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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



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Cover picture

Top shot: Sgt Brian Gamble's strikingly manipulated image of a sangar in Northern Ireland won him second prize in the Canon-sponsored best use of the digital medium category in the Army Photographic Competition.

Report and more pictures in centre pages.

Emma Dunks-Lunn describes her wheelchair, acquired with the help of the

ABF, as her "life-line". Full story in Page 31.



"OK, so it's a tradition... but you're still nicked." – See Pages 4-5

In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine

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Read on – if you've got the bottle

If you drink sensibly there's no problem, but you could lose your job if you don't

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

ALCOHOL abuse can cost a soldier his or her rank – even their job – which makes it a matter the Army takes very seriously.

It is also a serious matter that more than 35,000 deaths a year in Britain are drink-related and four per cent of the population is dependent on alcohol.

To play its part in tackling the problem, the Army is launching this autumn a campaign backed up by on-going publicity on BFBS and Garrison Radio.

The message applies to everyone – even non-drinkers – so read on if you've got the bottle.

"The Army is not a 'non-alcohol' organisation, but it is into sensible drinking with effective supervision," said Col Tony Harking, late RE, who is heading the alcohol-awareness campaign.

He has brought in Galahad SMS Ltd, a firm of consultants with expertise in drink and drugs misuse, which will roll out an alcohol education programme across the Army.

"We are not promoting going teetotal or a ban on alcohol. What we do say is that drinking is an individual responsibility."

While the policy towards soldiers using illegal drugs normally results in discharge from the Service, what many don't realise is that for those who abuse alcohol, discharge is also an option.

"We handle arms and ammunition and

drive heavy vehicles such as tanks," said Col Harking. "Alcohol impacts on health and safety in much the same way as drugs."

"There is also a medical dimension and the harm that can accrue through an excess of alcohol consumption."

So when do you know that enough is enough? Anne Fox of

Galahad, a social scientist with expertise in drug and alcohol abuse, has been working with the Army for six years.

"We are not telling people to stop drinking, they are not going to do that," she said of the education package.

"We are saying that as long as you drink sensibly there really is no issue. It is only the people who go overboard who make it a problem for themselves and others around them."

The two-hour interactive pre-

sented to engage the attention of all ranks, was tested on the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Soldiers were asked for their honest appraisal and their comments were taken on board.



Education package: Ann Fox

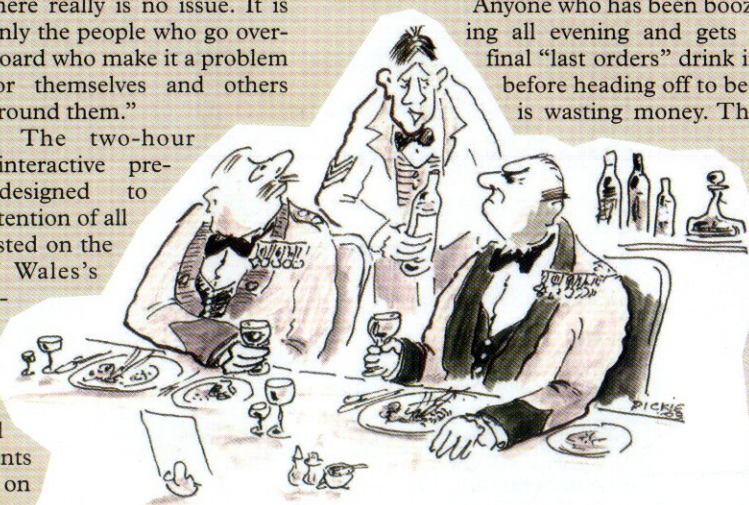
"We want soldiers to be aware of something they might not consider to be a problem," said Anne. "If they go away from the presentation with even a few facts that put doubts in their minds about their drinking behaviour, we've done our job."

Along with a fast-moving, picture-based PowerPoint show and video clips, the presentation includes demonstrations given by Mark Keane, who was kicked out of the

Army in 1997 for failing a compulsory drug test.

Now working for Galahad, Mark plays the role of a part-time barman to demonstrate how many glasses of water it takes for an individual to rehydrate, and the cost of drinking.

Anyone who has been boozing all evening and gets a final "last orders" drink in before heading off to bed is wasting money. The



"You've had your allowance of red, sir... How about some nice Malvern Water?"

Sobering thoughts about alcohol abuse

- Alcohol contributes to almost 80 per cent of violent crime.
- Courts martial statistics in 2002 showed 53 per cent of all cases involved alcohol.
- One in four men and one in seven women drink more than recommended levels.
- Alcohol is estimated to be a contributing factor in 60 per cent of fatal car accidents involving young men between 1000 and 1600 hours.
- About 30 per cent of pedestrians killed in road accidents are

above the legal limit for driving and more have drunk some alcohol up to the limit.

■ Alcohol is a contributory factor in 30 per cent of all domestic accidents and 30 per cent of drownings (50 per cent in the 20-30 year age group).

■ About 24 per cent of assaults take place near places of entertainment, mostly pubs and clubs.

■ In 1998 nearly 4,500 people died from alcohol-related diseases.

(Figures are from Institute of Alcohol Studies and MoD PS2)

effects usually kick in when the drinker is asleep.

"Another element the presentation addresses is the link between alcohol and aggression," said Anne. "We ask the soldiers how much control they think they have when drinking. The results surprise them."

She said much of the information was developed from major research in 1996.

"We found that the more heavy-handed and more stringent the rules about drinking in barracks, the worse the incidents off camp were. Commanding officers who allowed sensible drinking on camp were rewarded with more reasonable behaviour both on and off site."

"The US Army has found this too. It did research into banning drinking on camp entirely but found that local towns suffered. So keeping it in-house is a good policy."

An instruction allowing alcohol consumption in unit accommodation has been issued. "People did it surreptitiously

before but we have now said 'this is your home, treat it as such'," said Col Harking. "Soldiers will be treated as adults in their own homes. But if they abuse the privilege it will be removed. It is about responsibility and having a grown-up approach to it."

"What we are keen to emphasise is the role of the team," added Col Harking. "A soldier who has a hangover is not only letting himself down, but his mates too. Would they trust a soldier who was drunk or incapable next morning of driving or going on the ranges?"

"Teamwork is vital to what we do as an Army and if that breaks down then soldiers are no longer effective."

"We trust a soldier with arms and ammunition, we should be able to trust him with a beer."

Think about it . . .

Would you trust a school bus driver who gets hammered the night before he drives your kid to school?

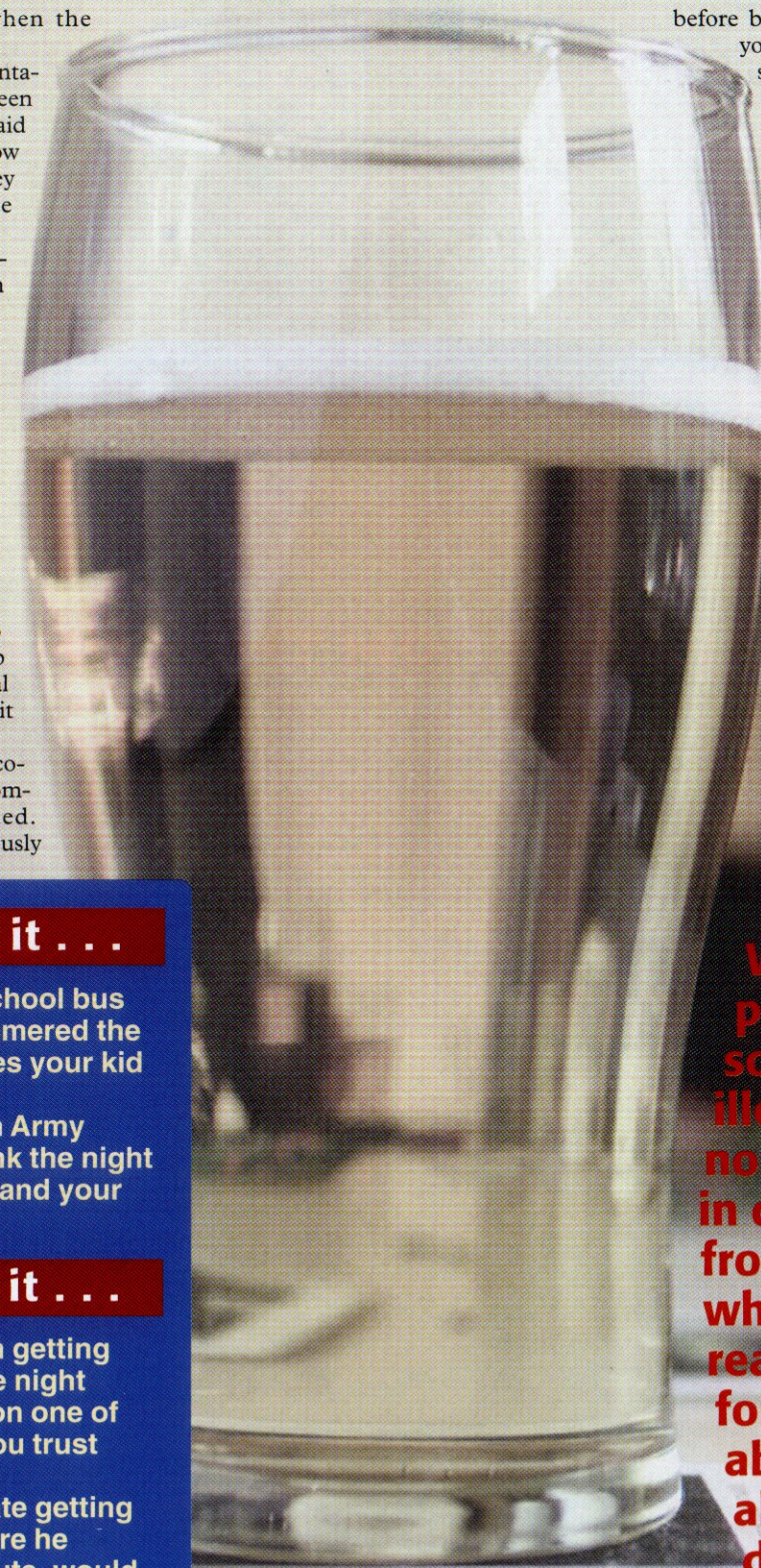
Would you trust an Army driver who gets drunk the night before he takes you and your mates on exercise?

Think about it . . .

If you saw a surgeon getting smashed in a bar the night before he operated on one of your family would you trust him?

If you saw your mate getting ratted the night before he packed your parachute, would you trust it?

While the policy towards soldiers using illegal drugs normally results in discharge from the Service, what many don't realise is that for those who abuse alcohol, discharge is also an option





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Lethal convoy: A force of heavily-armed Iraqi tribesmen drive into the desert near Al Hawtah to confront militia from another tribal group

Kings step in to stop desert bloodbath

More Op Telic reports and pictures
- Pages 17-19

Fifty-strong company form buffer to keep tribesmen from going to war

MAJOR conflict between two warring tribes in southern Iraq was prevented by the diplomacy and tact of heavily-outnumbered troops from the 1st Battalion, The King's Regiment.

Fifty soldiers from the battalion's D Company stood between thousands of angry militiamen from the Awlad Amer tribe and dissident members of the Garamsha tribe.

The catalyst for conflict was the kidnap of Qnsay Abdul Khalik from the Awlad Amer tribe and a demand for a \$100,000 ransom to be paid for his release by the Garamsha tribe.

About 1,000 armed Awlad Amer tribesmen, supported by mortars and machine-guns, gathered in old Iran-Iraq war trenches in the desert to the south of the main Garamsha town of Al Hawtah.

Soldiers from 1 Kings deployed to the area with Warrior armoured fighting vehicles and Land Rovers in support. They established a buffer zone between the two tribes in an attempt to reassure the Awlad Amer and prevent hostilities breaking out. Soldiers confiscated machine-guns and mortars.

Maj Andy Hughes, the officer commanding D Coy, acted as a mediator and negotiated separately with Sheik Amir Lalfaez of the Awlad Amer and Sheik Kadim Abdali of the Garamsha.

After several tense, nerve-racking hours the tension eased when the hostage was released and the militia dispersed.

Maj Hughes said: "The potential for hostilities and a great deal of bloodshed was very high. The swift and timely response by the soldiers of D Company averted a potentially large-scale tribal conflict. The cost of failure does not bear thinking about."

"In total there were only 50 Kings soldiers involved in the operation. They showed great diplomacy and tact throughout. Obviously nerves were jangling a little because of the size of the armed forces



Buffer zone: Kingsmen in position to keep tribal militias apart

opposing each other but they maintained their order extremely well.

"It was a highly professional and well-executed operation," he said.

Four hurt in bomb blast

FOUR British soldiers were injured by bomb blasts in Basra last month.

One soldier was wounded when the Land Rover he was travelling in was hit by an unidentified explosive device as it drove past a petrol station on the outskirts of the city. Another blast near the entrance to a military base in Basra injured three. None of the injuries was said to be serious.

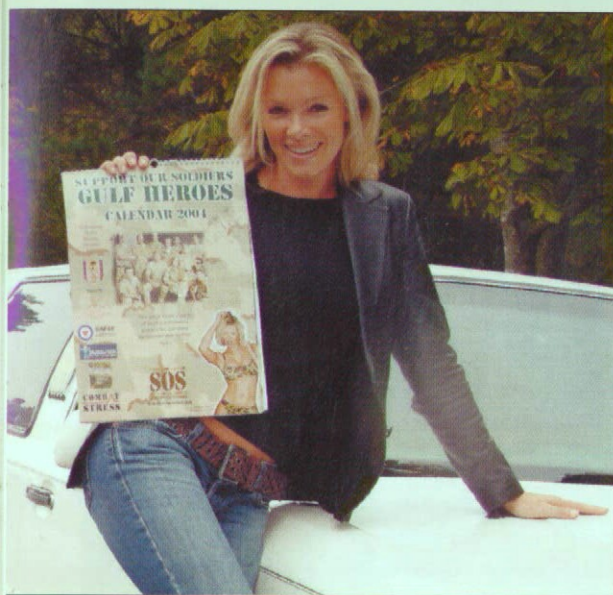
An attack on the headquarters of 19 Mechanized Brigade in Basra, thought to be a small mortar, did not

cause any casualties or damage to the base.

Troops were deployed in a public order role to quell disturbances which erupted during a pension payment demonstration at Basra Port.

A large crowd, which included people ineligible for payments, became violent and two companies of soldiers were sent to support Iraqi police on the scene. The troops quickly brought an end to the demonstration and order was restored.

A date with Nell



Make a date with Nell: Model, Page 3 girl and forces' sweetheart **Nell McAndrew**, above, launched the **Gulf Heroes** 2004 calendar brought out by Support Our Soldiers (SOS), a website set up by **Karen Webster** while her son, **Gnr Nick Coward**, was deployed in Iraq with 12th Regiment RA.

SOS, which has Nell as its patron, was created to help families and friends of soldiers in the war, and it continues to support those in Iraq or recently returned. It is hoped sales of the calendar will raise £25,000 for the National Gulf Veterans and Families Association, Hollybush House in Scotland and the three Service benevolent funds.

The calendars cost £5 each (plus £2 p&p) and are available by mail order. Cheques payable to "Support Our Soldiers" should be sent to PO Box 70, Shipley, West Yorks BD18 1BP, or online at www.supportoursoldiers.co.uk

● *Soldier's* colourful 2004 calendar is also on sale right now. Turn to Page 52 for full details.

This won't hurt...



Open wide: **Capt Beth Dover** RADC checks the teeth of a boy at a school in Knezevo, Bosnia. Her visit, with UK Battle-Group Civil-Military Cooperation Cell officer **Capt Rodrigo Marchessi**, was arranged to help the community regain its trust in local authorities riven by crime and corruption.



Prayers for Iraq fallen

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, accompanied by 12 other members of the Royal Family, joined 900 Servicemen and women who had fought in Iraq in a national service of remembrance in St Paul's Cathedral last month.

Uniformed representatives of every unit which served in the Gulf took part, as did 250 relatives and friends of the 51 Service personnel who died during the conflict earlier this year.

The service was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, and lessons were read by Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge, who led British forces in the Gulf, and the Duke of Edinburgh. The Rt Rev David Connor, Bishop to the Forces, led an act of remembrance.

The dead and wounded, both military and civilian, were remembered, as were those still involved in operations in Iraq.

Main picture: Alan House

Gurkhas find arms dumps

More major caches uncovered in Bosnia

GURKHAS operating north of Prijedor in Bosnia have uncovered huge caches of illegal arms and ammunition during recent sweeps.

Soldiers of A Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, part of a UK battle-group, found two M55 triple-barrelled 20mm anti-aircraft guns in a barn. They also discovered two .50-calibre mounted machine-guns, several 82mm mortars and three 82mm recoilless guns.

Several other caches found within a 2km radius produced 200 boxes containing 150 grenades, mortar rounds

and rockets – more than six tonnes in all. Fourteen M57 rocket-launchers and 45 rocket-driven Bangalore torpedoes were also uncovered.

Capt Hitman Gurung, 2ic of A Coy, said: "These caches had obviously been well managed, so their removal directly contributes to making this area a safer place to live again."

"The success has really depended on the quality of the soldiers and it has been great for the guys for all the hard work they've put in."

The arms finds, under Operation Harvest, follow similar major successes

by the 1st Battalion, The Highlanders, which has now returned to Edinburgh.

● Members of the Royal Gibraltar Band who played at Petar Koi School in Mrkonjik Grad were a huge hit with the children. The eight musicians were joined by dozens of pupils marching beside them as they performed on the school football pitch. The school was presented with a CD of the band's music.

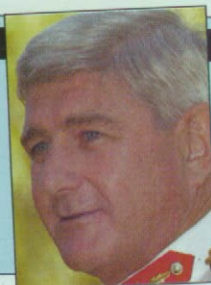
Lethal weapons: An anti-aircraft gun found by Gurkhas operating north of Prijedor in Bosnia

Picture: Cpl Yves Gemus



IN BRIEF

● **Maj Gen Peter Pearson**, right, has been sworn in as Administrator of the Sovereign Base Area after taking over as Commander British Forces Cyprus. He described the post as "probably the best two-star appointment the Army and Royal Air Force has to offer".



● Training support in the Armed Forces has turned purple with the formation of a new directorate at RAF Halton. The Army School of Training Support, until now based at Upavon, has disappeared under the umbr-

ella of the new Defence Centre of Training Support. The first Director General Training and Education is Capt Mike Farrage RN. Command of the centre will rotate among the Services.

● A modern apprenticeship course run for the **Royal Armoured Corps** by Wilt-

shire College and Somerset College of Arts and Technology was recognised with an accolade at the National Training Awards' regional ceremony for the South West. Under the scheme, 900 soldiers have so far achieved modern apprenticeships and 1,200 have gained National Vocational Qualifications in the subjects.

Sid scoops lottery



Picture: Graeme Main

Jackpot: Gütersloh-based **Sgt Darren "Sid" Sidebottom**, above, of 2 Close Support Regiment RLC, is £15,000 richer... thanks to the Army Sports Lottery. He scooped the top prize in a special draw to mark the tenth anniversary of the lottery and reported to Aldershot to be presented with his big cheque by the Director of the Army Sport Control Board, **Maj Gen Simon Lytle**.

Sid, a systems coordinator for 2 CS Regiment, has had two tickets in the lottery ever since it started but had never won a penny until now. He and his wife **Rachael** are planning to celebrate with a family holiday to Florida for their children **Aaron**, 11, and **Elesha**, four.

In the past decade the lottery has raised nearly £5 million for grants to individual units and major capital projects, such as all-weather pitches, as well as generating £4.7 million in prizes.

If you want to join the fun, ring the lottery office on Aldershot mil (94222) 3550 or 01252 348550 or ask your unit admin office for details.

● To see who else won, turn to Page 61.

More support for faith groups

A DIRECTORY of religious advisers who can provide local support to Armed Forces followers of faiths other than Christianity has been launched by the MoD.

Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist members of the Department's Religious Advisory Panel helped to draw up the list of advisers.

Announcing the project, Defence Secretary **Geoff Hoon** said: "The Armed Forces are determined to become even more representative of our diverse society, harnessing the wealth of talent and skills of individuals from different backgrounds across all religious groups."



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Blade runner: Trainee pilot SSgt Matt Tones, Royal Signals, carries out his pre-flight checks

Sky's the limit if you take chance

THE PRESTIGIOUS Army pilots' course has become a victim of its own success and the Army Air Corps is taking steps to increase the number of applicants.

Although flying is an exciting option for NCOs and officers looking for a change of direction, the course is not attracting the interest it could within military circles.

Maj (Retd) Roger Southgate, SO2 Selection/Flying Training at the School of Army Aviation at Middle Wallop, said:

"A lack of awareness and a fear of failure are the biggest factors putting soldiers off applying. We aren't short of qualified pilots but we want to increase the quantity coming through the selection process to ensure we are getting the best."

To turn out the 70 pilots or so a year that it needs, at least 200 applicants have to be attracted through the school's front door. The course lasts 18 months.

Achieving the coveted Army "wings" is not easy and the failure rate is high. Many

soldiers believe flying is beyond their reach when in fact it is well within their grasp, as the numbers who pass the course each year prove.

Unlike the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, whose pilots are commissioned, AAC pilots are a mix of capbadges and ranks – corporal to captain – and all arms and corps, including direct entry officers

from Sandhurst. About half are officers and half NCOs.

Lance corporals must have at least two years' service

and be recommended for promotion to corporal, while officers should have two years' commissioned service after Sandhurst. Soldiers have to be on the course by the age of 30, officers at 28.

Selection is the same for all ranks and individuals must be recommended for pilot training by their commanding officer.

● Full details on how to apply can be found in the Army General Administration Instructions (AGAls), Vol 2, Chap 43 or by contacting SO2 Selection on 94329 674307/ 674303.

● What the student pilots think. See Vox pop – Page 78.

Naafi ploughs £1.2 back into Army welfare

NAAFI has announced that a final welfare dividend of more than £1.2 million will be returned to the Army in addition to the £275,000 paid earlier in the year. It is the first year in three that Naafi has paid a dividend to the Army.

The welfare dividend is being delivered to the Armed Forces from the £6.5 million profit Naafi made in 2002-03, a substantial improvement from the £0.5 million from the previous year and a significant loss in 2000-01.

Naafi spent £600,000 on ten portable shops for British forces in the Gulf. The air-conditioned leisure facilities, which were shipped to the Gulf, were staffed by 54 members of Naafi's own Expeditionary Force Institutes (EFI).

Lt Col Rory Maxwell, CO 6 Supply Regiment RLC during the conflict, said: "Naafi has done an immensely important job to boost the morale of soldiers in battle. The provision of a Mars bar and a can of pop brings a sense of normality to soldiers who have been fighting in the desert for days."

Speedster Mark smashes record

BLIND ex-soldier Mark Threadgold has smashed the sightless world speed record on water.

The former Royal Signals sergeant averaged 99.17 mph on Lake Windermere in a 35ft powerboat, bettering the previous best of 73 mph.

Mark, 36, a Regular soldier for 15 years, lost his sight after sustaining a serious head injury.

Last year he broke a world endurance record for blind people when he drove a rigid inflatable boat around the Isle of Wight in under two hours.

His latest record bid will help raise fund for the £100,000 Blind Ambition appeal launched by St Dunstan's, which helps sightless ex-Service people.

● www.st-dunstons.org.uk

Argylls spell it out

SOLDIERS of the 1st Battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders formed up on the parade square of their new home in Howe Barracks, Canterbury, to spell out the word Argylls. The battalion recently completed two-and-a-half years based in Belfast.

HIVE in better shape

A BIGGER, better HIVE Information Centre was opened at SHAPE, Belgium by Mrs Anne Moore-Bick, wife of the GOC. Soldiers and their families working and living in the multi-national community can use its improved information and referral services. The move was funded by a €1,519 grant from *Sixth Sense*, our sister publication in Germany.

EOD academia

SEARCH and munition clearance skills and training have been formally recognised by the launch of National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications. The award gives EOD personnel a recognised civilian academic qualification.

Understanding skills

A MEMORANDUM of Understanding has been signed between the MoD's Directorate General Training and Education and the Sector Skills Development Agency. It will allow the MoD – the largest single trainer of people in the UK – to influence the Government's skills agenda at strategic and working levels.



Under Big Ben

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

Concerns over BW vaccines were voiced

CONCERNS over the simultaneous administration of anthrax and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccines were conveyed to the MoD weeks before the Department began a 1991 Gulf conflict anti-biological warfare immunisation programme which included both vaccines being given at the same time.

Pertussis vaccine was used to speed up the effects of the anthrax vaccine in the short time available between administering the vaccine and the expected start of hostilities.

In a written answer to Parliament last month, Defence Minister Lord Bach said "preliminary" findings by the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) caused concern to the institute "because

there was evidence of severe loss of condition and weight loss in mice when these vaccines were given separately".

There were no side-effects when either was used on its own.

The pertussis vaccine, 40,000 doses of which had been procured from the Institut Merieux, was not licensed for use in the UK, but was in France under the name Vaxicoq.

Alerted to the NIBSC concerns, the Department of Health faxed a letter outlining them to the MoD on December 21, 1990,

under cover of a note from the then Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr Jeremy Metters.

"Dr Metters recalls advising MoD of the importance and relevance of the information from NIBSC and of their and his concerns," states Lord Bach in the written answer.

On January 2, 1991 the MoD began its anti-biological warfare immunisation programme for Service personnel preparing for the 1990-91 Gulf conflict.

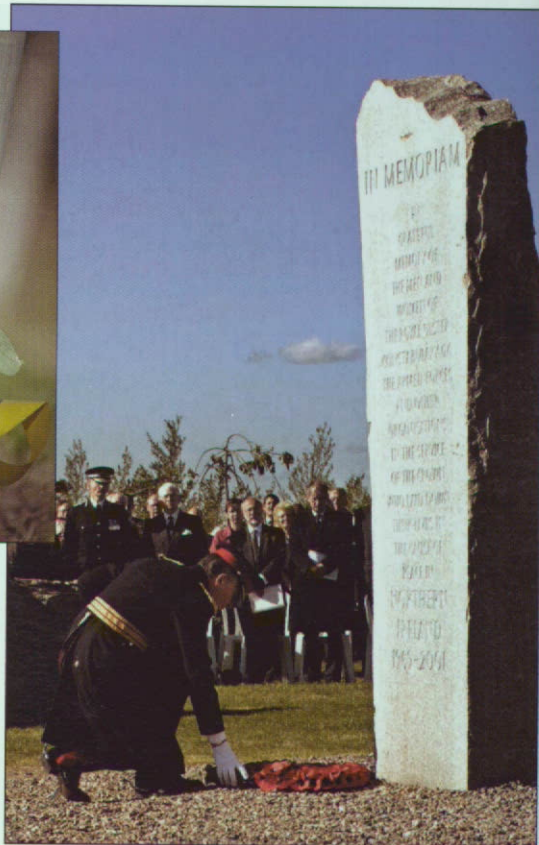
Vehicle statistics: Of the 116 Challenger 2 main battle tanks and 982 other armoured vehicles deployed on Op Telic, one Challenger 2 was destroyed in a tank battle, two Scimitars were lost in an air-land battle and a third rolled to its destruction, and one Sultan "drowned". At the end of decisive operations on April 30, 73 per cent of the Challenger 2s remained available for further combat. Of the 239 Warriors deployed, 78 per cent were fit for combat on April 30.



We will remember: Roses, above, rest against an ash sapling dedicated to the memory of 2nd Lt Irwin Long, who was murdered in Northern Ireland on November 8, 1972.

They were placed by his widow, Eileen, who attended the dedication in the National Memorial Arboretum of the Ulster Ash Grove.

Lt Gen Philip Trousdell, above right, GOC Northern Ireland, lays a wreath at the plinth at the centre of the grove. It is dedicated to the Armed Forces, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the North-



ern Ireland Prison Service. Around the plinth are six stones from each of the counties of Northern Ireland, and around them an ash sapling has been planted for each of those lost during the Troubles.

If you haven't had Telic audit, check in

ANY soldier who deployed on Operation Telic and who has not been called in to their medical centre for a post-Iraq medical audit should make an appointment with their medical officer to do so as soon as possible.

The intention to carry out the audit was announced at the end of July and most personnel will have been notified through their chain of command of the requirement to attend an interview at their medical centre.

There they will be asked to assist a member of the medical staff to fill in the

audit form FMed 1002. The audit will check off issues such as immunisation and when and where it was received; exposure to hazards; and the transfer of temporary medical records.

Sapper squadron re-formed

A FLAG-raising ceremony was held to mark the re-formation of 30 Field Squadron RE as an integral part of part of Ludgershall-based 26 Engineer Regiment. It was disbanded in March 1991 following Options for Change.

IN BRIEF

● **Marchwood Military Railway** at the Sea Mounting Centre near Southampton has celebrated its 60th anniversary. The railway was vital in the build-up to the Normandy landings in June 1944.

● Local cadets joined soldiers from 2 Signal Regiment, 1 PWO, and the E and

WRR to parade through York last month to exercise the military Freedom of the city.

● It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it. Pictured, right, **Capt Brian Penfold** and **Maj Werner Stroud** flank celebrities **Liz Carling** and **Anneka Rice** for a Make-A-Wish charity fashion show at the

And I quote . . .

'American and British forces achieved their objectives with extraordinarily few civilian casualties. In particular, the painstaking way in which 7th Armoured Brigade and 16th Air Assault Brigade took Basra and the surrounding towns will go down as a new textbook standard for how to fight a 21st century war.'

— **Opposition defence spokesman Bernard Jenkin** in debate on the military situation in Iraq



We've got you haka-ed

Sgt Maj Tony Costello of the 1st Battalion, The Green Howards got an earful when 100 Fijian soldiers based in Northern Ireland gathered in Ballykelly Army Base to celebrate their national day with an expression of national culture and identity.

He was on the receiving end of the fearsome *haka*, the warrior challenge more usually associated with the rugby field than Ballykelly.

The Green Howards hosted the event. It was the first time the day, which marks Fiji being ceded to Great Britain 129 years ago, has been celebrated in the Army. There are currently 1,600 islanders serving throughout Britain's Armed Forces.

Picture: Keith Cotton

Suez medal fast-tracked

SOME veterans of the Suez Canal Zone campaign of 1951-1954 could have the new clasp in time to wear on parade on Remembrance Sunday.

Veterans Minister Ivor Caplin said: "We expect all who have applied, about 10,000, to have their medals during the early part of next year." He said a few would be issued in time for November 9.

The Army Medal Office has set up a special section to cope with up to 200,000 applications for the "Canal Zone" clasp, which will be worn with the General Service Medal 1918-1962 or its naval or air force equivalents.

The qualifying period is 30 days' or more continuous service in the Suez Canal Zone between October 16, 1951 and October 19, 1954.

Reduced periods for those who died or were wounded

in-theatre will be sufficient. Next-of-kin of veterans who have died since 1954 will be eligible to apply, but must provide supporting documents. Anyone who meets the criteria but who did not receive a GSM can apply for that as well.

Civilians who served full-time with BFBS, Naafi, the British Red Cross, SSAFA, Forces Help Society, Combined Service Entertainments, Women's Voluntary Service and other organisations are also eligible.

How to apply

Send your service details, including full name, date of birth, Service number, unit on discharge and dates in theatre to:

**Army Medal Office,
Government Buildings,
Worcester Road,
Droitwich WR9 8AU.**

Service at sea will not count towards the qualifying period, and nor will time spent in the zone on official visits by personnel based elsewhere.

Mr Caplin paid tribute to those who fought for the medal. "It was a legitimate and well-organised campaign that the Government has been pleased to respond to."

One year old . . .



We're one: **Josette Lesser**, Garrison Radio's sports editor, celebrates the first anniversary of the station's sports news programme by blowing out a birthday candle at the Aldershot studios. She was joined by Army Sport Control Board director **Maj Gen Simon Lytle** and other guests to mark the occasion. The programme broadcasts a mix of live reports and results.

Picture: Graeme Main

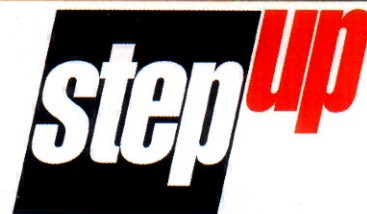


Dorchester. Brian, from 20 Aircraft Workshop REME, and Werner, from HQ 160 (Wales) Brigade, are members of the Project Chance management committee.

● **Civil Contingency Reaction Force** exercises to test procedures in the event of a significant civil emergency have taken place

around the country. One exercise scenario was based on a cargo plane crash near Swindon, another at Shorncliffe, near Folkestone.

● **The Epynt Way**, a 90km circular footpath following the boundary of the Sennybridge training area in Wales, has been opened to members of the public.



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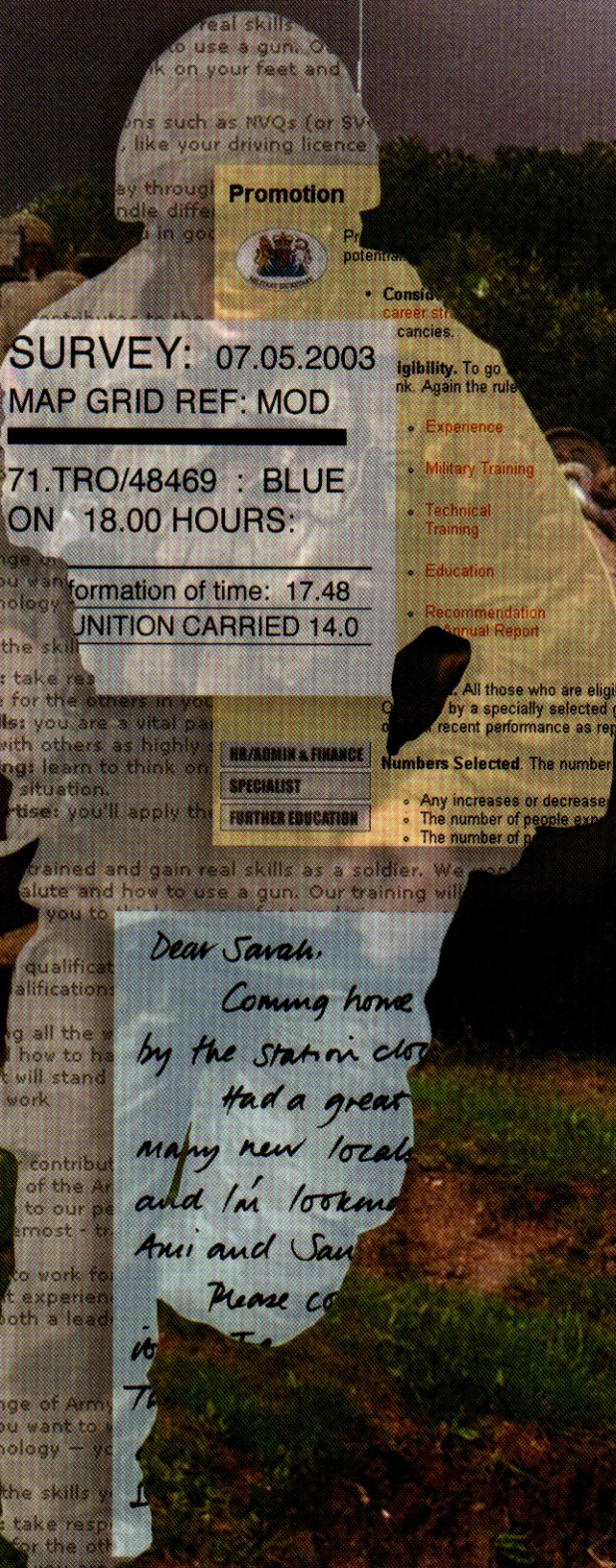
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- Any increases or decreases
- The number of people expected
- The number of people

Dear Sarah,

Coming home
by the station close
Had a great
many new locals
and in looking
Ami and Sam
Please co



Opening salvo: Former war correspondent Kate Adie, second from left, is pictured with, from left, Capt Tanya Gatheridge AGC (ETS), Maj Nadine Heron RMP and Maj Rachel Grimes RLC at the launch of "Women at War", a major new exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth

Quake team set tempo in Nepal

THIRTY Territorial Army soldiers from the Civil Affairs Group helped the government of Nepal to prepare for a major earthquake which scientists predict is overdue.

Kathmandu Valley, home to two million people, is said to be particularly vulnerable in the world's most quake-prone country.

The keys to eight pre-positioned ISO containers of rescue stores were handed to community leaders by Lt Col Harry Walker RE, who headed the TA group.

CAG initiated the project during a disaster contingency planning exercise in Nepal last year. It identified the need for basic rescue equipment and secured £45,000 from the British Embassy to pay for it. During the recent trip, the TA team supervised the installation of the containers and other equipment at strategic sites.

In addition to shovels, picks, ladders and ropes, the ISOs hold lighting equipment,



Going, going, gong: Sgts Victor Galpin, left, and Caroline Knowles-Ley, both RMP, received Voluntary Reserve Service Medals while on the earthquake exercise in Nepal

stretchers, hard hats, boots and first-aid kits.

The group also hosted a three-day seminar for 150 people from key organisations. Lt Col Bede Strong, who led the seminar, said: "To hear their renewed motivation to act as a result of the seminar was incredibly rewarding for the whole team."

Going to Afghanistan: Reservists from across Gloucestershire complete an eight-mile march while training for their deployment to Kabul.

They were among a 53-strong contingent of Territorial Army soldiers from the South West-based Rifle Volunteers mobilised for Op Fingal. More than were required came forward, avoiding the need for compulsory mobilisation.



Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● Richmond in North Yorkshire emerges as the best place for unattached women in search of a partner. There are more than two single men for each "singleton" there, although MP William Hague said this has more to do with Catterick Garrison, the British Army's largest base, than anything else. — *Daily Telegraph*

● To commemorate the 60th anniversary of D-Day, war veterans will receive lottery grants to travel to the battlefields on which they fought. Lottery cash will be used to fund special tours of the battlefields in Europe, North Africa and the Far East. A commemorative medal is also being considered. — *Daily Telegraph*

● Commanding officers of Infantry battalions which have not contributed £1,000 towards the £130,000 cost of a bronze statue of British infantrymen have been instructed to pay up. The statue, of two soldiers in assault mode with SA80 rifles, is due to be unveiled by the Prince of Wales next year at the Army's Sennybridge training area in Powys, Wales. — *Times*

● Singapore's infamous Changi Prison, where thousands of Allied PoWs and civilians lived and died during the Second World War, is to be demolished. — *Daily Telegraph*

● Some of the 5,800 reservists mobilised compulsorily for war duty in Iraq were given such short notice that they had no time to prepare their families or their employers. Some employers did not even know that they had reservists on their payrolls. — *Times*

● The Royal British Legion is mobilising an army of Second World War veterans to protest against exorbitant council tax rises. A spokesman said most were on fixed incomes and many would suffer because of the rises. — *Express*

● Prince William has abandoned plans to do conservation work in Africa and will instead join his brother Harry at Sandhurst within two years. St James's Palace said it was "absolute fiction" that William was spending two years in Africa. — *Sunday Express*

● The MoD's £340 million refurbished headquarters, due to be reoccupied in May, are so eerily quiet that background noise will be piped in. — *Mail on Sunday*

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Hazard warning

Bomb disposal is big business in weapon-filled southern Iraq

Report: Andrea Frazer

Pictures: Cpl David Whittaker-Smith (RAF)

A LETHAL legacy of unused and unexploded ammunition and air-dropped weapons and missiles litter the Basra and Maysan provinces of southern Iraq, posing a significant threat to the lives of local people and coalition forces.

"The ammunition is a mixture of Iraqi, former Soviet, American, British and

other nations' equipment acquired by Iraq," said Capt Phil Davis, SO3 EOD, 19 Mechanized Brigade.

"The stuff we find ranges from a single grenade to large ransacked ammunition compounds containing many thousands of items in various states of serviceability.



Maj Chris Warhurst,
OC of the Joint
EOD Group

"The extensive spread of items varies in density and age. Some stem from the recent conflict while others are a legacy of Op Granby and even the Iran-Iraq war."

Thousands of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines are stored all over the country, often in public places.

The enormous task of detection, identification, rendering safe and disposing of the vast quantities of ordnance in the region is the responsibility of the Joint Force (EOD) Group, headed up by 49 Field Squadron (EOD), 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD).

The group has brought together teams from the Royal Logistic Corps, the Royal Engineers, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy and includes Norwegian and Czech units.



Putting ordnance out of harm's way covers the full range of bomb disposal operations, from explosions and finds to disposal of improvised explosive devices and conventional munitions.

Officer commanding Maj Chris Warhurst said: "The idea of a joint force EOD group was used in Afghanistan but I believe this is the first time that the three Services and multinational elements have worked together.

"We have a range of missions, the first being force protection, to look after and assist UK and coalition forces, to get rid of any munitions which pose a direct threat to our troops, such as RPGs and mortars, and medium and heavy weapon systems.

"A very close second is the humanitarian aspect, assisting the Iraqi people to get back to normality as soon as possible. "This involves clearing areas such as schools, mosques, hospitals and essential services – places where the old regime used to stockpile ammunition. These are routine daily tasks."

Bomb disposal teams are held at high readiness to respond to priority taskings, and are regularly supported by helicopter, medics, the Defence Fire Service and explosive dog protection teams.

During Op Telic 1, the group completed 600 tasks and destroyed 200,000 individual items of ordnance.

Since the start of Op Telic 2 in July, 1,500 tasks have been undertaken and personnel have destroyed 590,000 items across the spectrum of ordnance and 350,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition.

The scale of the job facing bomb disposal teams in-theatre is immense and desert conditions mean there are addi-

Stockpile: Artillery shells are prepared with demolition charges for destruction



Job done: Yet more sensitive munitions are destroyed

tional challenges to contend with. Working in a heavy EOD suit is awkward in any climate, but carrying an extra 45lb in temperatures of 50C is something else. A job lot of ice vests worn under the suits help a little.

Dust and sand getting into delicate equipment, particularly the Wheelbarrow, is an added complication so careful maintenance is essential.

In a country where everything has a use and scavenging and looting is rife, it is vitally important to remove sensitive munitions to protect people from harm

and ensure the weapons and ammunition cannot be used against coalition forces and the Iraqi people.

Looters have put their lives at risk by dismantling unstable munitions in arms dumps to steal copper components which are smelted into ingots and sold on the black market.

Since the start of Op Telic 2, 1,500 tasks have been undertaken and personnel have destroyed 590,000 items of ordnance and 350,000 rounds of ammunition

Job well done

Summer of tension comes to an end for mechanized brigade

THIS month will bring with it the end of 19 Mechanized Brigade's tour of duty, writes **Andrea Frazer**.

Troops from the 1st Battalions of The King's Own Scottish Borderers, The King's Regiment and The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, with 19 Brigade Signal Squadron, 40 Regiment RA, 38 Regiment RE and 19 Brigade HQ can look back with pride at what they have achieved during the past four long, dangerous and extremely hot months in southern Iraq.

The brigade arrived at the beginning of a very tense summer. Units immediately began forging relationships with the local community, working round the clock to build upon the successes of 7 Armoured Brigade and manage Iraqi expectations.

With security viewed as a priority, huge effort was focused on creating a stable society and establishing Iraqi security units such as Iraqi police, the elite Police Support Unit, Iraqi Civil Defence Corps, Border Police, Power Police and the Iraqi Riverine Patrol Service.

Local infrastructure was broken and units were acutely aware that reconstruction and regeneration work had to rank high in the brigade's priorities. About

Local infrastructure was broken and units were acutely aware that reconstruction and regeneration work had to rank high in the brigade's list of priorities.

\$5.8 million was spent on quick-impact projects designed to improve the quality of the infrastructure. A large chunk of the money was used to fund the refurbishment of 85 schools in 19 Brigade's area.

Eighty pylons across seven separate power lines were repaired as a joint effort between the brigade and local people, enabling communities to enjoy a period of uninterrupted power; pre-war levels were three hours on and

three off. Five hundred Power Police now guard pylon routes to deter sabotage and looting.

A fuel distribution plan has been implemented and various fuels are now imported, including 40,000 tonnes of benzene and 30,000 tonnes of LPG. A guard force has been trained and is operating to protect fuel refineries.

The brigade will hand over responsibility to 20 Armoured Brigade later this month when the 1st Battalion, The Light Infantry, 26 Regiment RA, 20 Brigade Signal Squadron, 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales, 20 Brigade HQ, 35 Regiment RE and the Queen's Royal Hussars have familiarised themselves with their areas of operation.

Our men at the embassy

TROOPS from The Light Dragoons and the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers have guarded the British Embassy in Baghdad.

After embassy staff left the capital in the wake of the bombing of the UN's headquarters, soldiers remained to protect and maintain the location.

A good relationship has been established with local people and military Land Rovers and foot patrols are greeted with cries of "Hello Britannique."

Army medics routinely treat children suffering from minor cuts and scrapes at the embassy gate and off-duty soldiers have played football with youngsters in the area.



Watchful: Cpl Mark Baxter RMP inspects the first Iraqi Police Support Unit graduates

Recruits graduate with honours

THE first recruits of the newly-formed Iraqi Police Support Unit (PSU) graduated from their six-week specialist training course in Basra.

Formed to bridge the capability gap between the existing Iraqi police and the coalition forces, the unit will provide the Basra Chief of Police with a highly-effective strike capability within the city.

The course, the first of its kind, was run by instructors drawn from Infantry, Royal

Artillery and Royal Engineer units and the Royal Military Police. Recruits were taught skills such as weapon-handling, first aid, patrolling and basic arrest techniques, house and vehicle searches, hostage rescue, physical training, leadership and basic drill.

They also learned about justice, preservation of evidence, and handling and caring for prisoners. A further 240 students have enrolled on the second course.

Sappers bridge the gap

A PONTOON bridge, built by 38 Engineer Regiment with the help of the Norwegian Telemark Battalion, has restored road links between two villages on the outskirts of Basra.

Their work has made life a lot easier for 10,000 local people, enabled children to get to school and the sick to travel to hospital. The original bridge between the villages of Abu Al Khasib and Bab Suleymar was damaged during the Iraq's long war with Iran and recently collapsed when a heavily-laden wagon tried to cross.

The bridge collapsed, crashing into the tributary of the Al Shatt Arab river which runs through the heart of the city.

Military engineers have also undertaken force protection works, provided diving, EOD and artisan trade support to the brigade, conducted more than 400 boat patrols and produced 350 tonnes of potable water a day through two reverse osmosis plants.



Leading the way: Lt Col Rob Lowth, of 38 Engineer Regiment, and Maj Torger Gillebo, Norwegian Telemark Regiment, join villagers at the opening of the new pontoon bridge restoring road links outside Basra

Terriers deployed

TERRITORIAL Army soldiers from B and D Companies, The East of England Regiment (V) and 201 (Bedford) Squadron, 158 (Royal Anglian) Transport Regiment RLC (V) have deployed to Iraq on a six-month tour of duty to undertake general duties such as patrolling and security to essential support tasks such as driving and catering.

● TA soldiers from the Tyne Tees Regiment operated a rolling programme of guard duties, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at the British HQ in Basra Palace, Basra airport and the massive logistics base at Shaibah.



Busted: Pte Paul Yates, Sgt John Battersby and Pte Robert McCormack, all of B Company, 1 QLR, sit on top of the mountain of aluminium seized during a search in Basra's suburbs

QLR's metal mountain

TACKLING and arresting criminals is a daily occurrence for soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment based in Basra.

Following a tip-off, a patrol from Burma Company uncovered an illegal aluminium smelting operation in the Al Hayyanayah area and discovered a massive pile of aluminium ingots, standing at 6ft high and weighing more than two tonnes.

The find, the largest made by the battalion in Iraq, was too big to be carried in the patrol's vehicles and had to be transported back to their base in a truck.

Four Iraqi men were arrested during the incident.

In an operation which targeted former regime loyalists, soldiers of Anzio Company rounded up a leading figurehead and a number of his supporters in a series of raids in Basra's suburbs, tightening the net on terrorism and organised crime in southern Iraq.

The battalion is also racking up success in the battle against illegal weapons. Anzio Company, acting on intelligence from a local man, made a substantial weapons find in the At Tuwaysah area.

Corunna Coy scored a major coup with the arrest of a bomb-making team and its equipment in simultaneous night-time raids across the city. Its efforts have disrupted a well-organised terrorist group.

Justin bags top double



SSGT Justin Lewis, left, won a 5km road race staged in Baghdad to mark America's annual Labor Day.

And his 33 Engineer Regiment colleague, Cpl Dinger Bell, right, finished seventh. The course took them around the lake in front of which they are pictured. On the same day Lewis learned he had been promoted to the rank of staff sergeant.

The two men, from Wimbish, are attached to the Iraq Survey Group hunting for weapons of mass destruction.

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JOINED UP

approach

Tri-Service course for warrant officers on trial at Shrivenham

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

NON-officer training has made its debut at the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham, and early indications suggest it is a big step forward.

First trials of new method to prepare warrant officers for work in a tri-Service environment have been completed.

Course director Lt Col Kris Chafer AAC said it came about as a result of the Defence Training Review, which identified as a weakness the lack of joint training

for WOs. The two-week residential course, which has already attracted interest from abroad, covers high-level training objectives.

Warrant officers are increasingly being used at levels which, ten years ago, would have been the responsibility of a captain or major.

"The first course was a trial, so we can re-jig as appropriate, although the overall content is more or less agreed," said Lt Col Chafer.

It involved several WOs already in joint appointments and some who were already experienced in joint environments. Their feedback will inform a pilot course scheduled to begin next month. The final version should be up and running by the spring.

"Each will comprise 30 WOs in three groups of ten. Each syndicate will have a mix from all three Services," said Lt Col Chafer. "Where we can help them is by giving them the tools to do their jobs in high-level, high-responsibility posts."

There have already been enquiries from overseas, "but," said Lt Col Chafer, "we want to get it right ourselves first before we look at the international dimension."

While mainly classroom-based, the course includes practical elements in which students play the roles of a joint task force commander's staff. They gain an appreciation of defence diplomacy, management techniques and tools, and of the different Service cultures.

"This is a prestigious course," said Lt Col Chafer. "A great deal of investment has been put into it."

And here's what they thought of it

WO2 (AQMS) Pete Hushin REME, serving with SHAPE

I had previously been at 148 Battery, a combined Royal Navy-Army posting and on joint operations with Nato in Kosovo. Parts of the new course have been very useful and informative, some has been good but not relevant and about a quarter needs to be changed.



WO1 Dawn Scott AGC (SPS), serving at PIHQ

It is relevant to those about to go into a joint Service environment. There are a couple of things that need to be changed before the pilot starts in December. The organisers are taking everything on board and getting feedback from us. As for the JSCSC, the facilities are exceptional.



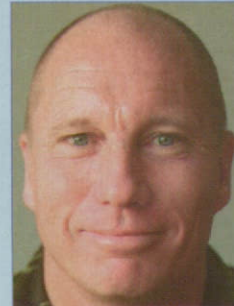
WO2 Kevin Edwards, Joint NBC Regiment

I was selected because I am with a joint organisation. It has been useful to see how the other Services operate and to understand their traditions. We can all learn a great deal from each other. The course length is probably about right because you can't take people like us out of our working environment for too long. Shrivenham is a great environment for learning.



WO Bob Loughlin, RAF Regiment, working for the Chief of the Air Staff

I was an instructor at the School of Infantry, Warminster, and spent two years on loan service with the Army in the Middle East. I think it has been very worthwhile, a great insight into how the Forces work. It is certainly worthwhile if it helps with joint issues. The course has a real future, but getting senior WOs away for more than two weeks would be difficult. I would like to see WOs from other nations take part. It will have a benefit where we work with them already. The Shrivenham site is ideal and it has given us a high profile in front of senior officers.



WO John McMath RAF, RAF Cranwell

I was a WO on a Harrier squadron but am not in a joint role at present. I came here with no preconceived ideas. It is difficult to start with a blank sheet of paper because there is major diversity in backgrounds and Service cultures. It is difficult to find common elements and to turn those elements into something you can take into a joint environment. We now have a clearer appreciation of our sister Services, although whether that is a result of the course or of putting people together in one area, I don't know really.



WO1 Mark Cornell RE, technical adviser (projects) HQ British Forces Cyprus

The drawback is that this course is going at 120mph. Have I benefited from it? I have learned a bit, especially about how the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force work. But there is one aspect of jointery that has been missed. Military force has four strands - Army, Navy and RAF, and a civilian component. Nowhere has the course covered how that civilian element comes in.



Taking issues

CGS's Briefing Team toured the UK and abroad to listen to the concerns riding high on the agendas of soldiers and their families

AS the British Army geared up for war in Iraq, a small Camberley-based team was travelling far and wide to listen to the concerns of soldiers and their families, and to convey those issues directly to the Chief of the General Staff.

Location, they found, had little impact on the nature of concerns. As ever, most points raised were financial, in particular administration of pay.

The briefing team tour lasted from January 9 to May 4 and took in Afghanistan, Belize, Brunei, the Falklands, Grantham, formed TA units in the UK and families in UK and Germany. Some visits were cancelled because of Op Telic.

Are soldiers' complaints listened to? The answer is yes. Last October the briefing team informed the Army Board of the

five main issues arising from its summer tour. Top complaint among junior ranks was the issue of the other-arms bergen, which wasn't big enough to accommodate all their warfighting kit. They asked for the infantry version.

The infantry bergen is now being issued and the other-arms version withdrawn.

Junior NCOs were aggrieved that on posting they had to hand in their webbing, carefully tailored to the individual, and draw a new set from their new unit. In infantry battalions they now keep their webbing on posting.

Most troops felt the green holdalls were too small to hold their complete issue of clothing. Now every soldier gets a large black holdall, and will

eventually be issued with two. On these pages are some of the issues raised on the latest tour and excerpts of CGS's responses to some of them.

On the road: CGS's Briefing Team at Camberley before setting out on another round of unit visits. From top, Lt Col Mark Blagbrough RWF, WO2 Alan Cameron RHF and Cpl Lesley Huddleston AGC (SPS) are keen to hear about the issues which concern soldiers, officers and families.

Picture: Graeme Main

IRRITANTS

TA ID cards. TA members questioned the policy of holding ID cards at unit level rather than issuing them to individuals. They said this sent a clear message that they could not be trusted.

CGS: We do not issue ID cards to most members of the TA for reasons of security, but in view of the weight of feeling I have asked that we consider how we could issue them more widely without undermining security procedures.

Families' ID. Wives wanted one ID card to be used at any duty station, as is the policy for RAF dependants, rather than have to arrange for a new ID card on arrival at every new duty station.

CGS: I take the point. Work is now in hand to see how we can take this forward.

Disturbance allowance. While accepting that costs incurred by single soldiers were significantly lower than those for married soldiers, many in single accommodation argued that they incurred some expenses and so deserved some recompense.

CGS: AG's staff have been looking at the issues relating to allowances for single and married personnel, and disturbance allowance is on their radar. This also relates to the other Services, so we cannot act in isolation. It is under consideration.

CALL-UP TIME TOO SHORT

Mobilisation – Visits were made to medical reservists training at Grantham; to 395 AD Troop (V) at Lyneham; to 165 Port Regiment (V) at Marchwood; and to the 51st Highland Regiment (V) platoon in Kabul.

Process – The Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre and the quality of training at Grantham drew widespread praise, particularly from those mobilised for the 1990 Gulf War. Medics said morale was higher because fewer Regular reservists had been mobilised than in 1990. They had had, apparently, a negative impact.

Notification. Many were critical of the short notice of compulsory mobilisation and blamed the Army. Air despatchers claimed that not one had received 14 days' notice and many had received only four.

Finance. Rates of pay were the biggest issue for those at Lyneham and Marchwood, and in particular the ceiling of £22,650 for corporals and below, and the amount of detail required to justify a Reserves Hardship Allowance. Some said they were paying the Army for the privilege of being mobilised.

At Marchwood, with an average age over

41, it was said even junior ranks would command wages above the ceiling. In Kabul, not one reservist had received Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) three weeks before the tour end.

Duration. All those mobilised for Op Telic had expected some indication of the length of their commitment, if only for the benefit of employers. Medics argued that to sustain civilian practices, they would prefer to report for repeated tours of, say three months, with three-month intervals.

Employment. The Kabul TA platoon said their security role fell short of expectations. They saw the deployment of Regular RE foot patrols as a snub.

● CBT team members noted in the report that they had been struck by the high and perhaps unreasonable expectations of some mobilised TA members, particularly in terms of finance and the idea of a duration of deployment.)

CGS comments: I am aware of the difficulties experienced during mobilisation but we must not forget the very positive aspects of what was achieved, for the first time on such a scale across the three Services and over a relatively short space of time. There is already work going on to see where we can improve our procedures and members of the TA who have been mobilised for the first rotation are seeing the benefits.

TOUR GAPS

WHILE many acknowledged the positive impact of the drawdown in the Balkans, there was consensus that the deployment to the Gulf would be for the long term.

Some said the Formation Readiness Cycle (FRC) had failed to withstand the test of Gulf deployments. For REME and R Signals in particular it had not ensured a reasonable interval between operational tours. Some families favoured four-month tours, accepting that they would be more frequent and that there would be no R&R.

CGS comments: I am aware of the concerns of those in the combat service support arms and efforts are being made at Glasgow to reduce their turbulence, where possible. I am interested by the suggestion that a four-month tour might be more appealing than a six-month deployment, and I have asked that further work be undertaken to identify the relative merits.

AND ...

FAMILIES

SPOUSES commented positively on the introduction of the Deployed Families' Support Fund and on the commitment of welfare officers to reducing the impact of Op Telic.

But it was also clear that families held high expectations about the pace of return from the Gulf and there was disenchantment that expectations were not being met.

These views were fuelled by feedback from theatre. The comment was heard regularly that "troops are sat on their packs in the middle of the desert doing nothing, so why can't they come home?" There was a view that if soldiers could return to attend courses, then they could attend the birth of a child.

CGS comments: Many families, rightly, saw the team's visit as an opportunity to vent pent-up frustrations. It was quite clear, however, that often unfounded comments from husbands in theatre had been amplified and accepted as fact within garrisons, with the result that there was a prevailing air that decisions had been taken without reason. This underscores the critical role played by the unit welfare officer in conveying accurately information from theatre and scotching rumour.

I sense that the unpredictable nature of warfighting has come as a shock to many people. There were positive aspects of our operations, not least the way in which our families were supported at home. It is incumbent upon us now to learn the lessons of the conflict.

FINANCIAL

PAY administration continued to be a major concern of many, irrespective of rank or location. The enquiry centre at Glasgow, introduced in February, was not popular among regimental admin staff, who said it constrained their ability to speak directly to subject matter experts.

Delayed payment of LSSA was an issue for Regulars and TA alike in Afghanistan. Long Service Advance of Pay (LSAP) continued to be contentious, with most senior NCOs in favour of reducing the qualification age at least to 30 or the 12-year point.

Late Entry officers wanted to know why they lost three years of their pension on commissioning.

CGS comments: If we expect our allowances to be paid in full and on time we must ensure that what we submit is timely and accurate. Examples of problems over LSSA quoted indicate that oversights were made at unit level. I am aware that at Glasgow considerable efforts are being made to improve how we deal with the information. The LSAP proposals raised are being considered by the staff and we can expect some progress shortly.

Pace of life. Officers said they were having to attend to competing and expanding demands in barracks, including new disciplinary procedures, Investors in People and health-and-safety issues. These impacted on other, arguably more pertinent, aspects of command and training.

Equipment. Concerns that soldiers would not feel confident in SA80 A2, highlighted in the last briefing team report, proved generally unfounded. The few concerns raised reflected an impatience to receive the upgraded weapons. Lack of available IT equipment was a major frustration for young officers and senior NCOs.

Belize. Troops were enthused by the prospect of an increase in training levels in Belize to cater for light-role battalions, but disappointed at the lack of training resulting from the level of operations elsewhere. AAC pilots were frustrated at the short notice of postings to Belize, while REME staff were concerned at the loss of yet another appealing posting due to the introduction of civilian helicopters.

Families were concerned at the lack of funding for an annual return flight to the UK.

Brunei. Gurkhas argued for local overseas allowance (LOA) in Brunei, in common with their British counterparts. British families asked for the establishment of a padre. Junior ranks accommodation was said to be particularly poor.

Falkland Islands. Concerns were raised at apparent anomalies in disciplinary procedures between the RAF and the Army, although this was being addressed within theatre. There was unease at the lack of provision of guaranteed flights to accompany schoolchildren to and from the UK.



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The overworked vet

IN 2002 a vet in Northern Ireland was found guilty of conspiracy to defraud the MoD and given a 15-month prison sentence.

The vet was found guilty of assisting with fraudulent claims for animals said to have been traumatised by low-flying Army helicopters.

To make a compensation claim, farmers needed to provide evidence that a post-mortem examination of the animal had been carried out by a vet.

The vet allegedly undertook 9,000-post mortems and claims ranged up to £8,000.

Fortunately, the culprit gave the game away by claiming to have completed 200 post-mortems in a single day.

Nice little pension earner

A pensions clerk was sharing an office in Glasgow with a colleague. To generate payment of pensions, each clerk had to enter a code into a computer.

One clerk went on holiday, giving a personal code to the colleague to enable pensions payments to continue.

Armed with both codes, the second clerk generated payments to a fictitious person using the BACS system. Twelve months and 17 transactions later, he had embezzled £479,000.

Unfortunately transaction number 18 went wrong and he ordered a cheque by mistake. He is now regretting his greed – in prison.

Let's nick 'em

Fraud is costing the MoD millions of pounds and the law needs your help

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Graeme Main

FRAUD cost the MoD more than £2 million in 2000, but the Department is fighting back.

This month it is launching an initiative to tackle theft and corruption.

Gen Sir Michael Walker, the Chief of Defence Staff, has lent his support to a campaign which will be hammered home via posters, advertisements, website information and awareness presentations.

DS Robert Allen, head of the MoD Police's fraud squad, and Paul Archer, head of the Defence Fraud Analysis Unit, told *Soldier* the average fraudster was a very ordinary individual, perhaps the person you are working alongside as you read this.

Vehicles, tools, fuel, clothing, ceremonial kit, foodstuffs – practically anything that can be picked up – have been reported stolen.

Outright theft is one form of the problem, fraud another. Typically, it involves

an act of deception such as forging a signature on a claim or making a false statement about personal circumstances.

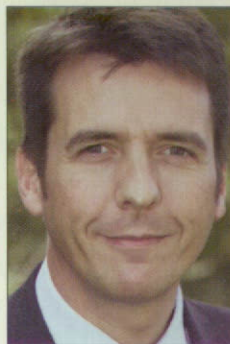
DS Allen said: "We are joining together to protect assets being targeted from within – such as false travel and subsistence claims and dodgy flexitime forms – but from the outside, too.

"This initiative aims to bring the Services along with what we have been doing with the civilian side for some time. Our message is: 'Something wrong – tell us'.

"It's all about people anywhere within the MoD – Service or civilian – reporting suspicions. They are the people who have the knowledge and we can develop that intelligence to target criminal activity."

DS Allen said fraud could have an impact on front-line soldiers. "If resources are misused or subject to product substitution in the procurement process, soldiers on the front-line are going to suffer because of a lack of resources or through inferior products."

About 200 cases of suspected fraud are reported every year. These can range in value from a few pounds to millions. "Historically vulnerable areas have included property management and maintenance."



DS Robert Allen

DS Allen quoted a fraud perpetrated by a contractor, which, on face value, appeared to be worth only a few pounds. On investigation it had turned into a small fortune.

"He was providing accommodation services for married quarters," said the head of the fraud squad. "The work involved fitting carpets, for which he was paid by the square metre, fitting new gripper and trimming door frames.

"On every job he inflated the area of work by up to 30 per cent. He used existing gripper and charged for new, and trimmed non-existent doors."

He was making only a few pounds on each house.

"Working closely with the Treasury Solicitor in this case we recovered £400,000 for the MoD," said Det Sup Allen. "What seemed a trivial amount grew into a huge sum."

Often the first lead on a case can come from a virtually unnoticed source.

"We want to alert people to the responsibility they have for their own area of work; for instance a storeman who notices that deliveries from a particular company are always one or two items short.

"Anyone on the ground floor can have an impact."

And that means you.

● If you have suspicions call the fraud hotline in confidence on 0800 161 3665.



Paul Archer





Built for the job: The Iveco Multi-Role Light Vehicle which will become a close armour scout when it is delivered after 2006

Pictures: Alvis Vickers

New scout's about

Alvis Vickers to build 486 new-generation recce vehicles for Army

A RUGGED and nippy all-rounder has been chosen to supply the Army's close reconnaissance, platoon-level command and general peacekeeping support vehicle requirements, writes **John Elliott**.

The Alvis-Iveco Multi-Role Light Vehicle will replace elements of the Army's fleet of Land Rovers, Saxons and Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) family of vehicles.

Alvis Vickers has won the £200 million MoD contract to develop and manufacture 486 of the Future Command and Liaison Vehicles (FCLV). After a demonstration phase running until 2005, the vehicles will be delivered to units between 2006 and 2009.

The highly mobile 4 x 4 is based on an Iveco design being developed for a major Italian Army programme.

Future Command and Liaison Vehicle (FCLV) fact file

Performance: Top speed of 100kph.

Size: Height 2.5m; length 4.7m; width 2.5m.

Protection: Against small arms, anti-personnel mines and artillery fragments.

Weapon: Can carry 7.62mm general purpose machine gun.

Airportability: C130J can carry two; Chinook can carry one underslung.

Lightly armoured, armed and air-portable, the FCLV is designed to work with artillery and on tank operations. In the former it would be flown in, driven towards the front line and used to spot targets for the gunners.

In the latter it would, for example, be used by the commander to move quickly around the battlefield to gain a bigger picture of where his units were and where they needed to be.

It will be fitted with the Bowman com-

munications system and a driver's night vision system using thermal imaging.

Col Charles Hookey, leader of the Close Armour Integrated Project Team at the Defence Procurement Agency in Bristol, said of the FCLV contract: "This has been a clean, comprehensive and well-run competition which has produced a clear winner, representing good value for money. It is excellent news for the British Army, the RAF Regiment and British industry."

● **LOCKHEED Martin Systems Integration** is to supply the MoD with a range of vehicle-mounted and air-portable electronic warfare equipment. The £150 million Soothsayer project will provide EW units of the Army and Royal Marines with state-of-the-art equipment designed to detect, identify and locate radio, radar and other electronic signals.

● **TWO** assessment phase contracts have been let by the Defence Procurement Agency to find a faster warning system for nuclear, biological and chemical attack. The Integrated Sensor Management Scheme (ISMS) will be designed to give timely warning and reporting into the command and decision-making chain. The aim is to deploy the initial capability in late 2005.

● **THE** first Trojan prototype is being evaluated by the Royal Engineers Trials and Development Unit at Bovington during a ten-month demonstration trials period. The breaching variant, based on Challenger 2 technology, will re-define what close support sappers can deliver to the all-arms battle. It will replace the ageing Chieftain Armoured Vehicle RE (AVRE).

Roving the range

Do you think you can drive off-road safely? We subjected three soldiers to the Land Rover Experience

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

IT'S muddy, slippery, boggy, wet and challenging... the ultimate in off-road driving.

Welcome to the Land Rover Experience, featuring rough and uncompromising terrain and expert instructors.

We persuaded three soldiers from the motor pool of the Tidworth-based 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, one of whom had passed his driving test only the week before, to accept the challenge. They headed for the

Off-road courses

Land Rover run off-road courses at centres near Aberdeen, Bangor in Northern Ireland, the Yorkshire Dales, Bala in North Wales, Market Harborough in Leicestershire, Milton Keynes, Honiton, Devon and Eastnor Castle.

Most are one day in length, although the winning course is two days. Prices range from £170 a person for the familiarisation course to £600 for the winning course. Land Rover provide the vehicles.

For further details go to www.landrover.com or ring 0800 376 9175

woods and muddy trails of the 5,000-acre Eastnor Castle estate near Ledbury, Herefordshire.

Conditions were made no easier by a heavy downpour which waterlogged parts of the course. Our instructors were Ken

Knight and Nigel Smith and our vehicles a Land Rover Defender 2.5 diesel and a top-of-the-range petrol-driven Range Rover 4.4 HSE.

"Coming here is all about making progress," said Nigel. "They will learn techniques to overcome obstacles in safety and with minimum impact on the environment."

Our three soldiers were on the one-day familiarisation course, which includes instruction on understanding the controls and how the vehicles work.

"The familiarisation course must be completed by anyone wanting to go on to the more advanced levels, such as winching and trailer-handling," said Nigel.

"It includes advanced steering techniques and using the gears instead of the brakes on those long, slippery slopes. Because we are off-road we have to ensure care is taken of the environment."

With that it was off to woods. The trails, barely wide enough for the vehicles, slide their way up and down hills offering side-slope leans of up to 20 degrees, splash through water courses and whip under branches which obstruct the driver's view.

Over-steering was the most common error, according to Nigel. "Because the

The whole experience is about faith in your own ability, faith in the vehicle and faith in the instructors

Best foot forward: Pte Allan Thomas negotiates the tricky trails through woodland

surface offers very little resistance, turning the wheel sometimes produces almost no effect on the direction of the car. So you put more on and still nothing happens, then more and more. Over-steering can severely damage the tyres and the driver loses control.

"Driving with the foot on the clutch is another common problem and something we do not encourage. When coming down a slope with feet above the pedals, the natural instinct is to brace yourself and the foot goes down. It mustn't."

Climbing and descending hills are about being in the right gear and proper use of the throttle.

At the end of a successful day, our three soldier "students", weary from concentration and the rush of adrenalin, proudly accepted their certificates. They had passed the challenge.

Thanks for the chance: The end of a gruelling day at Ledbury. From left: Pte Allan Thomas, Pte Mark Kendall, Nigel Smith (in vehicle), Pte Daniel Phillips and Ken Knight



Steep learning curve for Saxo driver

Pte Allan Thomas

I only passed my test one week before the course... in a Citroen Saxo. Today I was driving a Defender and a Range Rover.

The vehicles were so much bigger than anything I've driven before I just did not know what to expect. But it was OK. I was really nervous when the vehicle leaned on a side-slope. I was convinced I was going to hit a tree. The whole experience is about faith in your own ability, faith in the vehicle and faith in the instructors. They were clear, friendly and helpful and offered a lot of encouragement.

I would recommend everyone to come here.

Pte Mark Kendall

I have been driving for four years. I drive Land Rovers and have just com-

pleted the conversion to eight-tonners.

A lot of people think they can drive well off-road. They should come and learn how to do it properly.

This was a really worthwhile experience and very enjoyable.

Some of it could be quite frightening, especially going down the really steep, muddy, slippery hills, and just trying to control the vehicle.

Pte Daniel Phillips

I enjoyed today and learned a lot. I have not been off-road before so it was something new.

There were times when it was difficult and I over-steered because it wasn't always clear what the position of the wheels was. I have been driving about 18 months and would love the Army to buy some Range Rovers.



Up and over: Normal and not so normal as our trio negotiates the course on Eastnor Castle estate, through mud, water, wood and trail

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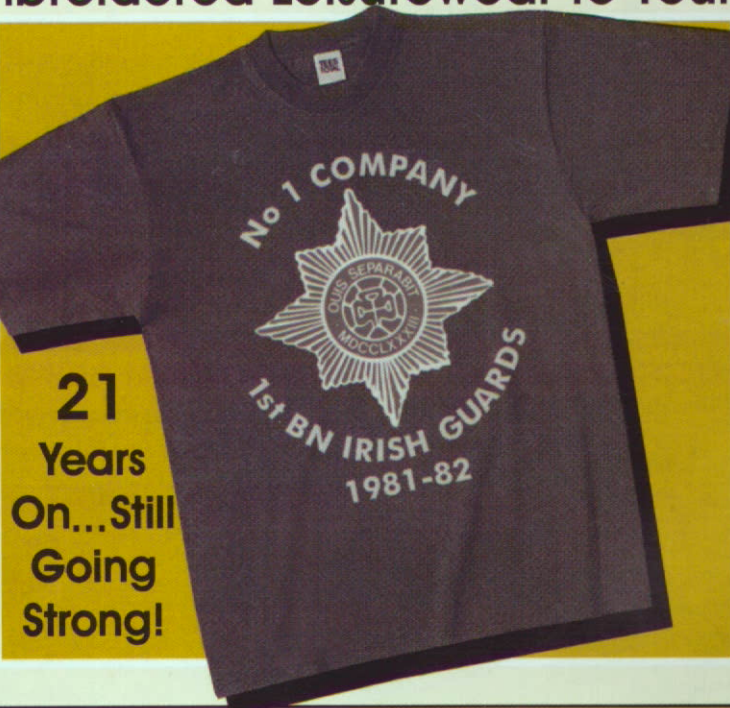
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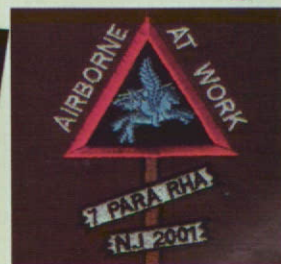
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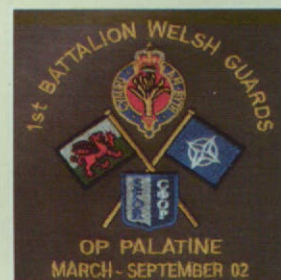
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Taking control

Army charity helps Emma to regain her independence

Report: Andrea Frazer
Picture: Chris Barker

ARMY wife Emma Dunks-Lunn has muscular dystrophy. At the age of 22, her body movement is restricted from the neck down and she relies on the use of a wheelchair at all times.

When husband LBdr Richard Lunn was deployed to the Gulf with 40 Regiment RA, she was left alone and immobile at home in north Yorkshire with their two-year-old son Lewis.

But thanks to a point in the right direction by her unit families' officer, Emma was given a grant by the Army Benevolent Fund towards the cost of a Balder electric-powered wheelchair and so regained the independence she needed to care for her son while her husband was away on duty.

Mrs Dunks-Lunn told *Soldier*: "I used to rely on my husband for so many activities that my condition restricts, particularly things like driving to the supermarket. The beauty of my new wheelchair is that it can be adapted to fit into a car and enables me to drive without help from others. It can also be adapted in the future to suit my needs as my health deteriorates.

"It has a lift system which helps me access places previously unreachable, like getting down to the floor to play with my son, reaching the shelves of my kitchen cupboards, or just boarding a bus.

"The Balder wheelchair is an expensive piece of kit but it's my legs and my lifeline. I'm in it every day of the week, so it has to be reliable and able to do everything I need it to.

The Army Benevolent Fund made a substantial contribution towards the cost of the wheelchair, along with the Royal British Legion and the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund.

Simon Brewis, Director Grants and Welfare at the ABF said: "Mrs. Dunks-Lunn has our admiration for the way she is coping with her health problems and bringing up her son when her husband is away from home.

"This is a most deserving case and we are only too pleased that our help has not

'The Balder wheelchair is an expensive piece of kit but it's my legs and my lifeline'

New set of wheels: Emma enjoys her new mobility with son Lewis and husband Richard

only improved the lives of a young family but has enabled LBdr Lunn to pursue his military career for as long as possible."

On his return from the Gulf, Richard said "It means a lot to me to know that from now on while I am away I don't have to worry about Emma and Lewis.

"We are so thankful for the support we have received from the Army Benevolent Fund.

"Emma is determined to maintain as

much control over her life as possible and this special wheelchair will enable her to do this. She is even looking to acquire some form of qualification which she would not have had the confidence or independence to do before."

The ABF provides support to serving and ex-serving Army personnel and their families in times of need.

● To contact the ABF call 020 7591 2000 or go to www.armybenfund.org



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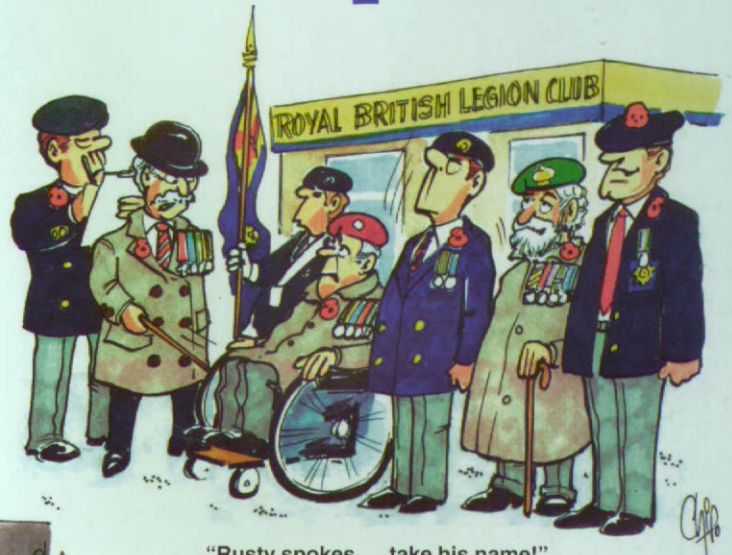


"You might well have to use a CD instead of a band, matey. . . but we absolutely refuse to march past to 'Boogie Nights'."

Remembered with pride



"Colditz veterans? Anybody seen the Colditz veterans?"



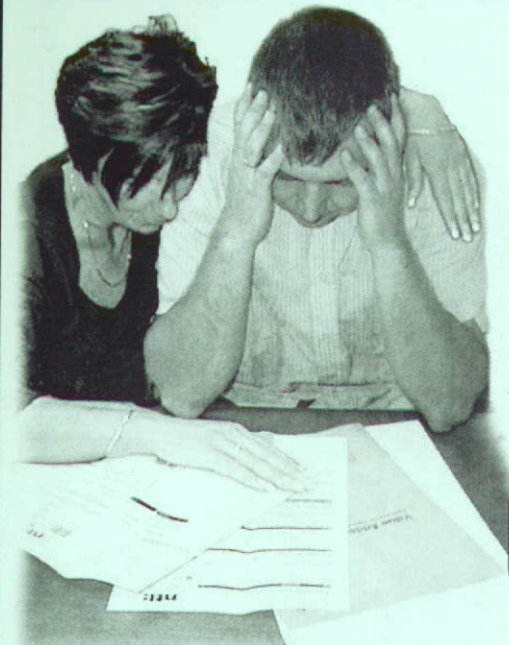
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Right: Pte John McDermond VC (1832-68), 47th (The Lancashire) Regiment of Foot, winning the Victoria Cross by saving Col Haly, his commanding officer, at Inkerman, on November 5, 1854

Oil by Louis William Desanges



Desperate days

Reports from Crimea alerted public to plight of their soldiers

IN 1854 the Crimean War had as strong an effect on the nation as the recent conflict in Iraq, writes **Jo Woolley of the National Army Museum.**

It saw the military might of the world's greatest empire – sent to teach the Russian Tsar a lesson – stretched almost to breaking point. The British Army was ill-prepared for war. Incompetent command famously caused disasters such as the Charge of the Light Brigade, where 600 soldiers rode into murderous Russian fire in the “valley of death”, and contributed to a far greater tragedy.

In the trenches besieging Sevastopol, soldiers in summer uniforms struggled to keep warm in the Russian winter, starved without rations and fuel with which to cook, and died of cholera and dysentery.

Army hospitals lacked the supplies to cope with the scale of the suffering and medical staff were overwhelmed. By Janu-

ary 1855 the rate of sickness and mortality in the Crimea was such that, without reinforcement, the British force was within 30 days of ceasing to exist.

Against all odds, the conflict was a victory for the British soldier. His discipline, bravery and heroism in battle was brought home to the British public by eye-witness accounts telegraphed by the world's earliest war correspondents.

These reports also brought into British homes the spectre of soldiers abandoned to cold, disease and official neglect. The storm of indignation that followed unseated the government, led to rapid reform and inspired the

striking of a new medal for valour – the Victoria Cross.

A new National Army Museum exhibition to mark the 150th anniversary of the war analyses the role of the Army command and the impact that civilians such as William Russell and Florence Nightingale made on its course.

Among the displays are the order that launched the charge, the prototype VC approved by Queen Victoria and some of the earliest war photography by Roger Fenton. Above all, letters, diaries, drawings, photographs and personal relics of the soldiers are drawn upon to tell the story of the Crimean War.



A Most Desperate Undertaking: The British Army in the Crimea, 1854-56 will be open until the end of next year at the National Army Museum in Chelsea. For more details, go

to www.national-army-museum.ac.uk

Above: Trumpeters Gritten and Lang of the Royal Artillery. The lad, William Lang, was barely 13 when he first heard the whistling of cannonballs on the banks of the Alma. He says he was frightened “for the first half hour, but has never been afraid of them since”. Photograph by R Howlett

Left: Group of the 47th in winter dress: Replacements for warm clothing lost on the supply ship *Prince* had begun to reach the Army in January. The gratitude of the soldiers was tempered by regret, as Capt William Radcliffe of the 20th Regiment noted: “I spoke to a man yesterday that was carrying some sheepskin coats on his back, and said what capital ones they were. He said: ‘Yes Sir, it’s a pity they didn’t come before so many poor fellows were in their graves’. I could not but agree with him.” Photograph by Roger Fenton



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Scimitar AT WAR

WINNER of this month's competition is LCpl Chris Glover of C Squadron, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, based at Imphal Bks, Osnabruck.

His picture of a Scimitar on the Al Faw peninsula impressed the judges with its simplicity, framed by a pale column of smoke drifting from a burning oilpipe on the other side of the water.

We "read" pictures from left to right – just like words – and the position of the Scimitar on the right of the frame draws the eye to the vehicle and then into the middle distance, just as the crew would have been doing, wondering what what was going on on the far bank.

Runners-up were LCpl April Rooney, a budding unit photographer with 4 R Irish, who submitted an atmospheric picture of a soldier in a riot helmet, and LCpl Hayley Dansie, of 6 Regiment RMP, also based in Northern Ireland, who transformed into a powerful image a simple clip of ammunition being loaded into a heavy-calibre weapon.

Top: Scimitar on the Al Faw, by LCpl Chris Glover. Right: Ammo, by LCpl Hayley Dansie. Below: Silhouette, by LCpl April Rooney

All pictures published in the magazine competition, which will run until February, will be judged for the £250 *Soldier* Award, one of the categories in the 2004 Army Photographic Competition.

Send your entries, preferably prints up to A4, to the Chief Photographer (address in Page 3), including a self-

addressed envelope for return, or e-mail them to phot@soldiermagazine.co.uk, indicating *Soldier* Photo Comp.

Competition closing dates: December – November 3; January – December 1.

Soldier competition rules apply. Query line: 01252 347357 or Aldershot mil 2357.

SOLDIER
Photographic Competition



2003 Army Photographic Competition – centre pages



When it all got too much for Sharon

SHARON thought it was a good idea at the time. Her husband was serving in Iraq and she was struggling with two small children. She lived a long way from a bus route and could not drive.

She had got used to depending on her husband to drive them all to the supermarket to do the weekly shop. There she could buy the good-value clothes for the family.

As soon as her husband was away she began to struggle. She missed him terribly and didn't have any close friends. She felt trapped in her isolated surroundings and, in a desperate attempt to feel better, started taking taxis to town, where she would spend large sums on DVDs to fill the lonely evenings.

She also bought a new clothes for herself and the children using the store cards offered to her whenever she went out. On top of this Sharon started looking at catalogues and bought a load of stuff through them.

She began to realise that she was buying more than she needed and getting into a mess, but she somehow could not stop. It wasn't long before bills were arriving way over the amount that she could afford. When the

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your
money



Credit Action Director Keith Tondeur, will be pleased to answer, in confidence, specific questions addressed to the Editor.

first of the threatening letters began to appear, she was unable to sleep because of worry and ended up, exhausted, in her doctor's surgery. Her GP realised her lack of sleep was due to depression and worry and by gently probing was able to see that this was caused by her overspending.

Sharon's doctor did a great job in restoring her self-esteem, but he also encouraged her to get help to sort out her mounting debt problems. He gave Sharon a letter explaining her situation and why she had overspent on so

many different things. Sharon had already put to one side a copy of *Soldier* that had a debt advice column encouraging anyone struggling to phone the Consumer Credit Counselling Service for free advice on 0800 1381111.

She did so, explaining her situation and telling the counsellor about the letter from her GP. She was sent a sample letter to send out to all the people she owed money, which she did, together with a copy of the letter she had from her GP. Sharon was delighted when she received letters in reply accepting her offers of repayment. Some even agreed to cancel the interest charges. The store where she had bought the most clothes recently agreed to take them back and refund the value.

Things were soon under control and Sharon is determined she will never get into such a state again. She has started making lists of things she will buy only when she needs them and has also gained the confidence to start taking driving lessons now her husband is back home.

0800 1381111 or
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It started with a kiss

The Scottish actor-comedian enthuses and jokes about life with the military as the second series of *Red Cap* is filmed

Interview: Chris Horrocks
Pictures: Graeme Main and BBC

THERE'S a scene in the next series of the TV drama *Red Cap* in which Sgt Bruce Hornsby pauses during his morning jog around a British Army base in Germany to flirt with a young female colleague beside a Land Rover.

As he leans over to steal a kiss, the camera picks up the bizarre sight of a Saxon armoured personnel carrier corkscrewing down a sloping road towards them, seemingly out of control.

In the nick of time Hornsby spies the rogue APC and pulls back from what might have been the kiss of death. The runaway Saxon misses the Land Rover by a hair's breadth and all hell breaks loose.

Typical day on a modern Army base? Of course not, but not necessarily that far-fetched.

The two Special Investigation Branch warrant officers who advise on accuracy and authenticity – WO1 Clive Robins and WO2 Gary Ward, both from HQ Provost Marshal Army at Upavon – don't vet the scripts, but they are on hand to ensure nothing too silly reaches the screen.

The Royal Military Police and the

Army in general gave the first series full marks for credibility. This, balanced by the dramatic licence applied by the producers and writers, helped to attract more than seven million viewers.

By the umpteenth take of the Saxon scene, filmed at the Army Training Regiment Pirbright, in Surrey, Gordon Kennedy, the actor-comedian who plays Hornsby, had shouted so much that he had lost his voice.

An interview seemed out of the question, but after lubricating his larynx with water, Kennedy was soon back to his fast-talking, wise-cracking best and launching into a spontaneous outburst of praise for his hosts.

"The Army are really, really helpful, and the SIB in particular," he enthused. "It's important that, as far as we can, we make it authentic and they have been fantastic to work with. They will tell us how things should be done but they won't be oppressive about it.

"They are our eyes and ears for authenticity. Coming back for series two there was that worry that if we hadn't done the job right in the first series a lot of people would say it was rubbish.

"But what's been brilliant is that all the people that we work with, not just the SIB, have all said they thought *Red Cap* was very authentic.

"In a way that is great because the SIB are not the most loved part of the Army.

"But those advisers have been fantastic in their support, helping us on all the details – how you arrest someone, for example, because with

the Army there is so much procedure involved; how you interview someone of a more senior rank than you. It's all so different from normal cop shows."

Inevitably, those details extend to uniforms and how they are worn.

"There has been a huge saga about berets which has been very funny," said Kennedy with a grin. "Every time we walk out of our dressing room you see some Army guy going 'Geeez... look at that!' and you have to go and get your beret put on right.

"In the first episode of the new series we are in Bosnia, which is great because we are all in uniform. It's the first time we wear the combats and berets and stuff but there was an awful lot of beret-adjusting going on for about an hour-and-a-half before the cameras rolled.

"They wouldn't let us anywhere near the cameras because half of us were walking about looking like Frank Spencer."

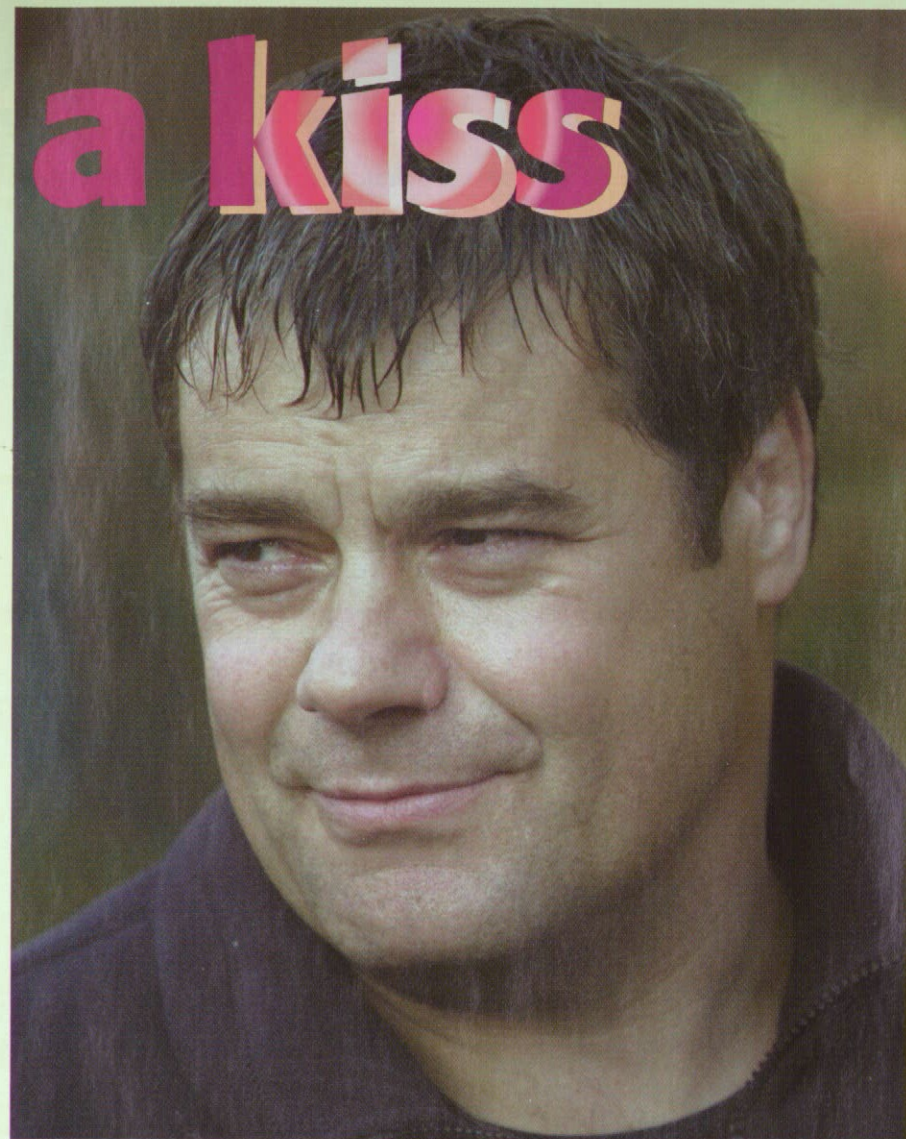
Kennedy said he didn't know why the show was so popular.

"I hope it's because it's entertaining and funny, but it also has a feeling of being set in the real world. As I say, it's not your normal cop show – it's got a lot of excitement because it involves the Army and a lot of the action takes place out of doors and is stunt-oriented."

‘Something about the Armed Forces appealed to me but I was never tempted to join – too scared’



Gordon Kennedy with star Tamzin Outhwaite in an episode of *Red Cap*



Ever-present grin: Gordon Kennedy, left, said: "Half of us were walking about looking like Frank Spencer"

Gordon Kennedy was brought up in East Lothian, where his father was a doctor who served in the RAF in Aden and his mother a nurse. At school, Kennedy junior excelled at rugby. He later trained as a PE teacher at the Scottish School of Physical Education (SSPE).

Any affinity he now has with the military stems from that time, when he spent four years working in a close environment with a small group of people. He described it as "a very regimented life" – a physical regime had to be adhered to.

"There was the sort of camaraderie that I now recognise working with the Army, like the guys driving the APCs or in the bands.

"So there was something about the Armed Forces that appealed to me but I was never tempted to join – too scared."

The wicked grin tells you that the big Scot, who first found fame in the Channel 4 comedy show *Absolutely* and went on to present the Lottery show, co-star with Ian Glen in *Glasgow Kiss* and guest on *Have I Got News for You*, cannot be serious for too long.

So how did this PE teacher become an actor?

"When I first came to London and people used to ask where I'd trained, I'd say the SSPE and all these directors would think it was an acting school in Scotland," he quipped.

At school he had taken part in charity shows and with friends he started performing comedy at the Edinburgh Fringe. Several of them moved to London and *Absolutely* followed. He and three others from the show are still partners in a production company.

Kennedy, who is married with two children, was typically self-deprecating when asked how the flirtation between him and the Royal Military Police woman developed.

"Oh, I can't give anything away, but it's very, very exciting," he said, with a twinkle in his eye and just a hint of irony.

"As you can imagine, for a man of my age, it's not going to get too serious. After all, we don't want anyone switching over to watch something else thinking, 'Oh my God, he's going to take his clothes off', do we?"

Series two of *Red Cap*, starring Tamzin Outhwaite, is due to start in the New Year.

So what perception of the Army did he think viewers would get from the show?

"It gives a positive view but not a PR view. I've been really impressed with the honesty in the stories, which are based on things that might have happened. Some of them aren't very complimentary about people who have served in the Army. I think it is a smart move not to try to soft-soap the viewer. The point is, the SIB does investigate serious crimes in the Army, so you can't get away from it, you can't cover it up. But I think also people wouldn't like it if it was some asinine, distilled thing – it wouldn't work and we all live in the real world."

The real world involves controversial events in which the British Army is closely involved, but Kennedy would not be drawn on his personal standpoint in the moral debate over the

war with Iraq. And the almost ever-present smile faded for a while as he referred sympathetically to the recent deaths of members of the Royal Military Police while serving in that troubled country.

‘When you work with the Armed Forces, to a large extent any personal view you may have of the Iraq situation is removed because you come to realise they are out there doing a job’

"When you work with the Armed Forces, to a large extent any personal view you may have of the Iraq situation is removed because you come to realise they are out there doing a job," he said. "Obviously this has come very close to home with the deaths of those RMP guys.

"But the Forces are saying that the rights and wrongs of it are not for them to debate. They are the

practitioners – they are not the ones making the corporate policy decisions.

"You have to respect them and their bravery and commitment."

Snap judgement

Top photographers frame up for success in Army's annual competition

WINNING entries in the annual Army Photographic Competition provide an insight into the wide spectrum of activities undertaken by British Army personnel during 2002, writes **Andrea Frazer**.

The competition, open to amateur and professional photographers, attracted more than 250 images shot between February 2002 and January 2003.

Top prize for the Army's professional Photographer of the Year went to Stuart Bingham, Shrewsbury-based HQ 5

Division's highly experienced and well-travelled MoD cameraman.

Regular Army and TA personnel, staff and cadets of the Army Cadet Force as well as MoD civilians and contractors who work directly for the Army were eligible to compete for prizes including digital cameras, photo equipment and cheques ranging from £200 to £1,000.

Many aspiring photographers, particularly at unit level, are reluctant to enter the prestigious event, believing their subjects are not exciting enough. But as this year's competition illustrates, photo opportunities in the Army can crop up in almost any location.

Short-listed photographs included moments captured during exercises in Botswana, Kenya and the USA, operations in the Falklands and Northern Ireland, training in Otterburn and Salisbury, a cycle race on the Isle of Man and, believe it or not, Christmas lunch at Gibraltar Barracks in Surrey.

Maj Gen David Richards, Assistant Chief of the General Staff and host of

Helping hand (left): The best Army PR image of the year, by Sgt Brian Gamble. In flames (below): Fire strike image from Stuart Bingham's winning portfolio



Charging ahead: A Challenger 2 main battle tank pictured on Salisbury Plain by 43 Bde's Sgt Brian Gamble

this year's awards ceremony in London, said: "Army life provides superb opportunities for the amateur and professional photographers among us. Congratulations go to all the winners, each of whom has demonstrated a high level of photographic skill. With the excellent array of prizes on offer, I may be tempted to enter next year myself."

Expectations for the 2004 competition are high already. The eagerly-awaited event is expected to attract a significant number of powerful images shot during the Army's operations in Iraq.

Maj Peter Griffiths, who will organise the competition for the Director of Corporate Communication (Army), said: "I'd encourage soldiers who have taken photographs in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Northern Ireland and anywhere else they have been in the world to enter them."

"Lots of people have digital cameras so there must be hundreds of great Army-themed images out there and we would love to see them."

The format is being re-designed to make it more accessible to amateurs and to provide plenty of scope for the imagination. Only photographs taken between January 2003 and January 2004 will be accepted.

Judging is likely to take place next March and full details can be found on DCIs and the Army website: www.army.mod.uk/competitions/apc2003.htm



Fire power (top): A Milan anti-tank missile, captured by WO2 Pete Bristo, roars down the range at Otterburn. It won best picture in the Army equipment category.

Behind the wire (above): Best amateur photograph, taken by Maj Jonny Crook, KORBR, of 16 Air Assault Brigade. Cooling down (right): Sgt Paul Brownbridge, HQNI, impressed the judges with this digitally-manipulated image



The judges

Dave Barlow, Art Editor of *Focus*, the MoD newspaper, Garry Coward-Williams, Editor of *Amateur Photographer*, and, representing the Army, Col Dick Harrold of DCC(A).

The competition was sponsored by Olympus, Publicis, Services Sound and Vision Corporation, Nikon, Fuji, Canon, Kodak, *Loaded Magazine*, AGFA and *Soldier Magazine*.

All the results

Best individual portfolio, sponsored by BSV: Stuart Bingham, HQ 5 Division (£1,000 cheque).

Best Army equipment photo (Olympus): WO2 Pete Bristo, ARRC (digital camera); 2nd, Sgt Brian Gamble, 43 (Wessex) Brigade (digital camera).

Best personnel photo (Publicis): Graeme Main, *Soldier Magazine* (£500 cheque); 2nd, WO1 Chris Cox, 3 RSME (£300); 3rd, Steve Dock, *Soldier Magazine* (£200).

Best recreational/sports photo (Nikon): Stuart Bingham, HQ 5 Division (£250).

Best amateur photo (Fuji): Maj Jonny Crook, 16 Air Assault Brigade (digital camera).

Best use of digital medium (Canon): Sgt Paul Brownbridge, HQ Northern Ireland (digital camera); 2nd, Sgt Brian Gamble, 43 (Wessex) Brigade (digital camera).

Best use of colour (Kodak and *Loaded Magazine*): WO1 Chris Cox, 3 RSME (£300); 2nd, WO2 Pete Bristo, ARRC (one year's magazine subscription).

Best Army PR image of the year (AGFA): Sgt Brian Gamble, 43 (Wessex) Brigade (£1,000).

***Soldier* award for best single image short-listed by the magazine:** Sgt Gary Ranu, 1 LI (£250).

The background picture, of paras on patrol in the Falklands, is part of Stuart Bingham's winning portfolio



Gateway to the great outdoors

Former gunner offers soldiers the chance to return to Scandinavia

Report: Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

SHORTLY after taking up an invitation to become a full-time instructor at the British Outward Bound Centre (BOBC) in the small town of Evje in Southern Norway in 1983, Brian Desmond fell head over heels in love ... twice.

As well as meeting his wife, Ingunn, the former Royal Artillery gunner began an enduring affair with the countryside surrounding the BOBC, which offered British soldiers a gateway to a diverse range of recreational and adventure training activities for more than 30 years before it closed its doors for business in 1991.

"After spending my first year in Norway I knew that I was finished as a Brit," explained the former Great Britain biathlete, who won the National Biathlon Championships in 1976 and attended three World Ski Orienteering Championships before giving up competing in favour of coaching.

"You can not fail to be enchanted by this country's outstanding scenery and it didn't take much to persuade me to make Evje, and the Setesdal Valley in which it sits, my home."

Two decades have done little to temper the expatriate's ardour towards a daily backdrop of log cabins, lush forestry and snow-capped mountains reflected on the surfaces of brilliant blue fjords, and Desmond is keen to share the object of his affections with others.

"Closing the BOBC was a huge

mistake and one which has denied soldiers the chance to experience adventure training in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

"Norway has everything Canada has to offer in terms of adventure training activities with the only real difference being that it doesn't take a day on a plane to get here.

"We've got the mountains, rivers and lakes, and extreme weather conditions in the winter, and all within close distance of each other. You can step off a plane, coach or ferry in the morning and be abseiling or canoeing by early afternoon."

In a bid to reintroduce the Scandinavian countryside to troops based in the UK and Germany, Desmond's travel company, Destination Setesdal, has struck a deal with the local council that will allow units to visit Evjemoen, a former training establishment for Norwegian conscripts and members of Norway's elite King's Guard.

Situated 40 miles north of the city of Kristiansand on the outskirts of Evje, the facility has benefited from a £10 million face-lift and now boasts traditional Norwegian-style accommodation, complete with saunas, a modern canteen and kitchens, a fully-equipped gymnasium and football pitch, and even its own cinema.

An ideal base for adventure training expeditions, Evjemoen is within easy reach of challenging climbing

areas for abseiling, 3,000ft hills for hiking, Europe's longest outdoor go-kart track, a six-hole golf course and driving range, and a spectacular 40km long inland fjord for kayaking and fishing. A short drive to the north and soldiers can find themselves in the mountains, while to the south lie the skerries, ideal for sea canoeing, and some of Norway's most challenging and impressive glaciers.

One of the star attractions of the area is the El Dorado of white-water rafting, the River Otra, which, with its attractive series of waterfalls and rapids, attracts thrill-seekers from across the globe.

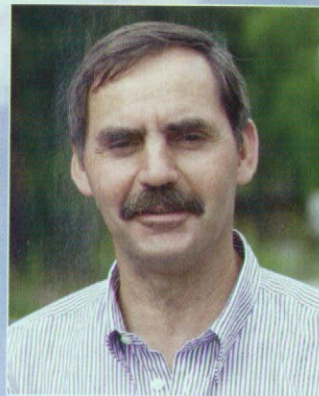
"This is one of the best rivers in the world for white-water rafting and kayaking," explained Tim Davis, a former staff sergeant in the Army Physical Training Corps and now the owner of the Setesdal

Rafting Centre in Evje. "The Otra is a lot wider and steeper than most rivers, which makes it very exciting to negotiate as there are not lengthy gaps between each set of rapids.

"It is a seasonal river and when the water levels are at their highest some of the rapids would prove a challenge for even the most accomplished oarsmen.

"It is the most rafted river in Norway and we had 8,000 people pass through this centre last year. The sheer volume of people coming here speaks for itself."

For winter activities, there is a local ski stadium with 20-target biathlon range, an 8km floodlit cross-country ski track and reserve cross-country



Biathlete: Brian Desmond



Viking voyage: Evjemoen can offer British soldiers access to a vast array of adventure training and recreational activities such as climbing and abseiling, top right, white-water rafting on the River Otra, above, and go-karting at the longest outdoor track in Europe, right

ski arena. In addition there are more than 60km of prepared ski trails, a downhill centre for alpine skiers and snowboarders, and the nearby mountains become an ideal playground for snow and ice climbers.

"Evjemoen means that there are once again, after a break of 12 years, the facilities available for soldiers to experience a Viking adventure," said Desmond. "The combination of having fantastic nature on its doorstep and its proximity to Germany and the UK makes Norway a convenient and cost-effective location to conduct expeditions and adventure training."

Evjemoen has already been given a stamp of approval by the Adventurous Training Wing at HQ Land, which means that units using the centre for level three expeditions will be eligible for financial support.

The facilities are available to Service personnel all-year-round for summer and winter activities. Units can book accommodation on an ad-hoc or time-share basis. For more information visit www.destination.setesdalnett.com or e-mail briandes@frisurf.no



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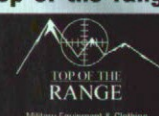
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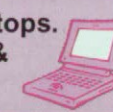


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THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Terriers' track triumph

Soldier talks exclusively to the 2003 European ASCAR champion

Interview: Andy Simms

IN Deuce Racing RML's driver Ben Collins, the Territorial Army backed the runaway winner of the 2003 European ASCAR racing series.

Behind the wheel of his TA-sponsored 450bhp camouflaged Chevrolet, dubbed the Stealth Car, the ex-Formula One test driver won six races, smashed four lap records and set nine fastest laps before securing the championship title with a record points total in front of a 40,000 strong crowd at Rockingham Speedway.

"It has been a fantastic year for me, but to be honest I had high hopes from the very beginning of the series," explained the 28-year-old, who only arrived on the ASCAR circuit, recognised as the fastest growing area of motor sport in the UK, in time for the last race of 2002.

"Since arriving from America ASCAR has gone from strength to strength and has attracted big names like Colin McRae, so when the opportunity arose last year to become involved I leapt at the chance.

"My goal in racing has always been to race against the best and to beat the best, and I am overjoyed that my performance this season was good enough to win me the series.

"Deuce Racing are known for being a winning team and getting a well known sponsor like the TA on board was a real boost – and without doubt gave me the best-looking car on the grid.

"There are many synergies between ASCAR and the military and

I believe that is why the sponsorship deal has proved so prosperous. Racing is all about teamwork, fitness, personal challenge and dedication – all attributes that I am sure you can also find in abundance in the Army."

Unlike most of the other drivers he consistently beat to take the chequered flag this season, Collins began racing at a relatively late age having grown up harbouring ambitions of reaching breakneck speeds not on the tarmac of a race track, but in the air.

"I always wanted to be a fighter pilot, but all that changed on my 18th birthday when my parents arranged for me to spend a day at Silverstone," explained Collins, whose Stealth Car is capable of hitting speeds of more than 190mph. "I became hooked instantly and one year later I finished fifth in the National Formula First Championship.

"When I first started out the fact that I never graduated from go-karting was constantly rubbed in my face by other drivers, but thankfully I proved myself on the track and do not get as much stick nowadays."

Indeed, as well as silencing the playful jibes of his peers, Collins's expeditious rise through motor sport's ranks and ability to run at the front and beat drivers of greater experience at every level has earned him acclaim from some of racing's top names.

Former Formula One driver Martin Donnelly, who was lucky to escape with his life when he crashed his Lotus-Lamborghini during a practice session for the Spanish Grand Prix in 1990, once described Collins as "an aggressive driver with phenomenal natural speed."

And after driving for Jackie Stewart's Formula Vauxhall team in the 1995 Winter Series and racing against the 1969 World Champion's Formula Three team, Stewart expressed the belief that Collins's talent would take him all the way to the starting grid of Formula One.

The prospect of pitting his skills against the Schumacher brothers and the rest of racing's multi-million pound elite is one that naturally appeals to the self-confessed adrenalin junkie.

"For the time being I am content competing in the ASCAR series and will definitely be back to defend my title next year," Collins enthused. "Ultimately I have got my eye on moving into NASCAR or Formula One.

"NASCAR is the biggest and most successful championship in the world and has the earning potential to match. I'd be lying if I said that I don't want to have all the trappings that come with being a top driver, but that is not why I got into racing.

"My main motivation, like soldiers in the British Army, is that I want to be the best."

Being sponsored by the Territorial Army gave me the best-looking car on the grid



Pole position: Stealth Car's racing driver Ben Collins celebrates winning the 2003 European ASCAR series at Rockingham Speedway

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

ATHLETICS: 4 Div Superteams competition, men's standings – 1, ATR Pirbright A; 2, RMAS; 3, 8 CS Coy REME; 4, 10 Regt RLC; 5, 16 CS Med Regt; 6, ATR Pirbright B; 7, ATFC; 8, 3 RSME A; 9, HQ 4 Div; 10, 47 Regt RA; 11, ATR Pirbright C; 12, ATR Winchester; 13, RMP CPU; 14, 1 Coldm Gds; 15, 3 RSME B; 16, SEME.

Women's standings – 1, RMAS; 2, ATFC; 3, ATFC (ETS); 4, ATR Pirbright; 5, 16 CS Med Regt; 6, SEME.

FENCING: Inter-Services championship winners, men's – RAF. **Women's** – Army. **Men's sabre** – RN. **Women's sabre** – RAF. **Men's foil** – RAF. **Women's foil** – Army (SSgt Sonia Greacen (RLC) and LCpl Jayne Perry (REME)). **Men's epee** – RAF. **Women's epee** – Army (Capt Liz McLellan (RLC) and OCdt Louise Dolden (RMAS)). **Master swordsman** – Sub Lt Keith Bowers (RN). **Master swordswoman** – LCpl Perry. **Men's champion at Arms** – Wg Cdr George Liston (RAF). **Women's champion at Arms** – OCdt Naomi Lee (NUOTC).

FOOTBALL: Massey Trophy – AAC 0 RLC

3 (Cpl Brough (2), LCpl Sullivan); CA Mus 0 R Signals 8 (Sgt Collins (2), Cpl Stephenson (2), Cpl Moffatt (2), Cpl Leonard, Cpl Simpson); Int Corps 2 (LCpl Tarr (2)) AMS 0; APTC 0 RE 6 (Spr O'Neill, Sgt Lawrenson, WO2 Smith, LCpl McCormick, LCpl Pierce, Spr Tyler); Int Corps 0 R Signals 9 (Sig Wood (4), Simpson (3), Cpl O'Connor, Cpl Richardson); Infantry 4 (Pte Brown (2), Pte King (2)) APTC 0; RE 3 (Spr Lawson, O'Neill, McCormick) RAC 0; RLC 3 (Sgt Hope, Pte Biggs, Pte Ayre) AGC 1 (WO2 Kincaid); CA Mus 1 AAC 5 (WO2 Johnstone (3), Sgt White, Cpl Peters).

Pricewaterhouse Cooper League – AGC 9 REME 2; AMS 2 R Signals 4; Int Corps 0 RLC 4.

ROUNDERS: Inter-unit championships – 1, QRL; 2, HQ NI; 3, 15 Sig Regt. **Inter-corps championships** – 1, R Signals; 2, AGC.

RUGBY UNION: APTC tour to Australia – Melbourne University 27 APTC 18; HMAS Cerabus 19 APTC 26.

Infantry tour to South Africa – Southern Natal 10 Infantry 47; Natal Duikers 15

Infantry 3; Pietermaritzburg 24 Infantry 18.

SHOOTING: Home nations match – 1, Combined Services (1,759pts); 2, England (1,753pts); 3, Scotland (1,747pts); 4, Ireland (1,725pts); 5, Wales (1,698pts).

SQUASH: 5 Div championships, doubles – 1, WO2 Ian Piers (14 Sig Regt) and SSgt Jason Bayles (14 Sig Regt); 2, WO1 Shaun Carey (Royal School of Signals) and SSgt Keith Humphries (RWXY). **Veterans** – 1, Lt Col Peter Russell (HQ AG); 2, Maj Simon Ward (HQ 5 Div). **Over 40's** – 1, WO1 Carey; 2, Capt Adi Woodley (Royal School of Signals). **Over 35's** – 1, Capt Nirmal Battachan (30 Sig Regt); 2, WO1 Chris Harwood (USU). **Novice Plate** – 1, WO2 Willows (22 Engr Regt); 2, Maj James Francis-Jones (HQ AG). **Novice Open** – 1, SSgt Bayles; 2, Sgt Keers (22 Engr Regt). **Open Super Plate** – 1, WO1 Carey; 2, Sgt Dir Pun (30 Sig Regt). **Open Plate** – 1, Pte Matyasira (29 Regt RLC); 2, Capt Woodley. **Open men's** – 1, WO2 Ian Pierce (14 Sig Regt); 2, Capt Battachan.



Final round for Powell

Coach counting on new faces to deliver championship title

Report: Andy Simms
Picture: Graeme Main

SPEAKING on the eve of his third and final season in charge at Aldershot's Maida Gymnasium, Army boxing coach SSgt Vinny Powell confessed to having mixed emotions about his team's forthcoming campaign.

"It is hard not to feel a little down about coming to the end of my tenure as coach," explained the former Welsh ABA lightweight champion who retired from the ring after representing Great Britain at the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur.

"When I stopped fighting I never imagined that I would get the same buzz from boxing again, but this job has renewed my passion for the sport and when I go I am sure that I will miss it."

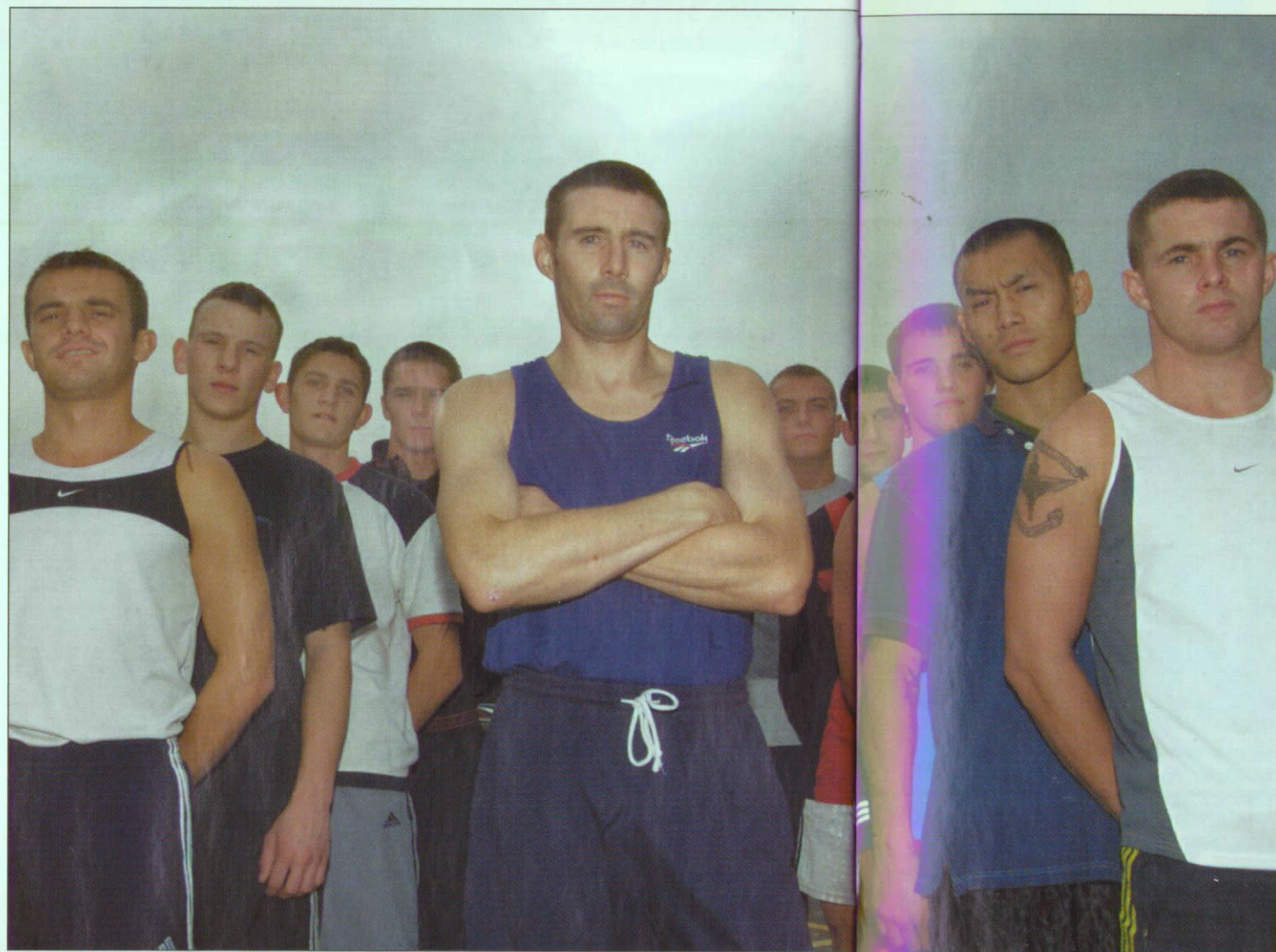
However, the knowledge that he must soon step down from the post he was recommended for in the summer of 2001 by his predecessor and former Great Britain team-mate WO2 Neil McCallum, has not prevented the once quick-footed lightweight from getting excited about the prospects of his team this term.

"The competitive season cannot get going soon enough," enthused Powell, who spent six seasons on the Army team under the tutelage of Mick Gannon during the 90s. "It feels great to be back in training with the squad after the summer break."

"Whatever happens this year I want the lads to enjoy their boxing, but our main goal as ever will be to retain the Combined Services championships and win as many English, Welsh and Scottish ABA titles as possible."

If Powell is to sign off on a winning note, he will do so with a vastly different team from the one that recorded the Army's 21st successive Combined Services victory in Portsmouth earlier this year.

"We lost some of our top boys in the summer," Powell added. "Some, like LCpl Tony Davis (1 RRF), who is training full-time with England in preparation for next year's Olympic Games, for good reasons and some not so good. Tony's situation is great for him but bad for us and we will miss his quality this season, but I



New kids on the block: Army boxing coach SSgt Vinny Powell, centre, with the raw recruits he hopes will bring his reign to a winning end

have drafted in a lot of new faces to replace those who have left and as a team we are confident of doing well.

"I am looking forward to working with the new guys we have here, they have knitted together well and there has been a very positive atmosphere in training. It's nice to have so many fresh faces here who are keen to get down to the hard work."

Among Powell's new crop of fighters are LCpl Jason Summers (2 RGJ), LCpl Carl Dilks (1 Kings), 2nd Lt Nigel Potter (27 Regt RLC), Pte Chris Sagar (3 Sqn RLC), Pte John Tuiatu (27 Regt RLC), Spr Bret Flourney (RE), 2nd Lt Dominic Cugguda (27

Regt RLC) and Pte Gavin Taylor (1 PWR).

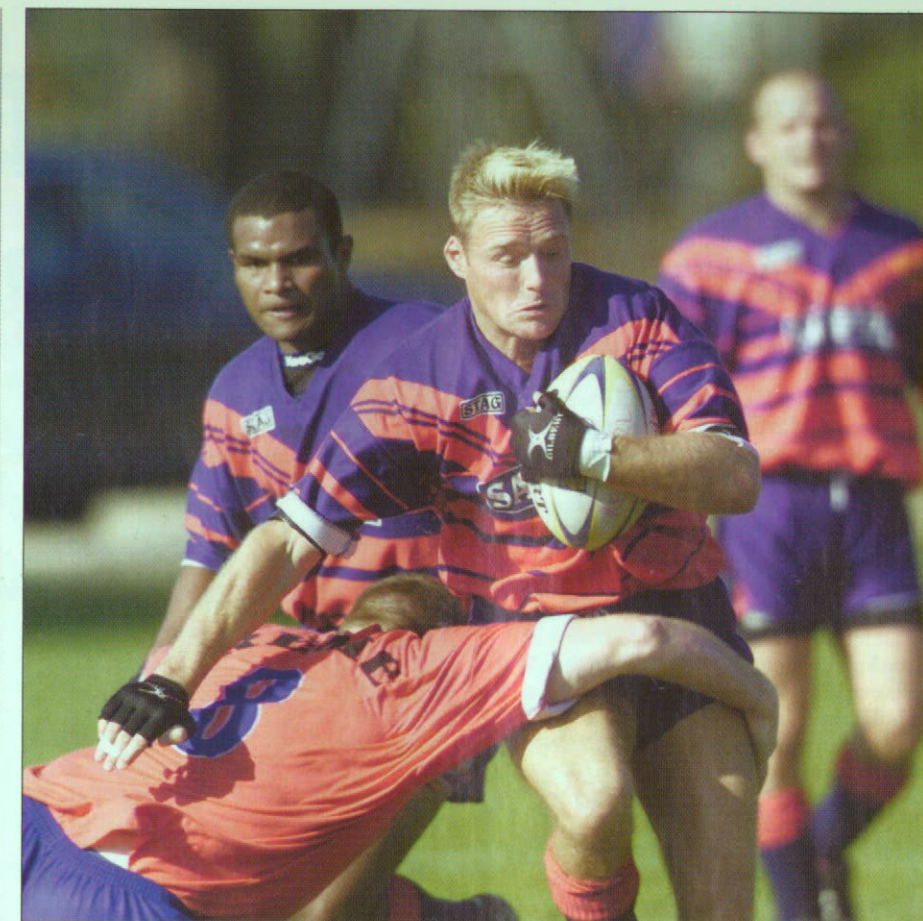
◆ LCpl Neil Robinson (1 GH) has taken over the duties of team captain from Spr Duncan Barriball (RE). The experienced lightweight, a Combined Services champion last year and semi-finalist in the senior ABAs, was handed the honour at the end of last season and will work closely with Powell and assistant coach LCpl Gordon Seal (1 SG).

◆ Powell's men highlighted their potential ahead of the opening rounds of this year's ABA championships by recording a creditable 4-4 draw against the

Welsh national squad in Paderborn, Germany.

Barriball, a former ABA champion, opened the Army's account with a majority decision over bantamweight Kevin Folley. Defeats for featherweight Pte Pete Murray (RLC) and lightweight Pte Jamie Evans (1 RRF) followed, before Robinson put his team back on track with a victory over Tristian Davis.

The fightback almost stuttered to a halt when Pte Brian Hollard (1 RRF) lost to Kerry Hope and Cpl Jay Whitfield (RLC), who represented Wales at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, was beaten by former Army team-mate Justin Jones. However, the Army had the final say with heavyweight Pte James Toal knocking out Gerint Jones and LBdr Nick Burchett (RA) comfortably beating Jamie Way.



Leading by example: SSgt Pud Cowburn breaks through the REME defence at Aldershot

Captain marvel

Treble delight for Army and RE skipper

HAVING already led the Army's Rugby League squad to victory at the Inter-Services championships this season, SSgt Pud Cowburn further proved his competency as a team captain by guiding the Royal Engineers to the Lawton Cup and 1 RSME to the Yeoman Cup at Aldershot.

Facing a formidable and unbeaten REME side in the Lawton Cup, the skipper's bid to secure a personal double by lifting the Inter-Corps silverware never looked in doubt despite his side falling behind to an early Cfn Davo Davidson try and WO2 Paul Roberts conversion.

Spurred into action, the sappers hit back almost immediately and levelled the scores with a well-worked try from Spr Modje Matau and goal from the boot of Army all-rounder Cpl Lee Innes.

Off the mark, the Engineers then plundered another two converted

tries before REME added to their own tally with a try apiece from Cfn Chris Tugaga and Roberts, and a straight-forward kick from Sgt Dave Husband.

Despite conceding just before the half-time break, Cowburn's men showed no signs of surrendering their lead in the second period and stretched the deficit to 30-16 when WO2 Nelly Nelson and Cpl Ben Hughes crossed the REME line in close succession.

Any chances of a REME comeback evaporated shortly after when their most effective runner, Cfn Tugaga, had to be carried from the field of play with a broken ankle and WO2 Andy Sangers scored the sappers' sixth try of the game.

A late consolation try from Cfn Skippy Signor took the final score to 34-20.

Cowburn completed his hat-trick of trophy wins a week later, when his unit 1 RSME beat SEME 34-8 in the final of the Yeoman Cup.

◆ The AGC, last year's cup winners, beat the RLC 20-19 in the third and fourth place play-off match.

SHORTS

Six secure Sevens crown

SPORTING a strong Fijian contingent, 1 BW got their season off to a flying start by winning the BA(G) rugby sevens championships – despite finishing the final with just six players on the pitch.

Having qualified for the title-decider with relative ease, the eventual champions stormed into a 19-5 lead against pre-tournament favourites 1 DWR, with tries from Pte Peter Tukutukuwaq, Pte Sikeli Mulase and Pte Taniela Tomata.

Victory looked to be a formality until, six minutes from time, a yellow card presented their opponents with an extra-man advantage. Seizing the lifeline, DWR scored twice through Capt Richard Payne and Pte Ben Naivaluvou to reduce the deficit to just two points.

Defending as aggressively as they had attacked during the early rounds, the depleted Black Watch held on to secure a slender, but deserved, 19-17 victory.

◆ **6 Sup Regt RLC beat 3 REME in the final of the plate competition.**

Gunners at the double

ATHLETES from 3 RHA celebrated a double victory at the 7th Armoured Brigade triathlon championships in Hohne, winning both the major units and women's titles.

The performance of the gunners, who had to swim 750m, cycle 20km and run 5km, epitomised the ethos of the Desert Rats – fit, capable and professional.

Other winners included 9/12 L (minor unit team champions) and SSgt Stu Irvine (32 Engr Regt), who was the first competitor across the finish line with a time of 1hr 9min 2sec.

European success

THE Dyncorp-sponsored Army basketball team signed off another successful season by winning the Eurobaskets International Basketball Tournament in Rimini, Italy.

Competing against teams from 17 nations, the Warriors won three of their four pool games before beating top Latvian side, Stopini, 82-67 in the tournament's final.

Newcomer Gnr Will Narruhn (16 Regt RA) and veteran players WO2 Neil Tolson (REME) and Sgt Carl Black (REME) were the pick of the trophy winners.

◆ **The Army women's team, nicknamed the Braves, had to settle for second place at the UK and Ireland Corporate Games. Playing at Newcastle United's St James's Park, the Braves reached the final of the competition, but, with team captain Sgt Bev Bates sidelined through injury, were beaten to the silverware by a strong Tyne and Wear squad.**

Olympic ringmaster

Former gunner who didn't make Staff College now inhabits a world of movers and shakers

Interview: Roger Thompson

BRITISH plans to attend the Athens 2004 Olympic Games have only to "survive contact" to succeed. The Beijing Games are five years away and the middle ground is tuned to London's bid to host the Games in 2012.

At the epicentre of this Olympic kaleidoscope is Simon Clegg OBE, Chief Executive of the British Olympic Association, whose previous appointment, in 1989, was battery commander 7th (Parachute) Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery.

Simon began his military career by coming to grief at the Regular Commissions Board, Westbury and ended it with reservations about his ability to pass the Staff College exam process and progress through the necessary staff appointments.

He now enjoys direct contact with the Royal Family, Prime Minister Tony Blair and London Mayor Ken Livingstone and briefs ambassadors on their part in gaining support for the London bid.

Simon's first visit to the RCB, while still at school, was not memorable. He was unprepared and, in common with many candidates, found the "education officer" somewhat obtuse. Only a chance encounter on a London commuter train led him to the 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (Volunteers), where he enjoyed two fabulous years. Earning more as a Territorial Army soldier than he could as a trainee surveyor, he revisited Westbury and passed into Sandhurst.

Life in the Royal Artillery was exciting. "Welcome," his battery commander intoned with a smile. "You're in the marathon next weekend. Any problems?" The words "I accept" were probably the most important of his life to date.

Surviving the 26 miles led to ski training. As 94 Locating Regiment nurtured the British cross-country ski team, the standards, and efforts to meet them, were exemplary. "In the Parachute Regiment I had taken a close interest in physical fitness, found it very gratifying and consequently was willing to push myself to run with the best,"

he recalls. Selection for the British biathlon team at the Sarajevo Winter Olympics was given the thumbs-down when the regiment was warned, at short notice, for Northern Ireland. A heart-to-heart with the CO concluded that "his time for Olympic selection had regrettably passed."

They agreed he should have a year's sabbatical, managing the British biathlon team. This was scant compensation and it took a posting to the parachute gunners and, ultimately, command of a battery to keep him in the Army for a further four years.

Any thought of an extended career withered after the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary where he managed Britain's sole ski jumper Eddie "the Eagle" Edwards and Dick Palmer, Britain's senior Olympic official, offered Simon the chance to join him as deputy general secretary.

His task would be to get the teams to the Games. The plans included uniforms with a 24in chest, girls with size 12 feet, extra-long beds for those over 6ft 8in, and the conversion of a Boeing 707 for the equestrian team's horses.

Nine Games and 14 years later the logistic SOPs are proven and Simon has taken over from Dick Palmer as chief executive. He is also Team GB's *Chef de Mission*. Athens 2004 is not far away and it is now a matter of lighting the fuse and "going operational".

Many of his phrases are rooted in the military, as are his methods of leading his Wandsworth HQ team. He might not

have liked his first Westbury experience but recently arranged for his team managers and himself to attend a leadership trust course in Wales.

As the Athens fuse burns down the major talking point is the 2012 London Games. It is a bid by the British Olympic movement rather than Whitehall. From an early stage Simon needed the unequivocal support of Government, the Mayor of London and the wholehearted support of the British people.

High profile "knockers" might refuse to recognise the benefits a successful Games would bring to London and the nation,

He needs to draw together large autonomous empires, regenerate a major part of the capital, build a stadium for 80,000 in East London and improve the city's crumbling transport infrastructure. How could such a man possibly have coped at the Staff College?



Pulling strings: Former para Simon Clegg, Chief Executive of the British Olympic Association

but Simon considered the arguments were clear for the vast majority. The budget suggested was about £2.6 billion.

Decisions must be based on facts, not spin, and a clear statement of the strengths, limitations and resolve to clear the hurdles with minimum disruption.

Simon Clegg talks with the Prime Minister and the Mayor of London about "infrastructure" and "exit strategies".

The impact is at the national level, the financial consideration not far short of the defence budget, the coordinating instructions need to draw together large autonomous empires, regenerate a major part of the capital, build a stadium for 80,000 in East London and improve the city's crumbling transport infrastructure. How could such a man have coped at the Staff College?

London 2012 now has a separate bid team under American Barbara Cassani, the "right person at the right time" says Simon, who has been included on her board. "Be in no doubt that the London 2012 team is walking the walk of victory."

He does not believe his experiences as a para tom were essential to becoming CEO British Olympic Association but credits his style of management to his life in the Army

and the conviction that no task is insuperable. That style is "open, direct, inter-personal rather than a paper chase and ends up on the firm side of diplomatic".

And the final question: does it really matter? Aren't hospitals, schools and railways more important? The answer comes easily, in two forms: we spend £1,132 on health and less than £3 on sport per person, he says. Redress that imbalance and the costs of the health of the nation will drop dramatically.

Secondly, Britain's sporting prowess is still to be fully realised, just as Australia's was in the 1970s. We have to recognise sport as the greatest vehicle for political and social development – we need the London Games to light the blue touch paper.

Life for Simon Clegg OBE has come a very long way since his first visit to Westbury. The world is now his oyster but the Army generated special ties. When the 7th (Parachute) Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery marched out of Aldershot on September 6, Simon, alongside his former RSM, now Maj Byff Byford, was there to see them off.

When the barman at the Officers' Mess requested permission to close the bar at 0500, they were still together.

SHORTS

Triumphant return

ALTHOUGH only re-formed this summer after a break of more than 30 years, the Army women's cricket team already has bragging rights over their Services rivals.

Moulded largely from hockey players, the Army side beat the Royal Navy in Portsmouth by four wickets before recording a 149-run victory over the Royal Air Force at Aldershot.

Army and Combined Services hockey star Cfn Amanda Potgeiter (REME) finished as top scorer on both occasions, hitting 127 and 179 not out respectively.

Anyone interested in joining the squad should contact team manager Maj Ruth MacGill on mil 94321 8390.

Strip artist wanted . . .

THE Army women's rugby team is looking for a dedicated kit manager. Interested applicants should contact Capt Eddie Hutton on mil 94214 5524.

On the up and up

COLCHESTER Garrison Cricket Club secured their third promotion in four seasons by comfortably winning the Osborne league division three title. Led by SSgt Jeff Carter (MCTC), the team won 15 of their 20 league games despite having to field a squad weakened by Op Telic commitments.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to November . . .

ATHLETICS: 5 – Army cross-country relay championships (Tweseldown Race Course, Aldershot); 19 – 4 Div cross-country league meeting (Aldershot).

FOOTBALL: 4 – Spall Trophy: Essex v Army (Braintree Town); Army Development v Oxford (TBC); 8 – RMCS v Army Crusaders (Shrivenham); 16 – Army Crusaders v TA (Aldershot); 17 – Middlesex v Army (Staines Town); 18 – Colchester United v Army Development (Colchester); 20 – Wiltshire v Army women (Aldershot); 26-27 – Women's sixes festival (Grantham).


RUGBY LEAGUE: 12 – Army v Australian Combined Services (TBC).



RUGBY UNION: 11 – Combined Services v Barbarians (Aldershot).



SQUASH: 11-13 – Infantry championships (AFC Harrogate).

SWIMMING: 18-21 – AGC/RLC training camp (Aldershot); 20 – AGC/RLC championships (RMAS).

TUG OF WAR: 16 – AAA indoor championships (Birmingham); 26 – Land Command indoor championships (TBC); 29 – Army indoor championships (Aldershot); 30 – Inter-Services indoor championships (Aldershot).


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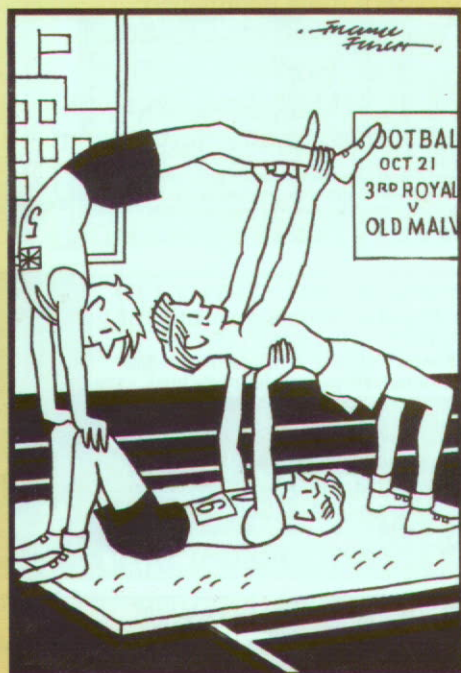
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No 744

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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.

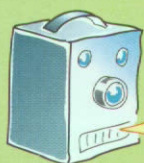
First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

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

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

September competition (No 742): First correct entry drawn at random was from Mr N E Evans, of Bridgnorth, Shropshire, who wins £100. Runners-up Mr D McLeavy, of Walton on the Hill, Stafford and Pte Gamon, Burma Coy, 7 Platoon, 1 QLR, receive a £10 gift voucher each. The ten differences were: parachute seams, top left; parachutist's harness, lower torso and foot; aircraft windows; lines around cloud; second and third parachute chords; lower cloud shape; tailplane of lower aircraft.



Freeze frame

Now that's what I call a recovery position, said the man from REME

Write a caption for the photograph, right, published in *Soldier* in August 1950. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by November 28.



FOR seeing something in the September picture, left, that no one else did, we're awarding Sgt J Smith of DNBCC, Winterbourne Gunner, the prize. His caption was: "The field xylophone was a hit with the girls in the band".

We also liked "This is so much more fun than staying at home slaving over a hot stove" from Mrs A Jack of Arborfield; "You can take the women out of the kitchen but you can't take the kitchen out of the women" from Sgt N M Esty,



AGC(SPS), Sarajevo; "I say, girls, aren't these magic mushrooms simply magic" from R Cooney, Commcen London Central; and "Well done, ladies, now you know how to boil water" from Reg Briggs, ex-R

Signals, of Peterborough.

Capt M Gee RA, of 22 Bty, 32 RA, offered: "The girls could not control their laughter at the thought of one more spoonful of chilly powder in the RSM's curry".

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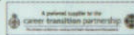
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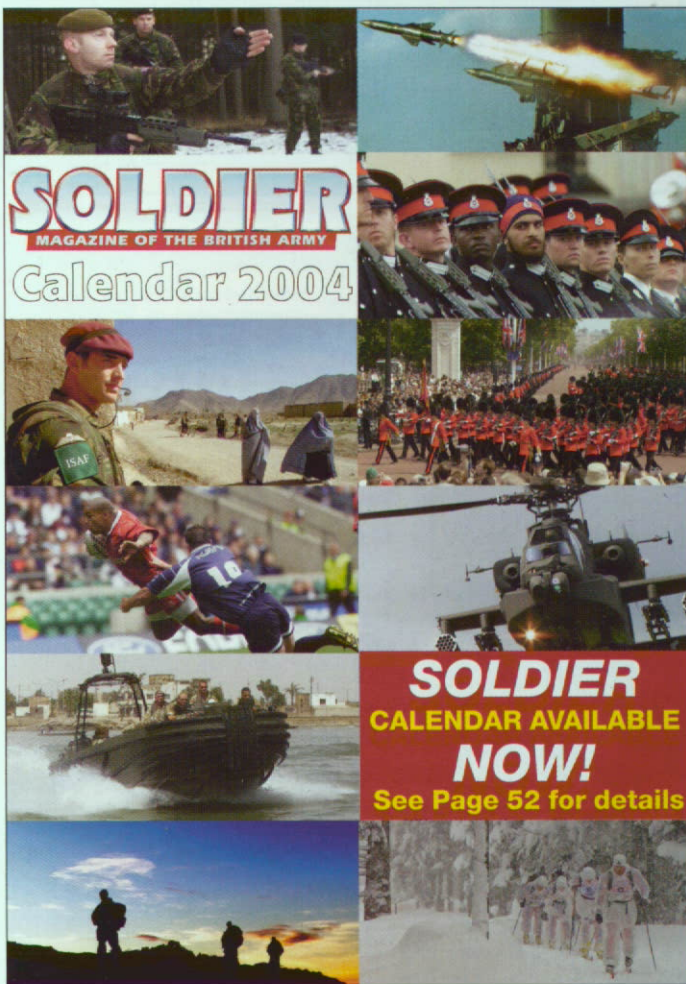
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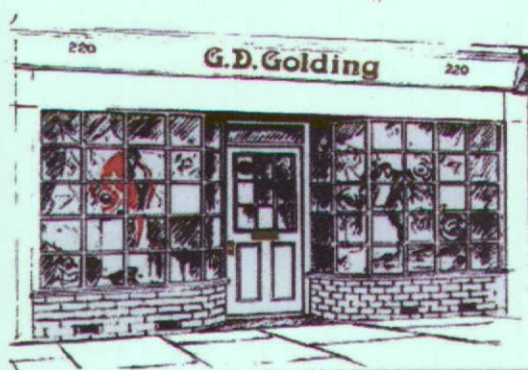
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Sharon, (19), 5'3", medium build, long brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys pubs, clubs and the cinema. Seeking pen pals, 18-28. P464

Lorraine, (32), Enjoys scuba diving, swimming, weight-training, hiking and is a bit of a disco diva. Seeking pen pals that can equal her GSOH. Commence pen to paper now. P465

Catherine, slim petite brunette with long curly hair and green eyes. Enjoys pubs, clubs, films, music and shopping. Seeking guys and girls in the forces to write to, any age group. P466

John, (22), 5'8", athletic build with blonde hair. Enjoys keeping fit, pubs, clubs and meeting new people. Currently serving in Iraq and seeking female pen pals, 18-40. P467

Lucie, (21), average build with dark hair and hazel eyes. Enjoys music, socialising, writing letters, reading, travel and photography. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P468

Jen, (41), 5'7", Enjoys reading, walking, history, music and the cinema. Seeking friendly, honest and genuine pen pals around the same age. P469

Angela, (43), 5'4", very attractive with dark hair and slim build. Enjoys swimming, reading, karaoke, driving and psychology. Seeking pen pals, 35-42. P470

Jaclyn, (37), 5'4" with fair hair. A nurse in NI, likes animals and enjoys the theatre, walking, swimming and the cinema. Seeking pen pals with similar interests and age, 34-42. P471

Patricia, (35), 5'4", dark hair, tanned, size 12 who stands out in a crowd. Enjoys arts, crafts, music, painting, dancing, driving, the gym, cycling, meals out and the theatre. Seeking pen pals with similar interest and GSOH, 30-45. P472

A 36-year-old 'Bridget Jones', who enjoys most things in life and is looking for a 'Mr Darcy'. Seeking genuine, honest and fun to be around soldiers/officers, 30+. Photo appreciated but not essential. P473

Donna, (28) blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys nights out/nights in, having fun and a giggle, music and the cinema. No blonde Barbie doll but seeking combat Ken. P474

Heather, single parent of one child. Enjoys walking, cycling, swimming, theatre, cooking and the cinema. Seeking genuine pen pal replies only, any age group. P475

Patricia, (37), 5'1", curvy blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys travel, music, reading, swimming and having serious fun. Lives on her own with a mad cat. Seeking nice, honest soldiers near or far for fun letters and lots of smiles, will answer all replies, 25-48. P476

Adelina, 5', Mediterranean complexion. Enjoys music, travelling, walking and the cinema. Seeking single soldiers in Iraq as pen pals, 30+. P477

Gail, (29), tall attractive blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys music, reading, keep fit, nights out and the cinema. Seeking single soldiers as pen friends, 29+. P478

Lynne, 5'5", slim blonde nurse with GSOH. Enjoys motor bikes, car rallies, golf, beach walks and natural history. Seeking pen pals, 34+. P479

Ann, (43), 5'7", blonde with hazel eyes. Enjoys the gym, mountain biking, walking and pubs. Seeking pen pals with GSOH, caring and honest, 35+. P480

Catherine, (35), 5'8", short with highlighted hair. Enjoys weight training, swimming and travelling. A nurse and also has a driving job, a mum of two children ages nine and one. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P481

Patricia, (56), 5'5", slim, young blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys reading, cooking, the countryside, music and mixing with people. Seeking pen pals who enjoy the countryside, i.e. Wales area, 50-60. P482

Haley, (20), 5'2", petite with brown curly hair. Enjoys the gym, socializing with friends and studying for her degree. A good personality and easy to get on with. Seeking pen pals, 18-26. P483

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REUNIONS

Black Watch Association: Remembrance Parade at Horse Guards Parade, Nov 9. Volunteers still required. Regimental Col Lt Gen Sir Alistair Irwin to take salute. Details: Frank Bailey, 1 Briarson Ave, Sneyd Green, Stoke on Trent, Staffs ST6 2NG or tel 01782 280912.

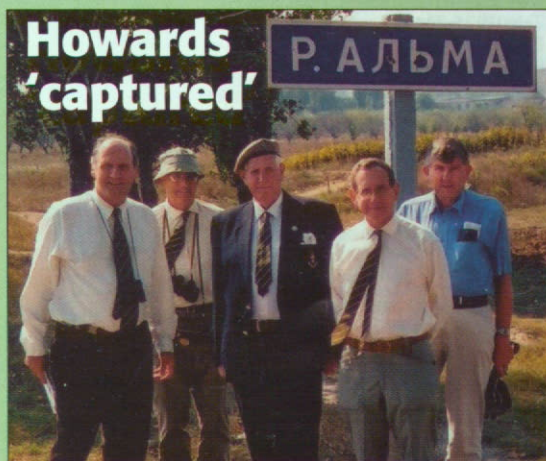
Queen's Own Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry, incorporating A Sqn QOMY and 76 Signal Sqn: Reunion lunch Nov 9 at Warwick. Ladies welcome. Contact John Mayfield, tel 01926 853461 or mail@talkgas.net

Royal Anglian Regiment and Beds and Herts Regiment Association: Wreath-laying and reunion, Nov 16, at The Keep, Kempston. Contact John Baggaridge tel 01234 294853 or johnbaggaridge@yahoo.com

Army Medical Services WOs' and Sgts' Mess Past and Present Dinner Club: Annual reunion Nov 22 at RMAS. Details: WO1 (CRSM) R S Parkes on 01276 412759 or Mrs Ann Bradley on 01276 412789.

Black Watch Association: Stoke Branch, Burns Night Dance, Jan 24 at Jubilee Hall, Stoke. Details: Frank Bailey, 1 Briarson Ave, Sneyd Green, Stoke on Trent, Staffs ST6 2NG or tel 01782 280912.

Rapier maintainers: Reunion dinner on Feb 7 in Bailleul Sgts' Mess, Hazebrouck Barracks Arborfield. Contact SSgt Al Friend on 0118



Howards 'captured'

P. АЛЬМА

Members of The Green Howards were almost involved in a second Crimean War when they were arrested by Ukrainian soldiers on the 19th century battlefield. Twelve members on a tour organised by the friends of the regimental museum were looking at the sites on which the Green Howards won their first battle honour when they were arrested and briefly detained at a local barracks while checks were made. Among those "nicked" were, from left, museum curator Maj Roger Chapman, Maj Miles Garnett, Pte Jack Haines, Colonel of the regiment Brig John Powell and Mr Edward Nicholl. The sign behind them says "River Alma".

976331 or e-mail radarreunion@aol.com

Cyprus Police UK Unit 1955-60: Reunion Mar 1, at Park Manor Hotel, Northstead Manor Drive, Scarborough YO12 6BB, tel 01723 372080. Ring hotel for bookings for dinner and accommodation and quote reference "Allison". Full details from Frank Cluer on 01372 720398.

19 Regiment (Highland Gunners): All ranks reunion, March 20 at TA Centre, Northampton. Details from Maj (QM) G C Porter, tel 01980 634230, or WO2 (BSM) Keir, tel 01980

634282, write to them at 19 Regt RA, Horne Bks, Larkhill, Salisbury SP4 8QU or e-mail reunion19regiment@yahoo.com

70th Artillery clerks: Reunion dinner at RA Sgts' Mess, Woolwich on Apr 3. Contact WO1 (SSM) A M Tibble AGC (SPS) on tel 01276 412250 or visit www.artyclerks.fsnet.co.uk

Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Aden Veterans' Society: Thirty-seventh reunion, June 18, at The Bulls Heads, Percy Street, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear. Details: Alan (Jonty) Batey, tel 01302 772044 or jonty.rfn@tiscali.co.uk

SEARCHLINE

Margaret M Coyne (née Davey) worked for Naafi, Ensa in Belgium 1945-46. She died and was buried there. Margaret posted home postcards featuring 43 Ensa Hostel, HCS, BAOR; Sealed Field Post Office; R143/HCS; BLA; and HQ/HCS BLA. Any former colleagues please write to Charles Holmes, Mayfield, Le Pre Cadoret, St Lawrence, Jersey JE3 1JQ or tel 01534 734752.

Information concerning life and service of **Pte-Sgt John Williams Parker, 3 Per Sup Coy, RASC 1939-48** (interned 1940-42 Switzerland) and **RAOC 1948-53 MELF, Egypt** is sought by his daughter, Sonia Gardner. Write to her at 16 Barn Close, Whiddon Down, Okehampton, Devon EX20 2QR or e-mail sonia@devonia.screaming.net

23 Field Ambulance Old Comrades Association: Worldwide membership of 260-plus, three annual reunions nationwide and seeks to swell its ranks. All interested former members of 23 PFA and associated units are asked to contact Maj (Retd) R F W Wickins, Beckview, 6 Waters Meet, Warwick Bridge, Carlisle CA4 8RT or e-mail bwickins@lineone.net

Former 13 Light Anti-Aircraft Brigade officers John Lawrence Mark Cave, Frederick Seebohm, Arthur Norton Puddle, Oliver Raymond Clegg and Ewart Gratton Barter, James Michael Barter, John Dyson and George Stanley Mitton who served with 69 (West Riding) Field Regiment (or their families) are sought. Also sought are surviving relatives of **Capt John Hinchcliffe Dawson** and **Capt Gilbert Woodhouse Rhodes Bottomley** of 70th (Bradford) Field Regiment RA.

Undelivered Sovereign's commissioning scrolls in the names of these veterans are waiting to be claimed. If you can help, contact 269 Battery RA, tel 01904 668600.

Information concerning military career of **Capt Carl Langer, 6 Bn Welsh Regiment 1914-18**, also attached to 3 Int Corps and Sniper School, is required by local historian in Clydach, near Swansea. Langer moved with his family to the Midlands in the 1930s. Contact Gary Packer on tel 01792 842888 or e-mail garypacker9@aol.com

QAIMNSR cape badge wanted. **Joyce Gertrude Talbot** was wartime nurse on hospital ships, including **mv St David**, bombed at Anzio beachhead. Her son wishes to present her set of five medals, including Italy Star, to Royal London Hospital Museum. He requires an example of the **QAIMNSR** cape badge his mother would have worn. Anyone willing to donate or loan a badge so a copy may be made is asked to contact Gerard Talbot, 27 Middleberg Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9RF or tel 01268 511140.

Ex-REME Liverpooldian LCpl Patrick Michael Martin, last known at Holywell, Wales, sought by Sharon Martin nankalamo@aol.com

Information on role of **sappers in Normandy** required for battlefield tour by Sgt A D Dolve, 7 HQ Sqn RE, 21 Engineer Regiment, BFPO 36 or andydolve@hotmail.com

Triangle Troop, 11 Signal Regiment, Ouston, Newcastle, June 1979 Intake. Rod Mansell would like to hear from old mates and

requires troop photo. E-mail royogi@aol.com

Johnny Hillman, who joined the **Royal Berkshire Regiment** as a National Serviceman on **Oct 16, 1952** is asked to contact Basil Mortimer on tel 01189 872549 or Mick Lamble on tel 01235 868546.

Any news of Robert P "Blaster" Bates, 7 Armd Wksp 1983, please to Ex-REME LCpl Norman Reid. norrie@reid776.freesevice.co.uk

Ex-68 Sqn RCT contact information and news of future events at www.waggoners.co.uk

ASSISTANCE FOR AUTHOR

DOG handlers in the military during times of conflict from the Second World War onwards are the subject of a book being written by Paul Laban. Input from British and Commonwealth Servicemen and women is required to complete the research. All correspondence will be acknowledged. Write to Paul Laban, 26 Lanwern Road, Maesycoed, Pontypridd, South Wales CF37 1EQ.

UNIT DISPOSALS

35 Battery RA will disband on March 31. Anyone who has made a presentation to the unit since its re-formation in March 1985 is entitled to reclaim it. Any presentations not reclaimed by Feb 10 will be archived with battery property. Contact WO2 (BSM) Robbie Draper, 35 Bty RA, 22 Regt RA, Rapier Bks, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Gainsborough, Lincs DN21 4HZ or e-mail robbiedraper@hotmail.com

Your own HR website

UNSURE about recent changes to your pension or your pay on promotion? Or perhaps you just want to keep up-to-date with key human resources events within the Army.

All of this information comes under the watchful eye of the Army's Adjutant General, based at Upavon, and to make your life easier, two web sites – **AGWeb** and **AG Internet** – have been built for two audiences, but with many similarities.

The difference is that they sit on two separate networks. **AG Internet** is hosted on the Internet and is focused towards the soldier at home or abroad and, just as importantly, his or her family.

AGWeb, the intranet, is hosted on the Army's own network, which is inaccessible to the outside world but reaches all the way down to sub-unit level.

These sites are watched over by the four-

strong AG's web team. It is their job to maintain the contents and to keep the data up-to-date, ensuring that the information is relevant to today's soldier.

This daunting task would not be possible without the help of the Intra/Internet Liaison Officers (ILOs) across AG's command. The primary role of the ILOs is to look after their own specific area, on which they are the experts.

Key areas of interest on the two sites are: Pay and allowances; conditions of service; sports and welfare; operational news; legal and discipline matters; manning and medical; education and museums; promotions, pay and pension; terms and conditions of service; individual development and training.

Internet: <http://www.ag.mod.uk>

Intranet: <http://agweb.cash.mod.uk> or <http://www.agweb.r.mil.uk>

OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

Northern Ireland

OBE: Lt Col W M Campbell, R Irish; Lt Col J R Hockenhill MBE, Int Corps.

MBE: Capt P A Collister, Cheshire; WO1 R G Gray, R Anglian; Maj D R Orr Ewing, BW; WO2 P Plowman PWRR; Cpl I Vaughan, R Irish.

QGM: WO2 N J Bradley, R Irish; Cpl J S Hollingsworth, Para; SSgt S A Parker RLC.

QCB: LCpl M R Ball RAVC; Cpl J A Bowden, Int Corps; LCpl G Carr, Para; Sgt I A MacLachlan RHF; Sgt C L Nufer RGJ; WO2 R Pearson RLC; WO1 R V Price QGM, APTC; Sgt J R Smith, R Anglian.

QCVS: Cpl C T Anderson RHF; WO2 M J Bard, Cheshire; Lt Col A T Boyd MBE, RLC; Maj K M Broomfield AGC (SPS); WO2 B H Calder, A and SH; WO2 D Campbell, R Irish; WO2 C Davies, R Signals; Maj C M R Elmhirst SG; Lt Col E C Feldmanis REME; SSgt S J Griffiths, R Signals; Capt K W Hannah MBE BEM, Para; Cpl J E Hulme, Para; Lt Col R J Ladley MBE, R Anglian; Maj R E Parker RLC;

SSgt I C Noble, R Signals; Col J I S Plastow MBE, RGJ; Maj D S Powell RLC; Cpl M L Powell, Para; Cpl C A R Walledge AGC (SPS).

Former Yugoslavia

MBE: CSgt J I Grattan, Staffs; Cpl E G Wind, R Scots.

QCVS: Capt K J L Czernik AGC (ETS); Sgt N A Hill, R Signals; Capt A D Lumley, R Scots; Lt R K S Muir, R Scots; LCpl S W O'Neill RE; Sgt A J Williams RLC; Cpl G J Wooley, R Signals.

Afghanistan

MBE: Sgt R J Powell AGC (RMP).

QCVS: Capt C P Barrett RE; Maj D R McNeil, Para TA; Capt P D Talbot-Jones, Para TA.

Sierra Leone

MBE: Maj M J Edkins, D and D.

Congo

OBE: Col T J P Watts, late R Signals.

Miscellaneous non-operational awards

QCB: LCpl R P Davies PWRR; Pte S A Duff PWRR; LCpl B J L Johnson PWRR; Pte S M Poland PWRR.

Workshops offer jobs for disabled

THE Lord Roberts Workshops, Edinburgh, now a part of SSAFA-Forces Help, have been providing work opportunities for disabled ex-Service people for more than a century.

A small business with a reputation for quality, it offers a bespoke woodturning service and specialises in the manufacture and restoration of traditional brushes, boot scrapers and boot racks. The workshop's efforts have been rewarded with a Royal Warrant and ISO 9001.

People with machining, woodturning or woodworking skills who would like to work in or near Edinburgh and feel they could make a contribution to the business are asked to contact General Manager Ron Mann, Lord Roberts Workshops, 6 Western Corner, Edinburgh EH12 5PY or tel/fax 0131 337 6951.

SOLDIER COMPETITIONS

World at War DVD set (Sept) winners: A Kirkin, Bushey, Herts; Parachute Regiment Recruiting Team, Colchester, Essex. Answer: Franklin D Roosevelt.

The Great Escape (Sept) Winners: Sgt K Garret, NI; M Stephen, Churchfields, Kent; I Quick, Chicksands, Beds; LCpl T Whitney, Lichfield, Staffs; Cpl J Peden, Canada. Answer: John Sturges.

John Virgo (Sept) Winners: J Macdougall, Haxby, Yorks; G W Seatter, Harrow, Middx; G E Hodgson, Osnabruck; J L Birtle, Rheindahlen; D Shortman, Stockport, Cheshire. Answer: Mark Williams.

Indy Car (Sept) Winners: D Edwards, Croydon, Surrey; A Paling, Colerne, Wilts; M Russell, Swindon, Wilts; M R Kerry, Nottingham; Cpl A R Bird, Rheindahlen. Answer: 1993.

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000; www.armybenfund.org

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 433456

Army Families Federation 01980 615525; www.aff.org.uk

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org.uk

Career Transition Partnership 0207 766 8020 www.ctp.org.uk

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-Service Mental Welfare Society 01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Consumer Credit Counselling Service Free

Confidential Helpline 0800 1381111

Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

www.gulfveteransassociation.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575

Mutual Support (Forces Multiple Sclerosis support group) 01666 824709

National Gulf Veterans and Families

Association Office (0900-1700) 01482 808730; 24-hour helpline on 01482 833812;

www.ngvfa.com

Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011; www.rfea.org.uk

Royal British Legion's Legionline 0845 7725 725; www.britishlegion.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre 01622 717202/718484; www.rbli.co.uk

ESHRA Ex-Service Homes Referral Agency 020 7839 4466 www.eshra.com or eshra@britishlegion.org.uk

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021; www.st-dunstans.org.uk

SAMA 82 (South Atlantic Medal Association) Falklands conflict veterans 01495 227577 e-mail: densama@aol.com

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783;

www.ssafa.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Agency (includes War Pensions Agency) 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas); www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272; from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

WRVS General enquiries 02920 739906; www.wrvs.org.uk



DATES

NOVEMBER
15-16: Army Arts Society annual exhibition, Medieval Hall, Salisbury Cathedral, 1000-1600.
16: British Model Soldier Society Bristol area annual show, The Pavilion, North Parade Road, Bath. Details on 0117 9732067.

* **FOUR**-year-old Lauren, daughter of **LCpl Karl Shearer**, who died during the war in Iraq while serving with the Blues and Royals, officially opened a building in Peterborough named after her father. Lauren and her mother, **Suzi**, were joined by members of the regiment and civil leaders. Karl Shearer House is the headquarters of Close Brothers Military Services.

Karl, 24, was killed when his Scimitar came under attack from Iraqi troops and plunged into a canal at Basra on April 1.

* **Samantha Roberts**, whose husband **Sgt Steve Roberts** of the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment was killed in action near Az Zubayr on March 24, has joined forces with Keighley brewery Timothy Taylor to raise funds for the Royal British Legion. The Steve Roberts Challenge will invite local pubs to raise more than £10,000 for the 2003 Poppy Appeal.

* A copy of the register of paratroopers killed during the Second World War was displayed at **Tatton Park**, Knutsford, before moving permanently to the Cheshire Record Office. Bestowed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the copy was presented to mark Tatton Park's wartime role as the Army's Parachute Training School.

* **WORK** has begun on an £860,000 programme of work at the **TA Centre** in Wigman Road, Bilborough in Nottingham. It should be finished by the end of January.



She flies through the air with the greatest of ease

SSgt Helen O'Connor gives the thumbs-up during a tandem jump in Germany to raise funds for the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association (Blesma). Helen, who is serving at Gutersloh with 43 Supply Squadron, 1 Gen Sup Regt RLC, had her right foot amputated after an accident in Oxford last March.

A keen runner until then, she made the jump to "put something back" after all the help she had received from family, friends, colleagues, Headley Court and Garrison Rehabilitation in Germany. Helen completed her tandem jump with instructor **Bill "Kiwi" Sharp** at the British Parachute Jump Centre, Badd Lipp-springe, Sennelager. She persuaded **Sarah Sanders**, wife of her boss, **WO2 (SQMS) Frenchy Sanders**, to make the jump as well, and together they raised about €3,000 (about £2,000) for Blesma.



School's party

Good old days: Army pupils, right, at the **Duke of York's Royal Military School** in Dover dressed to mark the school's bicentenary.

Britain's first co-educational state-funded and state-administered school, it was founded by the "Grand Old Duke" in Chelsea as the Royal Military Asylum for boy and girl orphans of soldiers killed in battle (later the Duke of York's Headquarters, it has been sold back to Cadogan Estates).

The present Dukes of York and Cadogan watched pupils, all from military backgrounds, re-enact the arrival of the first children in 1803. The school, which is an agency of the MoD, was presented with new Colours on its annual Grand Day by the Duke of Kent, its president.

● **The Charity of Mars** – Page 71



Hunt for smallest soldier

STANDING just 4ft 10in tall, weighing 83lb, and with a chest measurement of 30in and size two feet, former Bdr Dennis Royston Manfield (Army Number 14110967) could well be the smallest soldier to have served in the British Army during the 20th century.

Dennis, who is pictured between two colleagues after their enlistment in 1946, recently donated his uniform to the the Muckleburgh Collection Museum at Weybourne Military Camp, Norfolk, where he was based during his National Service.

His uniform, which he had kept since his demobilisation, still fits him perfectly.

The museum wants to try to find out if he really was the smallest soldier to have served.

Anyone who knows better is asked to contact Neil Storey, Education and Displays Officer, The Muckleburgh Collection, Weybourne Military Camp, Weybourne, Norfolk NR25 7EG or tel 01263 588608.



Keeping it in the family



CSGT Jim Smith and daughter **Cpl Angela Mason** show off the Adjutant General's Certificates of Commendation they received for their work at the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre at Chilwell during the build-up to the Gulf war.

The centre mobilised more than 3,000 soldiers in just five months. Jim, who managed a team of eight civilians, ensured every soldier had accommodation and was briefed on kit and equipment before deploying.

Once the kit was issued it was Angela's responsibility to make sure transport was in place to transfer troops to the airhead, and to recover them when their tours were complete.

"I'm extremely proud of Angela," said Jim. "It's great that we both received the award, because we never expected it. It's cause for a double celebration."

REGULAR soldier **Cpl Ginge Mather** poses with cadets **Amy Watts**, left, and **Claire White** and the regimental drums during a once-in-a-decade family reunion for those connected with The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment.

More than 500 people converged on Hounslow, home of the 1st Battalion, for the event in Cavalry Barracks. Highlights included a drum-head service and a march-past, at which the salute was taken by **Lt Gen Kevin Donoghue**, the Colonel of the regiment.



* **Maj Ali Twinn** is believed to be the first female cadet company commander in the North East of England. She has been appointed by Durham Army Cadet Force.

Loggies move into Saddam's 'bloodiest' posting

Home sweet home: Shaibah – currently home to the soldiers of the Royal Logistic Corps – was an Royal Air Force airfield from 1927.

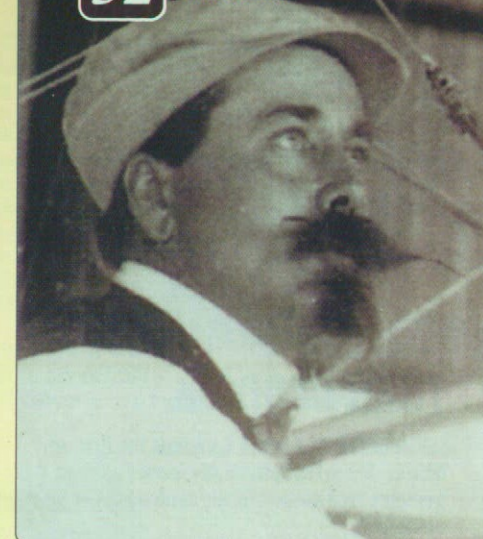
Taken over by the Iraqi air force in the 1950s, it was rumoured to be "the bloodiest posting on earth" by Iraqi forces. When Saddam came to power it was thought that he posted personnel there as a punishment if their crime was not severe enough to warrant execution. The desert base has a 12.5km perimeter and temperatures there often exceed 60C.

Picture: Mike Weston



Legends of the regiments and corps

52 Aldershot Military Museum



At the controls: Samuel Franklin Cody

Colonel who wasn't

IN 1906 an American, Samuel Franklin Cody, was appointed chief kiting instructor to the British Army. His system, adopted by the Army, was used for suspending spotters in the air beneath a system of kites.

The top kit had a basket in which the spotter sat. Kites were a quicker and easier alternative than the balloon systems and airships of the time.

Most of the Army's kiting was undertaken by the Royal Engineers at their balloon school in Farnborough.

FIRST FLIGHT

Cody built and flew "British Army Aeroplane No 1", making Britain's first officially recognised powered flight in 1908. Although his contract wasn't renewed by the War Office, which saw no future in powered flight, he went on designing, building and flying his own aircraft. On one occasion Cody met the King, who referred to him as "Colonel". The tag stuck.

Cody died in a flying crash in 1913 and was buried with full military honours in Aldershot's military cemetery. His flying helmet, gloves, a propeller from one of his aircraft and some of his flying trophies are on display in the Aldershot Military Museum in a gallery devoted to his flying exploits.

Aldershot Military Museum, Queens Ave, open Mon-Sun, 1000-1700. Adults £2, children/concessions £1; 01252 314598, www.hants.gov.uk/museum/aldershot

www.armymuseums.org.uk

Retail reconnaissance

Switched on . . .



TURN HEADS ▲

LOGITECH'S QuickCam Sphere is the first and only webcam that physically moves to keep a person's face automatically centred in the field of view.

Its unique adjustable design and robot-like personality offers the option to zoom in up to three times the normal viewing size, making video instant messaging and video calling more fun, with the person on the other end able to see detailed facial expressions. It includes a built-in microphone for easy addition of audio to instant messaging or video clips.

① £99.99, from www.logitech.com

MINI MARVEL ▼

WEIGHING in at 20g and no bigger than a car key, this Mini USB drive from Iomega punches way above its size and weight.

Small enough to slip into a pocket, the device provides space for your most important files, photos and digital effects, and is available with capacities of 64MB and upwards.

① £25, from www.iomega.com



MOVIE MAKER ▲

DESIGNED to be ultra compact and easy to use, Logitech's Pocket Video 750 boasts the same functions as its bulky counterparts.

Easily transportable, the camera is ideal for budding Spielbergs who are always on the move.

① Around £200, from www.logitech.com

Game on . . .



DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SEXY?

IN a bid to prove once and for all that computer gaming has moved from geekiness to sexiness, Gamer.tv (www.gamer.tv) has launched a nationwide search to find the UK's sexiest gamer.

After online knockout heats, the two-month "game idol" campaign will culminate in a televised grand finale at a high-profile London venue on December 12. Broadcast worldwide on one of Gamer.tv's satellite shows and with a first prize of an all-expenses paid trip to Hollywood up for grabs,

the final's judges will crown one male and one female winner.

Contestants must be over the age of 18 and be able to prove in due course that they are genuine computer and video gamers by completing a series of tough tests set by the competition's organisers.

Hollywood hopefuls can e-mail their photos, as well as those of their partners, friends and relatives, to www.sexiestgamer.com

◆ For more information visit www.gamer.tv or www.sexiestgamer.com

BYTE-SIZE NEWS

THE hottest August on record in the UK caused a predictable slump in console hardware sales. Nintendo's GameCube was hit hardest of all, with weekly sales figures slipping below 1,000 units for the first time since its launch.

SONY Computer Entertainment has confirmed that the PlayStation 3 will feature backwards compatibility with the PS2 and PSone, ensuring continued support for older software formats in the new hardware.

THE family of a man killed by teenagers allegedly influenced by action from the *Grand Theft Auto* series are preparing to file a reputed \$100 million lawsuit against the game's publishers Take-Two Interactive.

MICROCHIP developer Intel claim that their new mobile phone processor, codenamed Bulverde, will allow for Xbox-quality gaming on phones and PDAs.

GAMES watchdog ELSPA estimate that the gaming industry, which employs some 20,000 people, generated more than £2 billion for the UK economy last year.

MUNCH'S ODDYSEE, GBA

PREVIOUSLY available exclusively on the Xbox, *Munch's Oddysee* is the third game in the *Oddworld* series.

With their sacred land in danger of being destroyed by the greedy Glukkons, Munch and his sidekick Abe team up to teach their foes a lesson by arming themselves with wacky weapons, acquiring a wide array of weird and wonderful power-ups, and possessing the minds of their enemies.

A puzzle game at heart, *Munch's Oddysee* remains as addictive, and at times frustrating, as ever on the small screen.

VERDICT: Ideal for the portable puzzler. 7/10



OUT NOW

MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS, GBA



HAVING become one of the best-selling racing games on the PC, *Monster Truck Madness* now looks set to win over a new legion of fans on the Game Boy Advance.

The title's pick-up-and-play gameplay is ideal for the handheld market and allows gamers to get behind the steering wheels of some of the most powerful and outrageous vehicles as they crush, jump and roll their way to victory. With 30 tracks featuring destructible objects and real-time vehicle damage, *Monster Truck Madness* offers gamers classic arcade-style racing action.

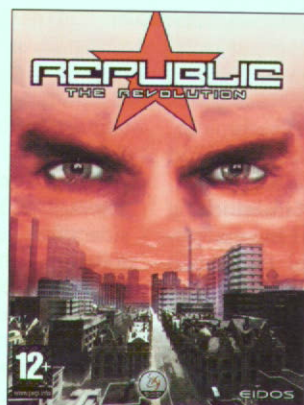
VERDICT: Motoring mayhem. 8/10

OUT NOW

REPUBLIC: THE REVOLUTION, PC OUT NOW

THIS strategy simulation from Elixir Studios tasks players with overthrowing Vassily Karosov, a dictator who rules the fictional Russian state of Novistrana with an iron fist and a regime based on fear and oppression.

Starting with just one loyal supporter, gamers must build up a faction strong enough to oust the president by converting key members of the country's 10,000 citizens to their cause. Methods of winning power range from inciting strikes and riots to organising music festivals and charity galas.



VERDICT: Power is everything. 9/10

JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY, PC OUT NOW



IN this follow up to LucasArts' *Jedi Outcast* gamers are immersed in the role of an apprentice at Luke Skywalker's *Jedi Academy* where they must learn the power and danger of the Force.

A unique level selection system allows the player to choose their own path through the game as well as the missions they undertake to improve their Jedi skills. Aside from learning to master different lightsabers, trainees must also get to grips with weapons such as the blaster and Imperial repeater.

VERDICT: Star Wars buffs only. 6/10

THE ITALIAN JOB, PS2, XBOX, GC OUT NOW

THERE are three modes of play in this high-octane arcade racer inspired by the new blockbuster film of the same name.

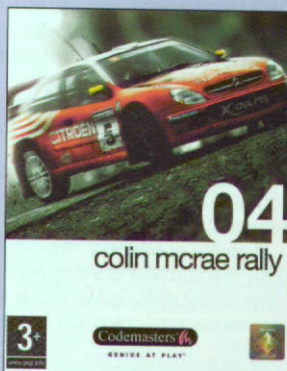
In story mode gamers follow the plot of the movie, which pays homage to the original 60s Brit flick, breaking and swerving their way through 15 different missions behind the wheel of a Mini Cooper.

Alternatively, players can choose to race against the computer or a friend in the game's circuit racing mode. A series of stunt driving challenges completes the hat-trick of game styles.



VERDICT: Mini magic. 8/10

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04, PS2, XBOX OUT NOW



VERDICT: King of the road. 10/10

THE intense gear-grinding action featured in *Colin McRae Rally 04* takes Codemasters' dominant six million-selling series to a new level.

Boasting the best car handling physics engine ever used in a racing title, the game's exhilarating rally challenges include four-wheel and two-wheel drive championships, country-specific rallies and stages, a group B championship featuring classic rally cars and, for the professional, an expert championship, which demands the best performance from even the most die-hard rally fans.

WIN... WIN... WIN

SOLDIER has teamed up with THQ to offer you the opportunity to enjoy gaming while on the move.

For your chance to win a copy of *Monster Truck Madness* and *Munch's Oddysee*, and a Game Boy Advance SP to play them on, simply answer the following question:



In which game did Munch's sidekick Abe make his console debut?

a) Oddworld b) Oddball c) Odd job



Send your answers on a post-card to Game Boy Advance SP competition, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by November 28.

Usual rules apply.

Book of the TV series is highly acclaimed

IN the side panels of these pages we feature five books on the 1914-18 conflict, appropriate for the month in which we remember the fallen. Prof

Hew Strachan's **The First World War** (Simon & Schuster, £25), accompanying the Channel 4 series to which he was chief consultant, has received high praise. Sir Max Hastings has called it "a book to end all books" and Prof Richard Holmes "a towering achievement". This is not part of Strachan's ongoing three-volume history of the war, rather a one-off work aimed at the general reader. It casts aside some of the clichés about generals and includes original colour photography.

Ypres, where poison gas made its evil debut

THE second battle of Ypres in 1915 was infamous partly for the fact that in it, Germany used poisonous gas as a weapon of war for the first time. In

Magnificent But Not War (Pen & Sword, £25) John Dixon, author of the definitive First World War history of the Monmouthshire Regiment, has produced a well researched and detailed day-by-day record of the battle, drawing heavily on personal accounts, regimental histories and war diaries and supported by maps and photographs.

Ordinary people in extraordinary times

WHILE researching the Channel 4 series *The First World War* (see top of column), Svetlana Palmer and

Sarah Wallis unearthed letters and diaries written by combatants and civilians from all sides. Their book **A War in Words** (Simon & Schuster, £14.99), another companion to the television series, draws on these to paint a poignant picture of the inner lives of ordinary people who found themselves thrown into extraordinary circumstances in time of conflict.

Cassino gamble

Campaign was 'was as arduous as Stalingrad'

Monte Cassino by Andrew Parker (Headline, £20)

Review: Brian Jewell

THE invasion of Italy in August 1943, following as it did the Allies' successful North African campaign and the conquest of Sicily, was a key element of Churchill's strategy.

He hoped by this means to keep a window open on the East against the threat of Russian dominance in that part of Europe and was convinced that an invasion of France across the Channel would be premature and unlikely to succeed.

American opinion was all in favour of such action but Churchill's viewpoint prevailed. Some have always held that the Italian front was an expensive and unnecessary diversion.

This book makes it clear how expensive it was and with what loss of life. The battle of Monte Cassino, fought over three months, was won only because of the Allies' enormous superiority in men and material.

The German forces, under the command of the vastly experienced Gen Kesselring, had the advantage of a system of interlocking fortresses known as the Gustav Line extending across the narrowest part of the Italian peninsula and considered impregnable.

In the opinion of one German combatant who had experience of both campaigns,

Monte Cassino was as arduous as the siege of Stalingrad.

The author exploits the modern technique of "oral history", interweaving his account of the campaign with abundant personal detail and the experiences of individuals who were involved in it. His many sources include the reminiscences of the late Spike Milligan and the touching recollections of a young Italian boy, Tony Pittaccio, who lived through both the German and Allied occupation, finding little difference between the effects of either.

A danger inherent in this technique is that it is possible to lose the main thread and overall movement of a campaign in a welter of personal detail, however fascinating.

The author has not fallen into this trap: he has clearly divided the push towards Monte

Cassino into its four component episodes, tracing the course of events from the Salerno landings through the fall of Naples to the struggle for Monte Cassino itself and finally the triumphant entry into Rome.

He leads us with clarity through somewhat confusing results of Italy's surrender, which took place while these events were in progress, and explains how the defection of their erst-

while allies left the Germans in considerable difficulties.

Of particular interest is Parker's analysis of the various nations involved in fighting on the side of the Allies. He provides background information about how these diverse elements came to take part in the action and sheds light on their individual styles of warfare and attitude. As well as British and

You can win a copy of **Monte Cassino** by entering a simple competition. Tell us on a postcard by December 1 the name of the general commanding the German forces in this campaign. First out of the hat gets the book. Competition details in panel below.

WIN!

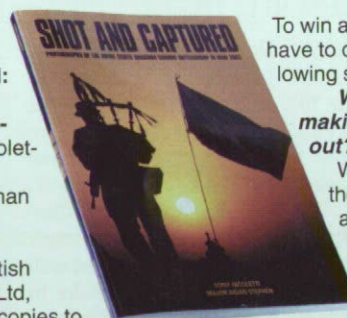
Help Blesma

ONE of several visually stunning books we reviewed last month was **Shot and Captured: Photographs of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Battle-group in Iraq 2003** by Tony Nicoletti and Maj Aidan Stephen.

Its 164 pages contain more than 200 high-quality images taken between March and May.

Now the publishers, the Scottish Daily Record and Sunday Mail Ltd, have kindly sent us two signed copies to give away to readers as prizes in a competition.

The book is being sold in aid of Blesma (order hotline: 0870 90 90 204).



To win a copy all you have to do is answer the following simple question:

What precisely do the initials making up the word Blesma spell out?

Write your answer on a postcard or the on back of a sealed envelope and send it to: BLESMA Competition, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 6DU. Make sure it reaches us by December 1.

The first two correct entries selected at random will win a signed copy of this large-format soft-back book.

Usual Soldier competition rules apply.

WIN!



Picture: US National Archives. 111-SC-239682

Beginning of the end: Shellfire lands near Castle Hill, with the monastery behind, in January 1944

American troops, the forces included a French Expeditionary Corps under General Juin, the 2nd New Zealand Division, the 4th Indian Division, the 1st Canadian Infantry and 5th Armoured Division and the Polish Corps under Lt Gen Wladyslaw Anders, which played a major part in the campaign and was first to enter the ruined fortress of Monte Cassino after Kesselring eventually gave permission for the German withdrawal. Graphic description of what ghastly sights awaited the victors makes chilling reading.

The destruction of the ancient monastery at Monte Cassino on February 15, 1944 was, according to Parker, "one of the most iconic moments of the war". Situated at the heart of the seemingly impregnable Gustav Line, the monastery contained priceless art treasures, many of which were prudently removed to safety on Kesselring's orders before the fighting began. It was also a place of quasi-mystical status as a spiritual shrine, the repository of the remains of Saint Benedict.

The Italians felt that attacking the monastery was akin to destroying Westminster Abbey, but the exigencies of war were allowed to overcome the scruples of religious opinion.

Writing 30 years after the destruction of Monte Cassino by Allied bombers, war correspondent Martha Gellhorn reported: "I saw the monastery turning into a muddle of dust and heard the big bangs and was absolutely delighted and cheered like all the other fools."

As the campaign unfolds, the author touch-

es upon the now accepted rivalry between British and American leadership. The vanity of the military commanders of that period is typified by American Gen Mark Clark's determination to be the first to enter Rome, even, it seems, to the extent of threatening to have his troops fire on the British if they attempted to get there before him.

Parker leaves us with the impression that the Italian campaign, for all its ferocity and eventual success by sheer weight of men and material, was not of war-winning importance. The many uncertainties and misunderstandings among prima donna commanders led to indecision and a "situation that added greatly to the problems of Commander-in-Chief General Alexander".

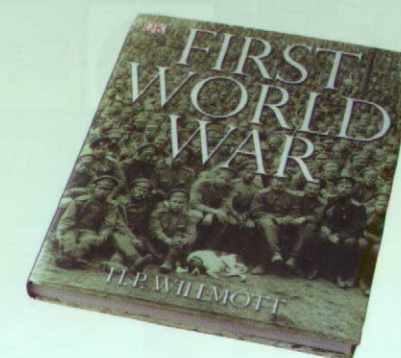
Lacking as it did the glamour of D-Day and the heroics of Stalingrad, the Italian campaign has tended to be neglected by historians. Indeed, Parker's book is the first to deal with this subject for more than 20 years.

But the participants and their hard-won achievements deserve the sympathetic recognition accorded to them by the author.

It is a painstaking and exhaustive tribute to those men ironically self-styled "The D-Day Dodgers".

Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>



Sombre subject, but this is a joy to read

PUBLISHER Dorling Kindersley (DK) has, true to form, produced a visually exciting work in **First World War** (large format, £25) which is a joy to read. H P Willmott's powerful and moving text is complemented by brilliant use of images, combining newly commissioned photography, and older pictures, including 75 never published previously in the UK or US. The war on all fronts is carefully examined and there are eyewitness accounts of soldiers and civilians taken from letters and diaries.

WIN!

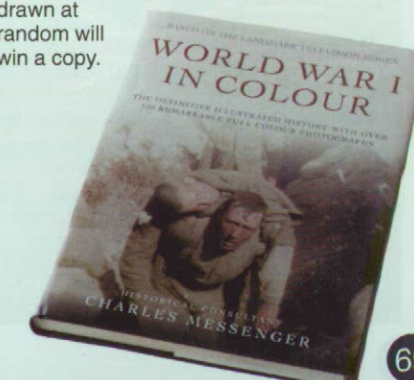
■ In association with DK, we have two copies of this book to give away as prizes. Tell us on a postcard, to reach us by December 1, the date and time on which the German armistice was concluded. Mark the postcard "Armistice competition". The first two correct entries drawn at random will win a copy of the book. See panel at foot of facing page for details.

Ten people's stories of the D-Day countdown

IF you thought the First World War was fought in black and white, wait until you see **World War One in Colour** (Ebury Press, £20). Inside this book, accompanying the Channel 5 series, are more than 200 full-colour photographs, enhanced by modern computer technology. Former RTR officer Charles Messenger was historical consultant.

WIN!

■ Ebury Press has made available FIVE copies of this book as prizes in a competition. Tell us on a postcard marked "Colour" the name of the Bosnian city in which Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in 1914. Closing date is December 1 and the first five correct entries drawn at random will win a copy.





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VIDEO/DVD

Make yours a triple

We've got six classic 'war' videos to give away in time for Christmas

FILM giants UCA have packaged together in time for Christmas video releases of dozens of great modern films.

On sale now in all good retail outlets at just £12.99 for three videos, they range from adventure to horror, science fiction to love stories, historical to military.

The distributors have given us six packs of military-related VHS videos to give away to lucky readers. The first teams up *Black Hawk Down*, *Hamburger Hill* and *Southern Comfort*, and the second a classic helping of *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Bridge Over The River Kwai* and *The Guns of Navarone*.

Black Hawk Down is the true story of a failed American mission to abduct two Somali warlords in Mogadishu in October 1993. Based on a battle which cost the lives of hundreds of Somalis and 18 Americans, it stars



Tom Sizemore and Ewan McGregor. *Hamburger Hill* is based on the battle to take Dong Ap Bia in the A Shau Valley during the Vietnam War. First released in 1987, it depicts



how a heavily-outnumbered unit of the 101st Airborne Division overcame the odds to complete its mission behind enemy lines. It stars Tim Quill, Dylan McDermott and Courtney B Vance. The third in the pack is the gripping and creepy

Louisiana National Guardsmen who fall foul of backwoods swampland Cajun fishermen. The cast list includes Keith Carradine and Powers Boothe.

Lawrence of Arabia (1962), David Lean's extraordinary, multi-Academy Award-winning film of a British officer who united the Arab world against the Turks and re-took Damascus during the First World War; the powerful *Bridge Over The River Kwai* (1957), starring Alec Guinness as a prisoner of the Japanese; and *Guns of Navarone* (1961), based on the Alistair MacLean novel and starring Gregory Peck, David Niven and Anthony Quinn, are among Britain's greatest war films.

We've got three of each to give away. To have a chance of winning, tell us on a postcard or sealed envelope which of the film's many stars played the role of T E Lawrence in David Lean's desert blockbuster. Was it:

a) Omar Sharif b) Anthony Quinn c) Jack Hawkins d) Peter O'Toole?

Indicate which of the two collections you would prefer. Answers received by November 28 will go in the hat and usual rules apply.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

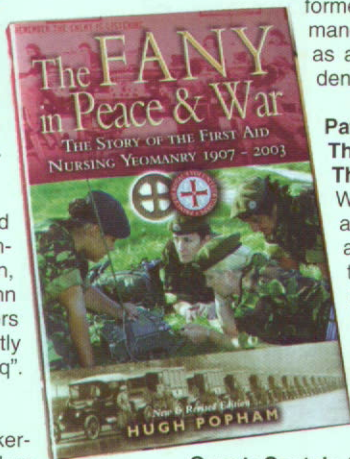
The FANY in Peace & War by Hugh Popham. First published in 1984, this new edition brings the story of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry up to date. Formed in 1907 by an eccentric sergeant who envisaged nurses on horseback riding round battlefields to tend the wounded, the corps' modern role is in communications, with strong links to the City of London Police, the Territorial Army and the Royal Signals. The author died in 1996 and the final chapter was written by serving members of the corps. (Pen & Sword, £19.95.)

The March Up by Bing West and Maj Gen Ray L Smith. Taking Baghdad with the 1st Marine Division, with an introduction by Sir John Keegan. Claimed by the publishers to be the first book to come "directly from the front lines of the war in Iraq". (Pimlico, £10.)

The Charity of Mars by A W Cockerill. Story of the Royal Military Asylum (1803-1892), the forerunner of the Duke of York's Royal Military School at Dover. At the height of the Napoleonic Wars, the asylum was home to 1,600 military orphans and children in need. This vigorous history of the Army's experiment in education and social welfare is available from The Bursar, Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover, Kent CT15 5EQ or Peter J Goble, 55 St George's Road, Harrogate HG2 9BP (softback, price

UK £15 plus £1.50 p&p; overseas add £2.50 p&p).

Winning Modern Wars by Gen Wesley K Clark. Sub-titled "Iraq, Terrorism and the American Empire", these are the views of a former Supreme Allied Commander Europe now tipped as a future American President. (PublicAffairs, £18.99.)



Paths of Death and Glory: The Last Days of the Third Reich by Charles Whiting. Prolific military author explores the appalling cost in lives of the final months of the Second World War. Volume 10 in the Spellmount Siegfried Line Series. (Spellmount, £16.99.)

The Last Great Quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic Sacrifice by Max Jones. Author uses new evidence and original research to argue that Scott's tale should be seen as far more than just a tragic adventure story. (Oxford University Press, £20.)

The Daily Telegraph Book of Military Obituaries, edited by David Twiston Davies. One hundred of the 1,000 obituaries of soldiers which have appeared since the *Telegraph*

began printing them 17 years ago. Includes the great, the brave, the adventurous and the eccentric. (Grub Street, £17.99.)

Tracing Your First World War Ancestors by Simon Fowler. Easy-to-use guide by someone who should know. The author was with the Public Record Office for nearly 20 years and now edits *Family History Monthly*. (Country-side Books, £7.95.)

Forgotten Voices of the Great War by Max Arthur. Paperback edition of the acclaimed history of the First World War in the words of the men and women who were there, published in association with the Imperial War Museum. (Ebury Press, £7.99.)

Battlegrounds: Geography and the History of Warfare, edited by Michael Stephenson. A collection of essays by some of the best military historians and writers, who discuss the impact of geography on military strategy and history. Battles covered range from Alexander the Great's attack across the Granicus in 334BC to the US-led siege of the Taliban in the mountains of Afghanistan two years ago. (National Geographic, £22.50.)

The T Force Story. A4-size, 170-page spiral-bound history of T Force operations in North West Europe between 1944 and 1948. To obtain a copy, send a cheque for £8.99 (incl UK p&p) payable to "5 Kings/2 T Force OCA" to T Wilkinson, OCA Hon Treasurer, 27 Ferriers Road, Stevenage SG2 0NU.

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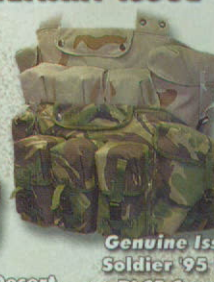
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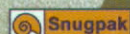


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SOLDIER to soldier

Everyone a winner

HAPPY birthday to the Army Sports Lottery, which in ten years has enriched both the fabric of Army sport and the bank balances of tens of thousands of soldiers.

As we report on Page 9, the lottery has raised nearly £5 million for grants to individual units and major projects and paid out £4.7 million in prizes.

From relatively small beginnings it now generates up to £180,000 a month, every penny of which – unlike the national lottery – ends up as a prize or in improved facilities.



Between £70,000 and £85,000 (depending on the number of weeks) flows out in prizes every month, up to £50,000 is allocated in grants, and the balance goes into a trust fund for bigger capital projects.

A new hockey pitch in Redfern Barracks, Edinburgh, hockey and cricket pavilions, and an electronic scoreboard for the Army rugby stadium in Aldershot are just a few of the major facilities which have been built or bought on a foundation of Army Sports Lottery money.

Naafi turns corner

CONGRATULATIONS, too, to Naafi, which is ploughing £1.2 million into Army welfare as a result of a substantially improved trading performance. The dividend, on top of £275,000 paid earlier, is the first for three years.

Naafi spent £600,000 on shipping ten portable shops to the Gulf so that troops deployed on Op Telic could enjoy a bit of normality in the field.

Shorter tour interval

A SOLDIER wrote to enquire if the average tour gap of 24 months, as stated in Parliament just over a year ago (Under Big Ben, August 2002), had changed. Could someone tell him what the average tour interval was now? The answer for Army units, as of July this year, is 10.1 months.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Pension skips my generation

WORKING my way through the details of the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme for the AFF *Families Journal* (as you do) I discovered an Awful Truth.

I am too old. What's more, so is Him Indoors. Well, too far gone. He is almost first in line in the Escape Committee queue and due to jump next February, so the new scheme will not be an option for him, or me. Which is more of a pity for me than him, as it happens.

Under the new scheme, due to be introduced in 2005, widows and widowed partners will not only get larger pensions, they will get to keep them if they have the temerity to remarry or, presumably, re-partner.

Whereas if Him Indoors meets his fate before I do and I remarry some gorgeous toy boy (stand in line), I would lose the lot. Actually, all I would have to do is co-habit (tut!).

Interesting justice, isn't it? Thirty-plus years of tagging around, moving from quarter to quarter, mostly overseas, with no hope of a proper job, let alone paying National Insurance contributions, and I am left with no occupational pension and only a microscopic state pension of my own to look forward to. I reckon I have put my fair share of toil and tears into Him Indoors's Army career and pension, but if anything happened to him and I chose to try again, I would pay for it, literally.

It is assumed, you see, that I will have another man to look after me. I wonder if I'd lose it if I turned lesbian in my old age?

It appears that the Government/MoD doesn't believe in making changes retrospective, so there are likely to be quite a few spouses under the old scheme in the same position.

It is somewhat ironic to me that the generation of spouses who followed their soldier and were unable to work consistently, thus compromising their pension prospects, are the ones that are penalised, whereas today's spouses and partners, many of whom are already creating their



A personal view
from Sue Bonney,
Editor of the AFF
Families Journal

own pensions or can at least take out a Stakeholder Pension, will be able to keep their soldier's. I suspect this may mean a bit of noise for the MoD down the line – to the barricades, Sisters!

◆ AFF's Op Telic survey on the support and information to all Army families during Op Telic 1 and 2 has had a terrific response – more than 1,700 completed questionnaires, and still counting – and has provided some interesting and salutary reading.

It came as no surprise to AFF that the findings so far suggest that communication and information were seen as essential in helping families to cope.

Forty per cent of Regular spouses in our initial sample said they felt well-informed by the military, but fewer than 20 per cent of Territorial Army spouses agreed. Perhaps not surprisingly, Regular families found it easier to access information than TA families, with around half of the TA group saying it was difficult to find the information they wanted.

Many TA and Regular families expressed a need to share experiences, and contact with other families was the most frequent suggestion for the future. We will be publishing a full report on the survey in due course, and you can find out more on the initial findings in the December edition of the *Families Journal*.

◆ Some families who went through Op Telic 1 are about to go through Op Telic 3, when their soldiers leave for Iraq this month. So much for the ideal of 24-month intervals between tours, or even the currently quoted ten-month average figure [see column one], thanks to the extent of our current commitments.

But then reality on the ground is often very different from the ideal, or the oft-quoted numbers, and it is soldiers and their families who cope with that reality. I'd say we were worth the pension, wouldn't you?

**Mail**

WRITE TO: SOLDIER, ORDNANCE ROAD, ALDERSHOT, HANTS GU11 2DU

● E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

An honour to serve with 202

AT the end of July I returned from a full term of duty with 202 Field Hospital in Iraq. During that time the unit provided our forces with the highest possible standards of care and professionalism.

I have nothing but the highest praise for this fine Territorial Army unit and would also like to pay tribute to the outstanding quality of 202, whose morale and endurance, in difficult circumstances, went from strength to strength.

When chapters are written about the history of the TA I sincerely hope that outstanding praise is given to the men and women of all ranks who served with 202 Field Hospital during Op Telic. I for one would be honoured to serve with them again. – **Padre W G Bergin RChD, Barnsley.**

UK firms are showing us their support

I WOULD like to put right the misconception that UK companies have not supported our military personnel as stated in the letter from Capt P Stredwick (Sept).

There have been many unsolicited offers of discounts from UK companies and lots of attractions local to deployed personnel that have given free entry or large discounts to military families.

Companies made these offers to show their appreciation and support for our Service personnel. I would like to say a very big thank you to them for their generosity and support.

Information of special offers and discounts for forces is available from HIVEs, and unit and Army Welfare Offices or see www.army.mod.uk/aws – **Carolee Gee, Information Manager, Army Welfare Service.**

Please be brief

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

E-mails **MUST** include your name and location (not necessarily for publication).

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

We'd be quids in with credit union

HAS a credit union serving the Armed Forces ever been considered?

The Association of British Credit Unions (www.abcul.org) defines one as a financial co-operative, owned and controlled by its members.

Credit union members save in a common fund. As well as being a good savings option – successful credit unions pay an annual dividend of up to eight per cent – money saved can be used to make low-interest loans to members.

Only people who come within the common bond of the credit union can join it and use its services. The credit union is directed and controlled by a volunteer board of directors.

I'm sure thousands of soldiers are borrowing at inflated interest rates, as high as 30 per cent in some cases. However, if you have money to save, you will struggle to find accounts offering more than 3.5

per cent. We could balance the situation more in our favour, encouraging responsible borrowing and saving.

I'm unsure of the Armed Forces' official stance on credit, but it is offered on purchases from retail facilities in camps, often at the highest rates. The Pentagon has a credit union, providing services for all American defence personnel, including civilians. Is there a reason why we don't have one within the Army, Royal Navy, RAF and MoD? – **Sgt Martin Walton, 89 Sig Sqn, 35 Signal Regiment.**



SO2a3, PS10(A) replies: There is currently no credit union for the British Armed Forces and there are no plans to implement one. In comparison to the American Forces, the British Armed Services are very small and such a venture is unlikely to be either commercially or economically viable.

No change over years on RAF trooping flights

HAVING joined the Army as an apprentice and served 22 years, I left in 1993 to become a civil servant. In the 34 years since, one thing has remained constant – our beloved RAF's inability to transport troops around the world in an efficient manner.

I run the admin for the Environmental Health Team in HQ 5 Division and every time any of my soldiers goes on an operational tour or exercise there is a cock-up over flight times, sometimes even the location of departures. The soldier is regarded as a piece of cargo.

As for departure times, you might just as well think of a number, multiply it by 100 and deduct your monthly salary.

Recently a soldier who works with me had her flight changed both on departure and return. On the return flight passengers had to share meals. To top it off, the vehicle to get her back to barracks was cancelled because she landed at a different airport a day late and her flight number had changed.

I realize the RAF is busy with operational commitments, but nothing has changed since I joined the MoD in 1969.



"Nice one! Mr Crab-basher is going all the way to Akrotiri... and his bags are going to Calgary"

I think the vast majority of soldiers who have travelled with Crab Air would agree.

Next time you are sitting at Heathrow bemoaning your slightly delayed flight, just think... you could be at Brize or Lyneham. – **R Sant, Shrewsbury.**

PISCATOR



The Army Benevolent Fund is YOUR national charity, committed to the welfare of soldiers, former soldiers and their families in times of need. To continue our work we are looking for dedicated people to organise and take part in fundraising events for us. For a fundraising pack, please call 020 7591 2042 or e-mail enquiries@armybenevolentfund.com



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PS...

Allowance denied

I TRIED to get Unaccompanied Baggage Allowance authorised for my soldiers for our deployment to the Gulf, only to be told that the allowance is not available because we did not have "comfy boxes".

However, every one of my men sent equipment ahead, loaded into their vehicles, unaccompanied. A few had personal equipment stolen during this move and this allowance should have covered them for insuring that equipment. On return from Iraq our personal baggage allowance was reduced and everything else had to be boxed and sent in ISO containers.

I cannot see why we should be denied an allowance that most soldiers get to claim whenever they go on operations or long-haul overseas exercises, just because we went to war. — Capt I Clarke, OC LAD REME, 1 BW (RHR).

Married to the mob

I FIND the statement, "... you can't be a fully-committed career soldier and be married" by Capt K Williams ("Reserve Judgement", Vox pop, Oct), an insult to all wives, including my own, who have shared their husband's careers. If he ever gets the chance to meet the ladies of our present Chief of the Defence Staff and his deputy, Capt Williams might realise how wrong his statement was. — Maj (Retd) R S Bresloff MSM, Chester.

Speed not cause of most accidents

I WAS delighted to see you giving prominence to road safety and the negative impact it is having on the Armed Forces ("Lethal Weapons", Sept).

Despite the loss of life, many still attach more importance, effort and resources to the other softer and, dare I say, more PC health and safety issues, despite them being less of a risk.

A problem is that we are being told speeding is the cause of most accidents when in fact it is not; bad driving is. Road deaths nationally are at their highest levels since 1997 (when speed became the sole focus of most road safety campaigns) and motorways, our fastest roads, are among the safest in Europe.

Many large organisations have recognised that poor individual driving skills are the root of the

problem and have introduced rolling programmes of continuation driver training, with large fleet operators reaping the rewards in terms of reduced accidents and associated costs.

While acknowledging the excellent opportunities that exist for Service personnel to improve their driving skills, is it not now time to make them compulsory? "Individual Training Directive(A) 13 – Road Safety"? — Lt Col RJ McBroom RAMC, Bristol.

WITH due respect to both views expressed above, the point of the Army HQ Land Command-led campaign featured in *Soldier's* September special report is to prevent young lives from being needlessly lost. Although we illustrated our article with an eye-catching image of a "speed kills" road sign, the feature made no direct reference to speed as a contributory factor. Other illustrations highlighted the need for safer driving. The figures speak for themselves, and *Soldier* is happy to be accused of lack of balance if it helps WO1 Frost's campaign save the life of even one soldier. — Editor

Army road crash fatality figures 'lacked balance'

WHILE not wishing in any way to understate the severity of the issue of road accidents involving members of the Armed Forces, I feel that your special report in September presented an unreasonably alarmist comparison of fatalities in the Army with those in the other Services.

In 2002 the Army's strength was about 55 per cent of the entire Armed Forces. It is therefore hardly surprising that 60 per cent of off-duty deaths were Army personnel.

Furthermore, when considering total vehicle-related fatalities, including on-duty deaths, we can assume that a higher proportion of the Army use vehicles on-duty than do personnel in the Royal Navy or Royal Air Force. It should therefore not be "staggering" that "two-thirds of these fatalities were Army personnel".

We complain about the national media implying that soldiers are particularly bad when an incident hits the headlines, despite the fact that such incidents occur far more often in civvy street. Let's not see this lack of balance in *Soldier* as well. — Col Mike Manson, Defence Medical Services Unit.

**Mail**

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● E-mail: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Advance of pay is great retention tool

THE following comments have been received as a result of Sgt Lynch's prize letter (August) and the response to it from PS4(A):

Flannel

I WAS disappointed with the PS4(A) response to Sgt Lynch's letter on Long Service Advance of Pay (LSAP) ("Sailors get help to buy homes years before us", Aug).

It failed to answer why there is a difference between terms of service for members of the same Armed Forces.

There was a lot of flannel regarding accompanied service, which is irrelevant and applies equally to the other Services. And let's not forget that soldiers in long-term or gay relationships are not entitled to married quarters.

The main reason for this anomaly is financial. If the Army allows LSAP to all from the age of 23, there is likely to be a large uptake. Disturbance allowance for single personnel and loss of income from single accommodation would cost the Army more.

Granting LSAP would be retention-positive, but the Army can't afford it. If the MoD can't fund it, why not buy one fewer Eurofighter? – **Name, address supplied.**

Woolly

THE response from PS4(A) was woolly. I am 35 and had the same experience five years ago. I spoke to PS4(A), who advised me then that moves were afoot to change the LSAP DCI and make it common across the Services. If the Army is committed to accompanied service, why are we drastically reducing the amount of available quarters?

I don't expect my letter, or Sgt Lynch's, will change policy, but we have a duty to raise these issues in the hope that someone will take notice. – **WO2 (Y of S) T F Parkins, Op Telic 2.**

Treatment

I'M disappointed with my treatment regarding house purchase. I'm in quarters in Aldershot and travel daily to Tidworth, where I am unable to take a quarter for family reasons.

I finish in the Army next year after 22 years and have bought a house in Farnborough. I am no longer entitled to Residence to Place of Duty (RPOD) but will receive Recompense in Lieu of Relocation (RILOR), and conse-

quently will be £22 a month worse off. My local support unit has tried everything to help me but regulations get in the way.

I agree with Sgt Lynch that the Army claims to invest in its people and encourage house purchase but then fails them when they help themselves. – **SSgt S J Lloyd, Tidworth.**

Living together

THE reasons for the Army not allowing soldiers under 35 to claim for LSAP prove how behind the times the Army is. I am single, live in mess accommodation and have decided to buy a property with my partner. She can't move because of work commitments, so we have decided to live together first, something 80 per cent of society does already. It will give me something to get out to when my 22-year service comes to an end.

Doesn't the Army realise what a massive retention tool it has here?

Incidentally, married soldiers within my unit have spent three of the past 18 months with their families. Is that the Army promoting accompanied service? – **Name and address supplied.**

Homeless link?

I READ with interest PS4(A)'s response to Sgt Lynch's letter. I was also interesting to note elsewhere in the magazine a feature concerning a centre for those fallen on hard times.

With 25 per cent of homeless people in Britain said to be from a Service background, has anybody else spotted a pattern? Many leave the Army after a full career to find themselves 20 years behind their contemporaries in the housing market. – **S J Peet, Preston.**

Anachronism

SINGLE soldiers have a life outside barracks. This is a huge quality-of-life issue and one which must influence retention. I am about to be posted back to the UK to spend two years re-training at a camp where single accommodation is scarce. If I choose to live out and relieve some of the strain on this stretched resource, it will be without any financial assistance from the Army.

The Army's obsession with single troops living on camp is an anachronism – let's move with the times. – **Cpl Evans, BFPO 8.**

Final move is down to me

I AM a WO1 with 19 years' service, 15 of which has been married accompanied, as encouraged by the Army.

I am planning for my retirement after 22 years' service and recently bought a house in my home town, 270 miles from my family's present location. I intend to let the property for 12 to 18 months then move the family in my final year of service.

My admin office tells me that although I am able to take advantage of the over-37 package, there's no compensation for the removal of my family.

I am moving into my own premises and it will be classed as my final move. Further enquiries resulted in my having been quoted £1,525 for furniture removals.

I am disgusted that the full burden of the final family move, arguably as stressful if not more so than any other move, is left to the soldier in this way. – **Name and address supplied.**



PS4(A) replies: Under current regulations there is no automatic entitlement to publicly-funded removals when moving to a residence on termination of service other than where eligibility exists under the over-37 provision or the final tour of duty provision.

An individual may be eligible for the over-37 provision at, or within, six months of their posting date, their 37th birthday during a tour or a change of marital status (to 1, 1s/c or 2).

In this case, the WO1 concerned has been informed that he may take advantage of the over-37 provision but is frustrated that he is not entitled to furniture removals at public expense. This is because, initially, he is not going to serve unaccompanied but intends to move his family during his last year of service.

Effectively, this means that he is seeking a delay in taking up the over-37 provision, a contingency not admissible under current regulations, which permit the over-37 provision to be applicable on posting (when aged over 37) or on reaching the age of 37.

We have sympathy with this case, especially as the warrant officer is taking the sensible decision to buy a home now in preparation for leaving the Service. He is also electing to serve accompanied for a further 12 to 18 months, a course of action which the Army encourages through the Accompanied Service Policy.

It is a shame he should be penalised. We suggest that his unit submit a full outline of the circumstances with a justification for eligibility for the over-37 provision, including furniture removals at public expense, to PS4(A), Trenchard Lines, Upavon, when he moves his family into his own home during the last year of service.

This space is reserved



I THOUGHT you might be interested in this photograph, taken at the Beachley Old Boys' Association reunion on September 21 in Beachley Barracks.

The wearer is a member of the April 1942 42A intake.

As an ex-Regular, and later, MoD employee I have been taking *Soldier* for some years. Your support for the medal, and the good quality of the magazine, is much appreciated. – **Alan Rice, Liss, Hants.**

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, November 1978: Men of D Company, 1 Glosters based in County Londonderry are in the Republican hotbed of South Armagh to support 42 Commando RM as 1,400 tonnes of equipment is taken into Crossmaglen by truck. They are there to see the convoys are not interrupted by bomb or bullet. Men and supplies are usually flown in.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, November 1953: Tidworth's face is lifted: The new Naafi canteen, above, at Assaye Barracks even has guest-rooms for entertaining ladies. The 50-year-old garrison town now contains sharp contrasts in military architecture. Old barracks have been converted into "flats" for privates, with bedrooms accommodating four men only.

House scheme is a commercial venture

I WRITE with reference to a letter from SSgt Lamont (Sept 2002), in the reply to which PS10(A) mentioned an Assisted House Purchase and Letting Scheme being trialled in the Colchester area.

Was it a success and is it going to be

extended to the rest of the Army? Alternatively, are there any other plans to help soldiers buy their own homes and how long are we likely to have to wait for them to be implemented? – Cpl Cox, Catterick.

Blue Forces have conducted presentations in UK, Germany and Kosovo and HIVEs have been provided with literature explaining the scheme. It is open to all members of the Armed Forces wherever they are serving. Blue Forces are entirely independent of the Army and MoD.

The contact address for further information is Blue Forces, Building 2, Circular Road East, Colchester Garrison, Colchester CO2 7SZ. Te 01206 560200, fax 01206 562260 or info@blueforces.co.uk

PS4(A) replies: Trials of an Assisted House Purchase and Letting Scheme have been undertaken in the Colchester area by a company called Blue Forces Services Ltd. It is a commercial enterprise designed to assist Service personnel in joining the housing market.

The scheme draws together all the necessary expert skills associated with buying and renting property. To be eligible Service personnel must have three years of their engagement to run.

PS...

Smarten up, lads

HAVE Queen's Regs changed so that it is now compulsory for soldiers to walk around town with their headdress off? If they do not want to show pride in their regiment, they could at least show pride in their appearance.

It is becoming the norm for soldiers to waltz through town (especially Aldershot) with berets stuffed in their pockets and Big Macs in their mouths. It is not smart and it does not project a good image of the British Army. Come on CSMs and RSMs... get a grip.

Well done to the Royal Welch Fusiliers in Aldershot, who obviously take pride in themselves and their regiment. – Steve Dock, (ex-Army and still as smart as a carrot), Salisbury.

Wrong... twice

I AND several other ex-squaddies who enjoy *Soldier* wish to point out that the aircraft in the main picture on Pages 22-23 (Aug) is not a C130, as stated, but an Antonov AN-12 Cub, as confirmed by the glazed nose. – Doug Wilson, a very ex-soldier (1947), Bulkington, Warwickshire.

THE Caernarvon (Then and Then, Oct), is actually the good old Centurion. The Caernarvon was a tank consisting of a Conqueror hull and a Centurion turret. – Lawson Kent, Cornwall. B A Leggett, (late KDG/QDG), of Dorset, and T Bell (ex-RASC), Birmingham, told us the same thing.

Medal mentions

IF Maj Kent-Payne ("You can have double medals", May), is suggesting that two medals were issued for the Borneo campaign – Dec 24, 1964 to Aug 11, 1966 – he is incorrect. There was only one, the GSM 1962 with bar "Borneo".

Personnel involved in the initial revolt in Brunei between Dec 8 and 24, 1962 (largely 1/2 Gurkhas, the Queen's Own Highlanders, 42 Commando RM and 12 (Minden) Battery RA), were awarded the GSM 1918-64 with bar "Brunei". Clearly, those involved in both the revolt and the subsequent campaign would have received both medals – but they were very much a minority of the total number. – WG Clarke, Durrington, Wilts.

IN response to Maj Beamer's question ("Are there any Service personnel who have been awarded both Silver and Golden Jubilee Medals", Sept), I presume he means still serving? I have and I'm still serving. – Maj Tony Wilmore, QRL.

I HAVE both jubilee medals. I was attached to 1 Coldm Gds in Windsor and the medal came with a certificate rather than engraved with number, rank and name. I received my Golden Jubilee Medal while serving as a Non-Regular Permanent Staff soldier with 60 Signal Sqn in Aylesbury. – SSgt Joe H Sale, AGC (SPS), ex-RAPC, London District.

Vox pop

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

High-flyers

The Army Air Corps recruits NCOs and officers from all arms and services in the Army for pilot selection. We asked students at the School of Army Aviation at Middle Wallop about the impact the switch had made on their lives.



SSgt Steve Coulson, Int Corps

New challenges don't come any bigger than this. Selection is tough but fair and training lasts 19 months from start to wings. There are so many hurdles, but you take one at a time and only look as far ahead as your next flight and your next

big test. But it's a great job, even if you're having a bad day, you're still flying helicopters, with £3/4 million worth of aircraft underneath you – it can't get any better than that.

Cpl Adrian Hunt, AAC

I joined up as a ground crewman, became an air door gunner, an air observer and then trained as a pilot. The job satisfaction is great, it's very exhilarating and not a bad wage, either. My aim is to become a helicopter instructor.



SSgt Ash Hubbard, REME

I have gone from repairing aircraft to operating them. You never forget the buzz of your first solo, the moment the instructor steps

out and says, "There you go, take it yourself". There is a lot of self-study on the course, you have to store all the information in your head and be able to recall it at any time. You need to keep a certain tempo going and can't afford to ease off at any time.



Cpl Matt Donaldson, 1 RGJ

It's not a well publicised course and I found out about it when I worked alongside the Army Air Corps in Northern Ireland. I thought I might as well try or I'd regret it for the rest of my life. It's hard work and you struggle and doubt that you're good

enough but if you knuckle down it is achievable.

Cpl Steve Howard, 1 LI

I enjoyed selection, which was pretty straightforward... nothing an intelligent NCO couldn't accomplish. The training is progressive, if you have problems at any stage, they re-teach and try to keep you on the course. The best bit is flying low-level at 100 knots over the countryside. You can't beat it.



Cpl Henry Poole, LD

The course is hard, you've got to set yourself short-term goals and keep at it. You're learning a new art – one day you're pants at it but once you get it, it's like a switch, something clicks and suddenly you can do it. Flying is wicked, the training environment is fun and friendly and they all want you to pass, which is paramount.



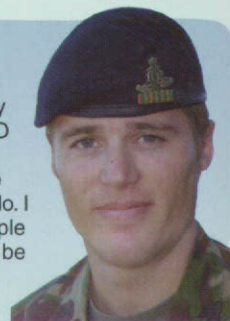
Capt Jack Perschke, KORBR

You must be enthusiastic, determined and committed and able to endure a lot of setbacks during training. The people you are with are high calibre and it's great fun. You go solo quite regularly through the course on different aircraft

types, both fixed-wing and rotary. Flying is pretty amazing, a mixed feeling of terror and great exhilaration, and when you get back down again you really feel like you have achieved something which few other people will ever get the chance to do... and it's all courtesy of the Army.

Bdr Sean Finch, 19 Regt RA

It's a great opportunity to be given as an NCO to be able to go away and fly, something the other Services don't do. I was one of those people who thought I'd never be good enough to do it, but when you push yourself it is achievable. I'd recommend it to anyone.



SSgt Dave Luke, REME

I've been working on aircraft for the past 15 years, so it's just a natural progression. It's been a fantastic challenge, doing things the average person doesn't have the chance to do, such as night flying with night-vision goggles.



Interviews: Andrea Frazer Pictures: Graeme Main



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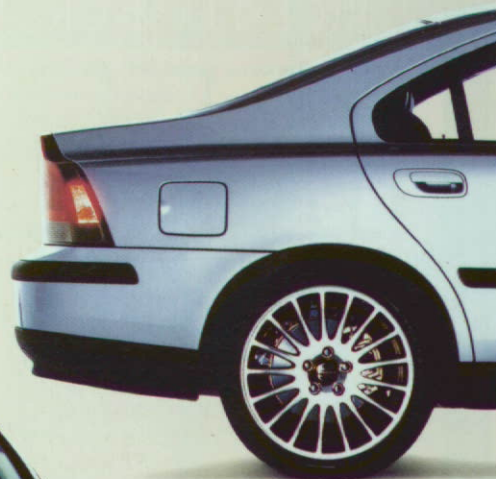
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