain?

Why is there is no representative to raise these points with the authorities? Is it not time for the Armed Forces to have their own ombudsman to air grievances? – Capt (Retd) A T Sutton, W Midlands.

▲ **PS10 Army responds:**

Capt Sutton raises two issues regarding the practice of deducting Charges in Lieu of Council Tax (CILOCT). The first, why civil servants do not pay CILOCT, is a matter for the Central Civilian Personnel Pay and Allowances policy branch, which has provided the explanation on the right.

The second asks why we charge CILOCT to personnel serving overseas. That decision is based on the premise that Service personnel receive the same basic pay and charges regardless of location. It is also equitable since we are required to pay council tax, rates or service charges in all such theatres.

He should be aware that soldiers do not pay CILOCT in Northern Ireland, nor do they pay CILOCT for any accommodation used on operation or exercise. Married personnel do, however, remain liable to CILOCT for their families' accommodation, which is in line with normal council tax rules.

The Services have set up a task force which takes up these types of issue with Government direct and is still attempting to gain favourable rulings with regard to dual liability to council tax and CILOCT.

▲ **Central Civilian Personnel Pay and Allowances responds:**

While Service personnel have an entitlement to occupy publicly-provided accommodation wherever they serve, this is not so for civilian employees who are expected to house themselves privately at personal expense.

Because MoD civil servants are UK-based, it is expected that most of their careers will be spent in the UK. An overseas tour for most is pretty much a one-off occurrence. They will normally own a home in the UK to which they will return at the end of the tour.

Throughout their overseas service, they will maintain a UK home, paying a mortgage, insurance, water rates and council tax. Overseas accommodation is provided to civil servants free of all charges to prevent them having to maintain two homes concurrently.

It is recognised that some civil servants serve overseas for extensive periods – in some cases for an entire career – and may never return to a UK post. In such cases, free provision cannot be justified and a recent and fundamental review will lead to the introduction of charging for civil servants who are specially recruited for overseas service.

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, November 1976: Queues of men from the 1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment boarded Dakota aircraft at the Royal Netherlands Air Force base at Deelen to re-enact the exploits of their forebears in one of the final and most important sequences of the multi-million pound war epic *A Bridge Too Far*, directed by Sir Richard Attenborough.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, November 1951: How to store sledgehammers. Barrels form the centre of each stack, above. In this one at the Central Ordnance Depot at Didcot there are 26 layers, each of 40 hammers. The depot can supply everything from a half-inch grub-screw to a fully-equipped laundry... in fact, everything the soldier needs for his comfort.

Driving offence blights my career

I AM serving in Northern Ireland as a driver in the Royal Logistic Corps but want to transfer to the Royal Military Police.

I processed my application and those who recommend me included a senior officer in the RMP. I passed all the tests and was waiting to be given a date for a work attachment when Manning Records informed me that because I did not have an "exemplary" Service record (it was only very good) I would be unable to transfer.

The reason was because I have a regimental entry for a minor driving offence. It was not a criminal act, just a minor driving offence. I have been punished twice for a silly mistake I made when I was younger.

I feel let down and am seriously thinking of getting out of the Army. — Pte RLC (name supplied), Northern Ireland.

▲ Lt Col J W Lanham, HQ Provost Marshal (Army), responds:

The relevant regulations in this case are Queen's Regulations for the Army, Ch 9, Para 9.457, and Army General and Administrative Instructions, Ch 48, both of which defer to the requirement for the candidate to have an "exemplary" character.

This is further defined as requiring there to be "No award of military or civil fines recorded as a 'Regimental Entry'". There is no reference to circumstances which might result in dispensation being given, for example, because the offence for which the fine was awarded was, in the opinion of the individual,

"minor" or "not criminal". These regulations were readily available to the candidate had he chosen to research them before making his application.

Notwithstanding that, they certainly should have been brought to his attention by someone in authority at an early stage during his application for transfer, together with the fact that because the RMP is heavily over-recruited at the moment criteria for enlistment is being vigorously applied.

I am sorry this reply will not be what your correspondent wishes to hear and hope he will see his way to moving to another arm of the Service where he can find fulfilment.

PS . . .

Still in the Zone

I READ your piece on the continuing campaign to seek a just outcome for those Servicemen and women who were involved in often hazardous operations in the Canal Zone.

The photo at Abu Gamas (known as Clifty Corner) taken on a cold early dawn brought back memories. I was just out of the shot, commanding part of the cordon.

What is significant is that at least three of those in the picture (excluding Egyptians) are now dead. If the Government keeps up the delay in righting the wrong there will soon be few to give the award to. Maybe this is the tactic.

Ironically, my Egyptian attaché colleague, years later in the Sudan (1977) explained that one of his medals commemorated the same "campaign". He bore no grudge and was surprised at our omission.

Come on, ungrateful powers-that-be, give the rapidly diminishing few their rightful medal — or clasp — before someone creates another do-it-yourself medal. The late Col Pip Newton would rejoice in his Valhalla. — Col (Retd) John Bird, Lancashire.

Ant-ics roadshow

WE totally agree and sympathise with the letter "No help for dogs" (Oct).

We have a colleague who has grown extremely attached to a nest of ants, at present residing outside the patio door of his quarter.

He is keen to take them with him when he is posted but is deeply concerned that when he moves some of the ants will be left behind.

There should be some form of compensation for this type of move and the post-traumatic stress this will cause the ants when leaving their buddies behind. — SSgt R Perry (RLC) and Sgt R Towers (PWO), ACIO York.

Plight of MoD civvy

I understand that you mainly print letters from serving soldiers, but please consider this one.

MoD civvies support the Army in many ways but we are the lowest paid and depend on the limited overtime that is available.

In our unit we are told that there must be a 20 per cent cutback on the overtime budget. The knee-jerk reaction is to bring in outside support (by civilian firms) who are not checked for security and, of course, do not come under the same budget, so do not compare cost-wise. Even with extra duties we do not earn a fortune, but we serve with pride.

It is a shame we are so undervalued by the Army. I hope this letter will highlight our plight. — MoD civilian employee, Surrey (name and address supplied).

Vox pop

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

Sgt Henry Farquhar, AGC, at 51 Highland Regt (TA), Banja Luka

I think that they should be treated the same as married people, including accommodation. Long-term to me means three to five years or if they have a child, because that is another form of commitment. We live in a day and age where people do live together rather than get married.



Pte Aidan Reilly, 1 A and SH, Belfast

In an ideal world, perhaps they should have the same rights. But you'd have a hard job deciding what was a long-term relationship, and you have to draw a line somewhere or else it gets silly.



LCpl Nicola Tremarco, AGC(SBS), Banja Luka

We live in blocks and females can't go to male accommodation and vice-versa, which makes it hard to work at a relationship. I am in a long-term relationship and have asked for a surplus married quarter as we want to make sure we can live together before we get married.



ried, but we were refused because of the rules. Some people will get married just to get out of the singles block.

Capt Anna Bower, 27 RLC, Banja Luka

If they do it should be the complete package – all or nothing, including pension, medical and widow benefits. But there have to be some parameters about time in a relationship. What is long-term? I think the Australians have a policy of one year.



Sgt John Ineson, 2 RGJ, Banja Luka

No. Getting married in the Army is a big step. One of the benefits of being married are the married perks. Many soldiers have girlfriends while on tour but leave them at the

end of that tour. Why should they get the married perk when there has been no commitment? No commitment... no perk.

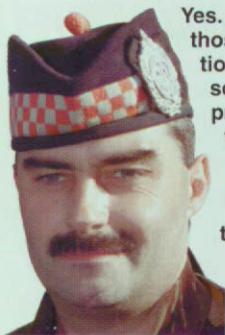
Rfn Nick Castle, 2 RGJ, Banja Luka

I would not expect the same facilities as a married soldier who had made a commitment to someone. Why should the Army commit to someone who has not done the same?



Pte Neil Sloan, 1 A and SH, Belfast

Yes. Older soldiers or those in long-term relationships should have some of the same privileges. If a relationship lasts longer than two years, especially if the soldier is travelling, then it is pretty solid.



LCpl James Simmance, 111 Pro Coy RMP, Sipovo

My wife and I were in a long-term relationship, living together. The only reason we got married was because the Army does not recognise common-law man and wife. She wasn't even recognised as my next-of-kin, but as a close friend. My wife is a midwife in the UK and I am working in Germany. She can't get a job in Germany with SSAFA until she has been qualified for a year, so I am unaccompanied.

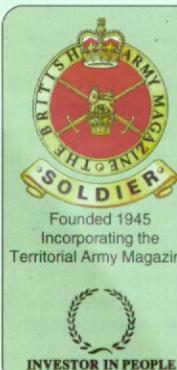


Sgt John Blackman, 16 Sig Regt serving in Banja Luka

It depends on how you class long-term. I don't think they should have the same benefits as pads (married couples) unless they have got children, because that already shows a commitment and they should receive the benefit.



Interviews: Ray Routledge and Anthony Stone Pictures: Mike Weston and Graeme Main



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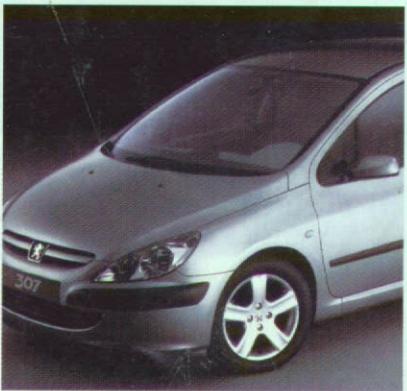
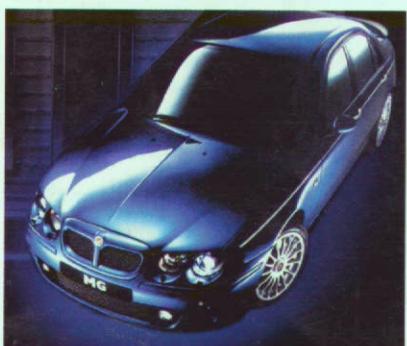
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