

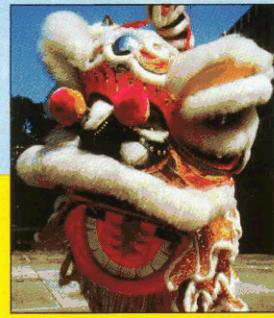
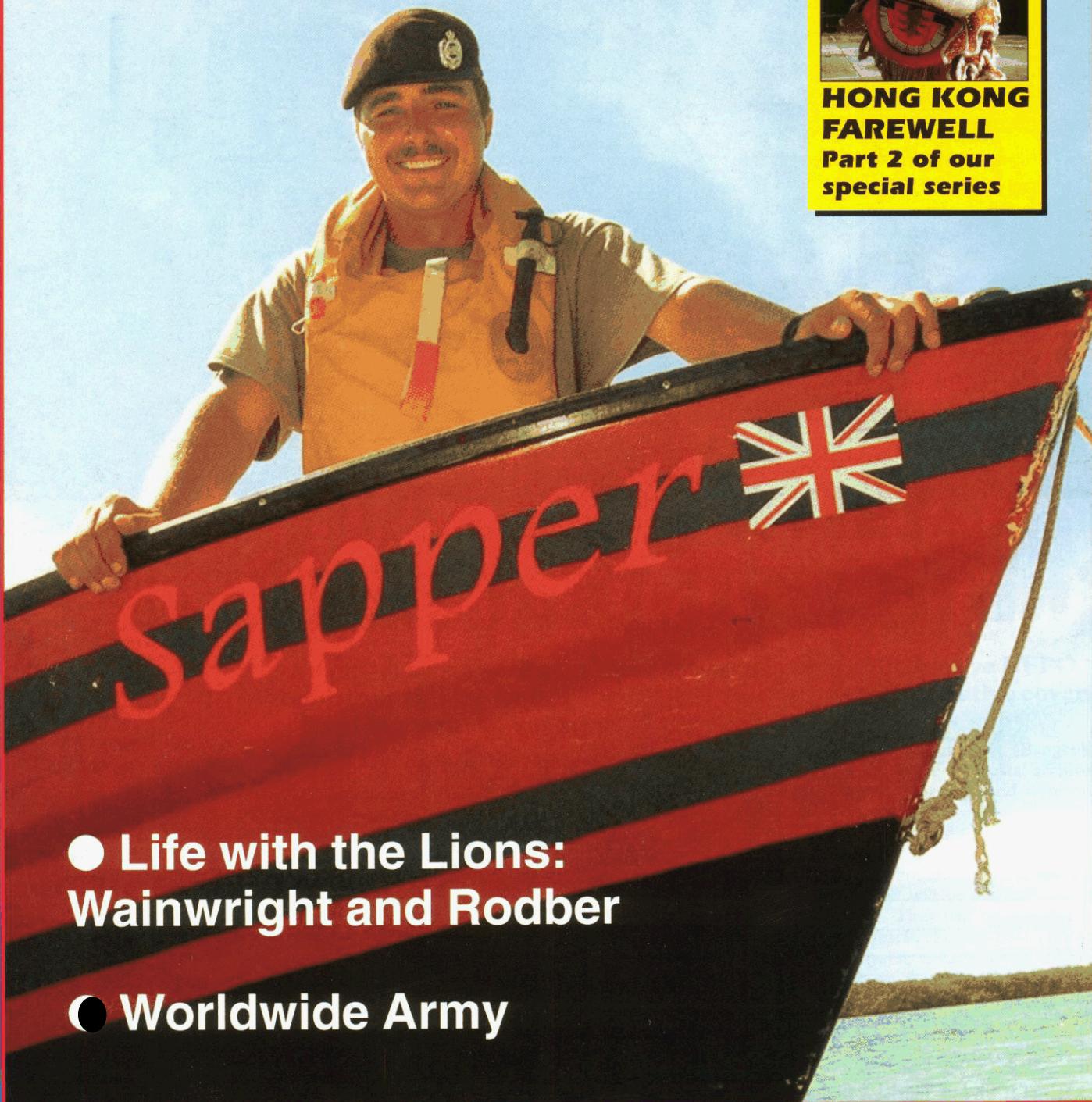
SOLDIER

FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

JUNE 23 1997

80p

ENGINEERS IN BELIZE



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Incorporating the Territorial Army magazine

June 23, 1997 Vol 53/13

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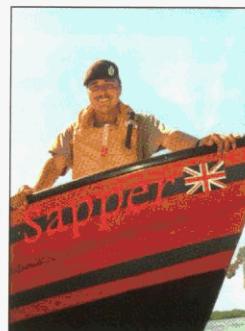
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Picture: Kevin Capon

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WO1 Trevor Lawrence sorts the mail before leaving Hong Kong



Why Black Watch is going white

THE 1st Battalion, The Black Watch is turning white for the British Garrison's final parade in Hong Kong ... its soldiers have been fitted out for white, lightweight jackets to replace the familiar green jackets they normally wear.

In the final weeks of 156 years of British presence in Hong Kong, this and other stories on the garrison appear in the second of *Soldier's* three-part special series to mark the historic withdrawal. Read about the REME "lock-picker" and the QG Signals.

Plus more human stories from soldiers who served there in war and peace.

Hong Kong Farewell is on Pages 21-28. See also BFBS's plans in the Lifestyle pages.

Philately will get you everywhere (but mainly China)

AMONG the last military postal items to bear the distinctive BFPO 1 number of Hong Kong will be 200,000 "lucky" commemorative covers printed to mark the handover to China.

Stamping them was expected to take up to three weeks after the envelopes, weighing six tons, arrived in London.

A special BFPO 1 rubber stamp has been designed for the cover.

WO1 Trevor Lawrence, who ran the Postal and Courier section in Prince of Wales Barracks until May 22, after which the staff gradually reduced to just three for the last month, said the covers' huge print run was largely aimed at the Chinese mainland market.

"The Chinese are fanatical about philately," he said. "Even the official number of the cover has been chosen because it is lucky for them - 8888."

Last regular post from BFPO 1 will be on June 27 - and it is hoped the last customer will be the last Commander British Forces Hong Kong, Maj Gen Bryan Dutton.

Loss of the distinctive BFPO 1 military postal address will leave Washington (BFPO 2) as the lowest number. BFPOs 3

(Korea) and 5 (Bangkok) passed into the postal archives many years ago and were not re-allocated.

Kathmandu in Nepal is BFPO 4.

A limited number of the covers will be available in the UK. They will be available at £2 each, cheques/postal orders payable to DPCSA Enterprise Fund, from the Philatelic Officer (HK Covers), Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London NW7 1PX. All proceeds will be given to Service charities.

Army Photographic Competition - details in Page 7

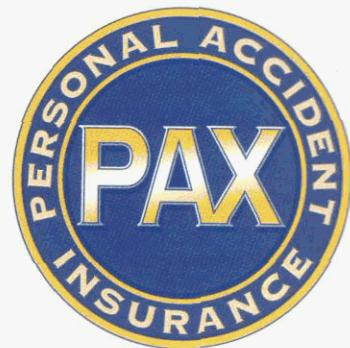
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Sick Gulf veterans meet ministers

GULF War veterans put their health concerns directly to the Defence Secretary George Robertson and Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid during an hour-long meeting at the MoD.

Dr Reid announced after the meeting that it was his intention to make the concerns of the Servicemen a top priority.

"I have listened very closely to all their comments and pledge that their concerns will be given the most urgent attention."

He said the Government was totally committed to finding an explanation for the veterans' health concerns as soon as possible.

"It is important that we establish a dialogue with those who are suffering, so that we understand their needs. This is the beginning of a process of communication and consultation."

Strategic defence review to be led by foreign policy

A WIDE-RANGING review of Britain's defence into the next century was announced by Defence Secretary George Robertson on May 28.

He said it would look at the country's commitments and interests in Europe and more widely, and would be used to reassess Britain's security interests and defence needs.

It would also examine the way the Armed Forces should be structured, equipped and deployed.

Accompanied at a press conference by the Chief of the

Defence Staff, Gen Sir Charles Guthrie, the Defence Secretary said the new Government believed it owed the men and women of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force a "real sense of direction into the 21st century".

He said his aim was to provide Britain's Armed Forces with a new sense of clarity, coherence and consensus.

The review would be led by foreign policy. "We will work jointly with the Foreign Office to establish a policy baseline that will build on our strengths

and on the best features of existing policies and capabilities."

Mr Robertson said Britain's security would continue to be based on the collective defence provided through NATO, and the Government would maintain strong conventional forces and its nuclear deterrent.

Describing the Armed Forces as "the best in Europe, if not the world", he acknowledged that there were equipment shortfalls and manpower shortages.

It is intended to make the

review as open to outside views and ideas as possible, and opposition parties and the Parliamentary defence committees will be involved in the process. "I should like all those with ideas on policy and the best use of resources to put them forward," said the Defence Secretary.

Submissions for the Strategic Defence Review should be sent to Jon Day, Director of Defence Policy, Room 7361, MoD, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB by June 30.

Bosnia story wins award

COVERAGE of the Army's support for the civilian community in Bosnia has won *Soldier* and a Territorial Army officer an award in a national competition.

In our September 16, 1996 issue we told how six soldiers from 522 Squadron, 23 Pioneer Regiment, on a six-month tour

in Bosnia, rebuilt the shell-damaged home of the Honorary British Consul in Dubrovnik, Mrs Sara Marojevic.

Commending the way the story was written and handled, the Communicators in Business Awards judge said it delivered a "real feel-good factor to the lay reader, let



Invasion: The Army's "navy" in action at Lulworth Cove, Dorset, as 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, from Marchwood, took part in a beach landing during Exercise Lion Sword. More than 80 vehicles and their crews from the headquarters element of Bulford-based 3rd Division were put ashore.

Picture: WO2 Pete Brisio

SOLDIER, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. Civil tel: 01252 347 plus last three digits of Aldershot Military extension given below

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Snap up a terrific prize

ENTRIES for the re-launched Army Photographic Competition close on October 17 and all entrants will be invited to the prize-giving in London at the end of that month. Winners will receive a range of trophies, cash and top equipment prizes.

The new competition is to have a change of emphasis, encouraging Regular and Territorial Army soldiers to enter.

Long-term aim is to enhance unit photographic capabilities and

encourage more PR photography.

Eight entry categories are: unit and professional photographer portfolios; best electronically-enhanced image; best monochrome and colour images; best Army image (sponsored by *Soldier*); best PR photograph and Army photographer of the year.

To be eligible, entrants must be members of the Regular Army, TA or cadet forces. Civil servants and civilians working for the Army and retired personnel working for the

Army are also eligible. Entry forms and copies of the rules are available from local Media Operations staff or direct from the Army Photographic Competition, DPR(A), Room 0326, MoD Main Building, London SW1A 2HB (tel 0171 218-1508; or MoD Main Building ext 81508).

Sponsors for this year's competition include Nikon, Fuji, Kodak, Vickers Defence Systems, Kiwi, Method Publishing and Grosvenor Television Productions.

Medics get 3% pay rise

DOCTORS and dentists in the Armed Forces will be paid more closely in line with their counterparts in the National Health Service.

Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid said the daily rate of basic pay of medical and dental officers would rise by an average of 3.4 per cent following the Government's acceptance of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) report.

In common with the rest of the Armed Forces, the award is staged, two per cent backdated to April 1, and the full award payable from December 1.

The AFPRB report recommended that the pay structures of medical personnel should be revised to compare with pay arrangements in the NHS, a measure that would mean some additional remuneration – including consultants' pay, general practitioners' pay, and the GP primary care supplement – would be consolidated into basic pay.

Announcing the increase, Dr Reid said: "Our medical and dental officers come second to none by way of dedication, professionalism and commitment, working often in the most arduous circumstances."



What's cooking, lads? Sgt Thomas Gardiner, Sgt William Hutchinson, LCpl Alec Middleton and Pte Fritz Fraser of the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion, The Black Watch, display their tasty offerings in the final of the Exercise Combat Caterer Territorial Army field catering and military

skills competition. Staged at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham, the finals were contested by 12 teams, each of three RLC chefs and a driver.

Winners were the 3rd Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire.

Exeter's old barracks to be sold off

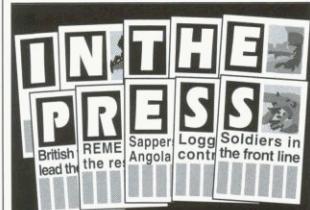
EXETER'S historic Higher Barracks is to close on July 31 after a military presence on the site spanning almost 200 years.

Closure will follow the transfer of the establishment's pay and records function to the

new centralised Army organisation in Glasgow. It will be the seventh and last of the regional pay and records offices to shut.

The Howell Road site is to be sold off for a housing development. Exeter retains a mili-

tary presence in Wyvern Barracks, headquarters of 43 (Wessex) Brigade, which covers the seven counties of the South West, and the regimental HQ of The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment.



What the papers have been saying

Gurkhas' statue for Whitehall

THE Gurkhas have won permission to erect a statue opposite the Ministry of Defence in London. The Gurkha Brigade Association is launching a public appeal to raise £200,000 to pay for it. – *Sunday Telegraph*

□ Foreign Secretary Robin Cook will use a meeting in London to press his Japanese counterpart for compensation for 12,000 survivors of Japanese death camps. – *Daily Mail*

□ An Army officer based in Ghana, Lt Col Andrew Gale, R Signals, has been praised for his part in co-ordinating the evacuation of British and European nationals from Sierra Leone during a military coup. – *Mail on Sunday*

□ Mme Arlette Gondrée has fought off a plan to evict her from the café overlooking Pegasus Bridge at Benouville, Normandy and turn it into a theme park. – *Daily Express*

□ A review has been launched by the Government into last year's change in the procedure for assessing war pensions involving deafness. – *Daily Telegraph*

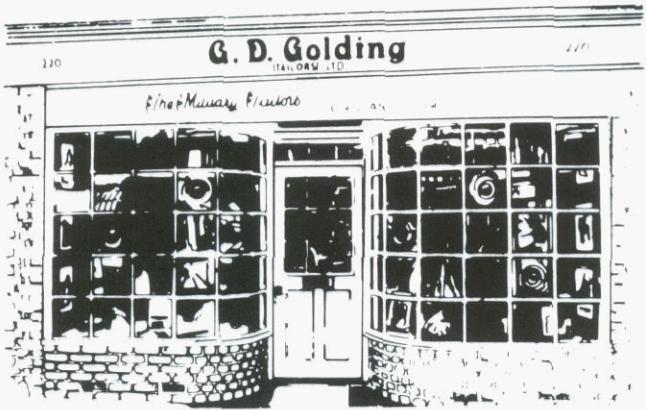
□ The British Korean Veterans Association is seeking more than £10,000 to establish a memorial to the 1,078 British Servicemen who lost their lives in the Korean War. – *Times*

□ The Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, Wilts, has been confirmed by the MoD as the second site in Britain (the other is Porton Down) where research on chemical weapons is carried out. – *Guardian*

□ The idea of sending Members of Parliament away from Westminster to spend time with military units is being examined by Defence Secretary George Robertson. He is concerned that the new generation of MPs, too young for National Service, is dangerously out of touch with defence issues. – *Daily Express*

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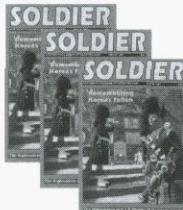
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Dental officer dies on Alaskan mountain

A BRITISH Army expedition to North America's highest mountain range ended in disaster when one of the climbers fell to his death.

Maj Mark Trevillyan, of the Royal Army Dental Corps, was leading an official adventurous training expedition in Alaska's Mt McKinley range on May 30 when he and fellow climber LSgt Paul Holmes lost their footing and plunged 500ft.

It is believed the two men had just reached the summit at 20,320ft and were descending to a camp at 17,200ft when they were enveloped by a snow storm and fell into a notoriously dangerous gully.

LSgt Holmes, serving with the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards, survived the fall.

He regained consciousness under the body of Maj Trevillyan, and was rescued by another climber before being evacuated to a hospital in Anchorage, where he was treated for what were described as superficial injuries.

Maj Trevillyan's body was eventually recovered by helicopter after several attempts had been hampered by high winds.

Other climbers in the expedition were Capt Mark Kitson RAMC attached 1 RGR, and Cpl Mathew Yorke, 35 Engineer Regiment.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said the dead man, who was 35 years old, was a highly qualified climber. He was also highly regarded in climbing circles.

Maj Trevillyan had been trained in mountain leadership, winter and snow climbing and rock climbing.

There will be an official enquiry into the accident.

Worthy upgrade

STATE of the art IBM/S390 processors have replaced the ageing mainframe computers at the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency at Worthy Down, Hants.



Above: RLC soldiers during the parade in Grantham
Right: WO2 (RQMS) Walter Kirk (left) and Col Tony Smith with the adoption certificate and civic dignitaries.

Grantham honours its loggies

PRINCE William of Gloucester Barracks at Grantham, home of the Royal Logistic Corps (Territorial Army) has been given the Freedom of the district.

The occasion was marked by a march past on St Peter's Hill in the town, and the presentation to commanding officer Col Tony Smith of an adoption certificate.



Picture: Grantham Journal

Bands and pipes and drums of 152 Regiment RLC, 150 Regiment RLC and the Scottish Transport Regiment led the parade as the loggies marched through the town in recognition of 21 years of service at the nearby barracks.

After an inspection by the mayor, the parade marched to St Wulfram's Church for a special thanksgiving service.

The Freedom honour means that the RLC at the Somerby Hill barracks have been adopted by the town through the Charter Trustees, 18 Grantham-area members of South Kesteven District Council.

Hundreds of local people turned up for a fun day at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks on the previous day.

Conserving Sennybridge

A NEW conservation centre is to be provided by the Army on its training area at Sennybridge.

The building, to which the public has access, will have a display of photographs and charts depicting the wildlife and vegetation in the area, and conservation measures taken by range staff over the years.

It is part of the MoD's ongoing conservation efforts under an agreement with the Countryside Council for Wales.

Airborne patrol saves woman in road crash

A ROAD accident victim was rescued and given life-saving first aid by Armagh-based troops in a carefully executed land and air operation.

The incident was spotted from the air by ATpr Simon Roberts, a member of a helicopter patrol, which flew immediately to Bessbrook Mill security forces base to collect a medical support team.

Capt Claire Coleman, medical officer of the 1st Battalion,

Welsh Guards, put a special neck brace on the young woman casualty to prepare her for the journey to hospital by ambulance.

When the soldiers reached her the woman, in her 20s, was semi-conscious in her overturned car. She was given first aid by Sgt Norman Lochri, of 1st Battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, as the helicopter illuminated the scene with its searchlight.

James is on the ball

Army cadet LCpl James Moriarty (17) will be able to tell his grandchildren that he scored the last international try at Cardiff Arms Park. James, a member of the Thongsbridge ACF detachment, was making his debut for the England Army Cadet Force XV against their Welsh counterparts in the final international match before the famous stadium is demolished. England won 37-7.



Picture: Chris Barker



Hundred'up
Capt Gerry Briggs, permanent staff admin officer of 223 Artillery Support Squadron RLC (V), shows his 100th recruit, James Reynolds, the workings of an SA80 rifle. Gerry has achieved his century of enlistments since taking up his appointment on January 9, 1995.



Pioneering

spirit

Look where enthusiasm gets you! LCpl Pat Thompson in the cab with Pte Trevor Wylie, SSgt Phil Pendleton, Pte Pat Morley, Pte Russ Hewitt and Cpl Mike Gleeson looking on. All six TA soldiers from Grantham-based 168 Pioneer Regiment RLC (V) volunteered for a two-week exercise and found themselves working in an ammunition depot in the Falklands. So far they have sorted over a million brass casings and built a sangar.

PEOPLE

Russian about

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment demonstrate training methods for the benefit of three Russian officers visiting elements of 5 Airborne Brigade to conduct an Arms Control Evaluation under the Vienna Treaty. Pte Shane Williams (left) and Pte James Brudenell are on the ground, while LCpl Jason Whitworth explains what is going on. Sgt Michael Cendrowski (right) and WO2 Dave Lee (rear) look on.



Chris's choice phase

Language specialist Capt Chris Willis AGC (V) (left) meets Gen Sir Michael Walker, C-in-C Land Command, after collecting a new pair of boots at Larkhill. Chris, a professional linguist, was about to start a six-month tour of duty in support of the multi-national force operating in former Yugoslavia. He will be working at the Italian Air Force base of Gioia Del Colle. Chris is a founder member of the Specialist Pool of Linguists recently established by the AGC's Education and Training Service. This was the 14th call-out of volunteers for service in Bosnia since December 1995. More than 600 reservists are currently in theatre, bringing to 2,347 the number who have so far answered the call.



BY GEORGE, HE'S GOT IT!

Latest recruit to 208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital (V) is George, a two-year-old Cocker spaniel pictured with his master, chief clerk WO2 Alex Francis. George has completed basic canine training and has been assigned to mainly clerical duties. After greeting unit members and visitors to 208's barracks, Chavasse House in Sarum Road, Liverpool, George patrols the corridors to make sure all is well before retiring to his basket for a dog nap.



That was Somme birthday party ...

Pte Julie Dick brings a smile to the face of Somme survivor Conrad Holmes during a parade at the Army Training Regiment, Whittington Barracks, Lichfield to celebrate his 102nd birthday. Members of the Territorial Army's 202 Field Hospital, SSAFA and Army Medical Services at Lichfield surprised Conrad with the event. Julie, the youngest member of the RAMC on parade, presented the First World War veteran with a plaque, a bronze statuette, and a kiss.



We have lift-off

Oldham-based Territorial Army sappers Cpl Liz Smith and Michelle Spencer (in cab) pause during training on a mobile crane at the Royal School of Military Engineering. They have joined the ranks of a select group of technical specialists by training as military heavy crane operators. Both women are serving with 201 Headquarters Squadron RE (V).

Duty calls put the pressure on locums

BRITISH Forces Germany Health Commission continues to review the health care arrangements in that country. One area which has caused concern for some time is the frequency with which families are looked after by locums.

When the uniformed doctor has to be away on duty a temporary replacement is found.

This is hardly unique to the Forces. It happens in the United Kingdom when the doctor is away on holiday, ill or attending conferences. What is unique to the Armed Forces' medical practices overseas is the frequency with which doctors have to leave their patients in the care – albeit highly competent care – of another.

As this happens quite frequently some patients see a different doctor every time they visit the medical centre. This is difficult if you are trying to follow a course of treatment or cope with a condition such as depression, where the treatment relies heavily on the relationship between patient and doctor.

In order to provide continuity of care the Health Commission is aiming to recruit long-term locums who would stay in on a regular basis. This is a good solution and has come about because of the constant monitoring of the situation by the Commission.

What surprised them when they looked into the whole business of necessary absences was the number of times that doctors have to be away.

There also appear to be fewer doctors than there used to be – unsurprising in itself – and, given the amount of cover which has to be arranged, it looks as though there are now fewer doctors joining up. For some time, Service people with medical connections have been telling me that the number of doctors in uniform have been falling far too quickly.



Cari's column

It now looks, to me, as if it should be a matter of serious concern to us all.

If it is true that fewer doctors are joining the Forces, we need to be looking at why a career in uniform is less attractive than it used to be. We also need to be looking at ways of encouraging doctors to be part of the Service community.

A fall in numbers has implications for patient-care, of course, but there is also an impact on morale. If doctors feel they are part of a dwindling community trying to cope against the odds they are hardly likely to feel valued and highly-motivated – although I don't doubt that they are carrying out their duties in a professional manner.

□ □ □

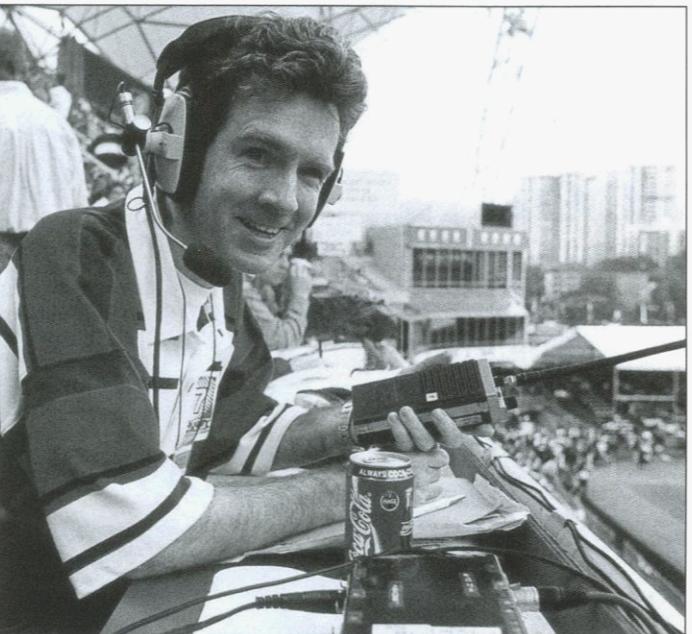
Meanwhile in Hong Kong, members of the British community are ticking off their lists of lasts and watching the infrastructure of their daily lives being dismantled around them. BFBS has transferred its operations to temporary quarters (see story on right).

There was a suggestion that the outside broadcast to cover the end of an era might be continued from a ship sailing out of Hong Kong. Sadly, this is not possible, but they are taking suggestions for what should be the final piece of music to be played before the transmitter is unplugged. Any ideas?

□ □ □

Thank you for your letters with imaginative ideas for keeping loved ones in touch with home while they are away on duty. I'll share a few of the best with you next time, so there is just about time to get yours in to me at the address below.

● Cari Roberts presents *Counterpoint* on BFBS radio. Write to her at BFBS, BFPO 786; or c/o Soldier.



Last on the line: Rory Higgins broadcasting live from this year's World Cup rugby sevens in Hong Kong

Rory determined to bow out on an appropriate note

BFBS Hong Kong will remain on air until the last possible moment.

In the weeks leading up to midnight on June 30 the British Forces Broadcasting Service team is to operate from a converted ISO container in the grounds of the Prince of Wales Barracks while the studios and equipment are packed, ready to ship out as the Chinese move in.

Programme director Rory Higgins's voice will be the last local listeners will hear. "There's a nice roundness to it," he said. "I first joined BFBS while living in Hong Kong in 1985, although I was immediately posted to Cyprus, and I was here when the Joint Declaration was signed."

He said the station would remain on air as long as possible. "In our own way, we're demonstrating British sovereignty. But, like the Forces, we have to withdraw all our equipment by midnight on the 30th. "We'll be moving into the container until June 29. We had hoped to put it on a ship and to go on broadcasting as we sailed away, but it isn't technically possible.

"Instead, on the final day we'll use an outside broadcast unit."

□ A matter of trust: For more than 180 years, the Cale, as the Royal Caledonian Schools are nicknamed, has provided education and accommodation for Scottish children of members of the Armed Forces – initially in London and, from 1903, in Bushey, Herts.

Since deciding last year to sell the Bushey site, they have continued their work by making educational grants to HIVEs, nurseries, playgroups, children and young people.

A leaflet has been prepared on how to apply for grants, copies of which are available from John Horsfield, Chief Executive, The Royal Caledonian Schools Educational Trust, Aldenham Road, Bushey, Herts WD2 3TS, tel/fax 01923 226642.

Worthy takes the job into account

WORTHY Down at Winchester has become the first MoD unit to offer staff an in-house opportunity to train and qualify as accounting technicians.

The establishment is at the forefront of vocational training and has

just been awarded Approved Assessment Centre status by the Association of Accounting Technicians. This means that staff in finance and accounting area can work towards the AAT's National Vocational Qualifications.

A pilot scheme offering 25 students access is about to begin and will expand to other MoD locations if it proves successful. Training is provided by the MoD's School of Finance and Management and the Defence Management Training.

Falklands families group thanks Des

TRIBUTES have been paid to Des Keoghane on his retirement as chairman of the Falkland Families Association.

In recognition of his outstanding work in sustaining and promoting the organisation's activities, he has been elected its first president.

He has been succeeded by the vice-chairman, Mrs Sarah Jones.

The 14th annual reunion and general meeting of the association

was held in the Guards Chapel in central London, where Mr Keoghane was presented with an oil painting – by islander Jamie Peck – depicting the Guards Memorial at Fitzroy, where his son, LSgt Kevin Keoghane, was killed in the Argentine air attack on the landing craft of the *Sir Galahad*.

The painting was handed over by the Falkland Islands Government representative in London, Miss Sukey Cameron. Mrs Nina Keoghane was given a bouquet in appreciation of her work behind the scenes, and, to complete the family tributes, the couple's daughter-in-law, Mrs Jane Keoghane, Kevin's widow, was also praised on handing over the secretary's post to Mrs Cynthia Middlewick.

Lt Gen Sir Hew Pike and Maj Gen Iain Mackay-Dick, who both fought in the campaign, were made associate members.

Open all hours at Blandford

FINISHING touches were put to Naafi's new leisure complex at Blandford Camp when Humphrey's restaurant and the King George's Third pub opened on May 30.

Humphrey's offers a wide choice of food during the day, and at night becomes an all-ranks restaurant and takeaway. A six-lane bowling alley, with bar and food area, has also proved a hit with troops and families based in the area.

Approved status

Training Depot, The Royal Irish Regiment at Ballymena has been awarded status as an approved centre for the issue of Scottish Qualification Authority awards. All recruits passing their initial military training will now gain Scottish Vocational Qualification Level 1 in Public Service (Armed Forces).

Free retraining

The University of Westminster is running two courses for people who have been or will be made redundant from the defence industry. A business innovation course lasting 20 weeks and a 12-week course on setting up and managing small businesses start on September 1. Both are sponsored by the European Social Fund. Call Diana Wolfin on 0171 911 5000 ext 3349, or Susan Foreman on ext 3027.

Lowering to the occasion

Eighteen plucky individuals from the Service community and civilians abseiled down the side of historic Fort Amherst, Chatham, and raised £1,200 for the National Meningitis Trust. The event was organised by Jon Vann of Army Welfare Service and the Lampard Community Centre at the Royal School of Military Engineering.



Fighting family: from left are Luke, Louise, Aaron and Katherine

World class karate kids

A JHQ Rheindahlen family has achieved amazing success in the sport of karate . . . and the youngest is just three years old. All four children of SSgt Alan Whitehead of the UKSC(G) Movement Control Office – himself a black belt – have gained world or European trophies.

Katherine (13) won the world championships in her class for kumite at the fourth Funakoshi World Shotokan championships in Bournemouth.

Brother Aaron (10) is European champion in his class for kumite (fighting against actual opponents) at the "Shotokan Karate Kyogi of United Nations" European championships, and sister Louise (8) was crowned European champion in kata, a set routine against an imaginary opponent.

Young Luke gained his ninth kyu, the first grading on the karate black belt ladder, at the age of just 3½.

The Whiteheads have been training with the Karate Dojo Monchengladbach Club where Alan was a leading figure. Now he hopes to set up a new martial arts club when the family returns to the United Kingdom on a posting to South Cerney.

RBL's distance approach to learning

AN alliance has been formed between the Royal British Legion Training Company, a Coventry-based consultancy and the Leices-

ter University Management Centre to provide distance learning management programmes for Service men and women. MBA and MSc

programmes are designed on a modular basis, and students can choose from a range of options including finance, marketing and public sector management.

Lower level bridging programmes are also available.

Students will be supported by RBL Training at its Tidworth College residential centre, and have opportunities to attend workshop days at the university.

Details from Andy Rigione of Resource Development International.

He can be contacted on 01203 422422, fax 01203 422423, e-mail info@rdi.co.uk.

Charities' union blessed in Abbey

Roberts Workshops combined earlier this year to form SSAFA Forces Help.

Prince Philip read the Beatitudes from St Matthew's Gospel and Prince Michael led the Act of Rededication, pledging support for both the older and younger generations of serving and ex-Service men and women.

● The Scots Guards were due to break for tea during rehearsals for Trooping the Colour, and unit tea parties around the UK and overseas were being held as part of the Army contribution to SSAFA Forces Help's Big Brew Up event on June 11. They were attempting to turn it into the world's biggest tea party. See back cover picture.

Lionhearts against the Boks

THE talk was of forthcoming battles, of Special Forces selected for the most difficult of missions.

Troops passed across the room either deep in their own thoughts or walking tall as they prepared to tell the world that it was far from Mission Impossible; that, man-for-man, they were as good, if not better, than the foe. They had a plan and they would WIN.

Hereford? Not at all. In the darkest recesses of a five-star hotel in mid-Surrey they were talking war. The cream of British and Irish Rugby had gathered for the supreme challenge – a 13-match, three-Test tour of South Africa.

The tempo in the British Lions camp was mightily upbeat. And it was, to all intents and purposes, an Army HQ. The talk was of maintaining the aim – or focus in modern management speak. Taking the battle to the enemy, never moving on to the back foot.

These men were superbly briefed on the battleground, South Africa, and the foe, the Springboks. They were, for all to see, already a team of one commander, 12 staff and 35 players, including Maj Rob Wainwright RAMC and Capt Tim Rodber, Green Howards, representing their countries, their clubs and, of course, the Army.

Although both officers are from different national teams they have played together many times in the familiar Army red shirt, the colour of the British Lions.

Neither Wainwright nor Rodber was in any doubt that the task ahead was monumental – taking on the World Champions on their own territory – not only on the rugby field but in all aspects of life from that moment on.

At the Pilkington Cup Final the previous

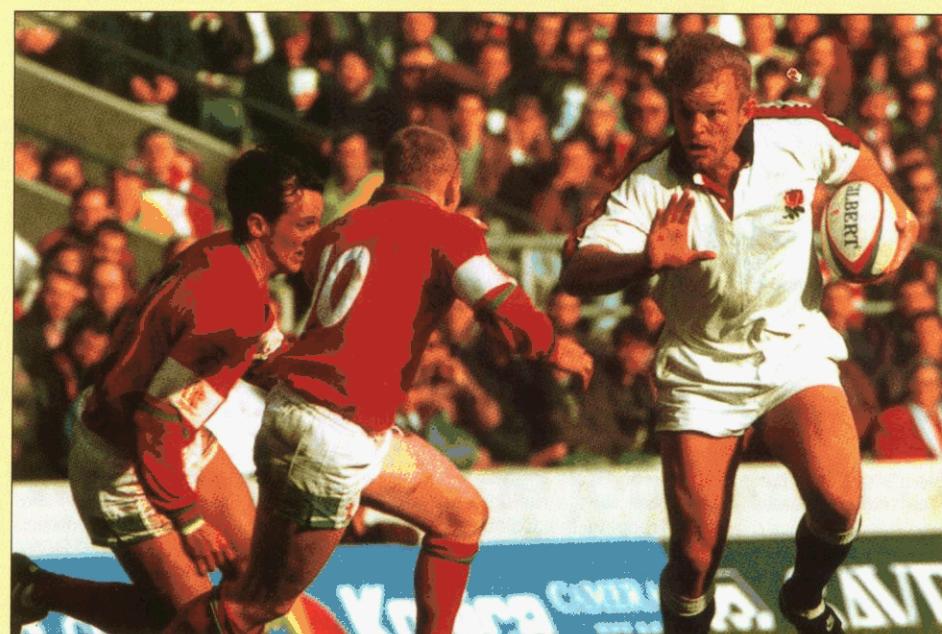


Ready for the challenge: Capt Tim Rodber (left) and Maj Rob Wainwright pictured at the team hotel before the Lions left for their tour of South Africa

Maj Rob Wainwright and Capt Tim Rodber talk to Roger Thompson

Saturday, Joel Stransky, Springbok and Leicester fly half, had focused not on his club's victory, in which he had scored all the points, but on the disinformation programme already in gear: the Boks to win 3-0!

He was speaking on behalf of his nation, his people, his team back home... and the Lions still had not gathered in England.



Into enemy lines: Capt Tim Rodber makes ground for England against Wales at Twickenham last winter. The Welsh No 10 is Neil Jenkins, who is also with the British Lions in South Africa

Both Wainwright and Rodber recognised they would be playing against the very best in the world, that life would be a series of "put-downs" from hostile crowds, noisy hotel rooms, meals arriving late and transport not arriving at all.

Life would be made as frustrating as could be imagined, but they were geared to remain positive, thinking only in terms of victory on the field of play. They knew that the 1997 British Lions squad was the best in the Northern Hemisphere and, if they played their best rugby, they would WIN.

Surprisingly, both Wainwright and Rodber thought Lions rugby would be a pinnacle in their rugby careers, and although this interviewer tried to play the devil's advocate to the captain of Scotland, humming a few bars of *Flower of Scotland*, they were adamant.

Sharper focus

Our men were already Lions through and through. The "marrying up" process was on-going and the gel was there. Quizzed about divisions in previous Lions tours, the line held firm. The English, Irish, Welsh and Scots were as one, Leicester and Northampton were last season's and next season's clubs. This was different, bigger and much harder, needing a different, sharper focus.

After several training sessions, Tim Rodber said: "There are no Jackers on this tour." What he meant was an "all right, Jack" attitude would not be tolerated.

The Green Howards officer was sharing a room with Scott Quinnell, who had returned from Rugby League to play Union for Wales; Wainwright, an Army doctor, was roomed with Richard Hill of England. They were bonding on and off the field, a vital process to withstand the constant

"sledging" in South Africa. Rugby styles and talents had been dissected, molecules separated, atoms split.

The Boks were very good but only one last kick had made them world champions against an All Blacks team riddled with a mystery dysentery which struck on the night before the final in Johannesburg.

Wainwright and Rodber were confident they could match the Boks physically, but they had to develop a fast 15-man game and be technically better, particular in ball retention and changing the point of attack.

Unlike some of the players (Lions' skipper Martin Johnson had played 42 matches in 1996-97), both Wainwright (16 matches) and Rodber (30) were relatively fresh after a gruelling first professional season.

Diet controls

Were the Lions already played out? Neither thought that likely. Wainwright, the doctor in him, believed diet controls, enforced rest and a change of atmosphere would greatly help recuperation where it was needed, whereas Rodber, while maintaining his inimitable focus, conceded that relaxing and getting away from it all would not be easy.

There would naturally be a part of both remaining in Scotland and England. Wainwright recently moved house and his wife, Romayne, would have to deal with the artisans converting it into a home. He will maintain contact daily by phone. Inevitably, however, he would lose touch with the children, Natasha and Douglas, and who would exercise Zala, his Hungarian hound?

Pictures: Roger Thompson



Old adversaries: Maj Rob Wainwright, the Scotland captain, is tackled during the game against England at Twickenham. Fly half Rob Andrew (left) is in attendance

Dispatch from the front line

In the opening week of the South African tour, Rob Wainwright skippered the Lions to a midweek victory over Border, and scored the winning try.

Tim Rodber's tour started slowly when he contracted a virus, but he returned to form with a powerful performance against Western Province, dominating the rear of the line-out against several international contenders.

Both men were facing, in somewhat different circumstances, the problems which greet every soldier told to pack his bags.

They are at the very top of the Rugby Union ladder, having achieved the highest possible standards after years when they had to climb that ladder rung by rung.

Rodber joined the Army from Churchers School in Petersfield, Hampshire, taking a cadetship up to Oxford and playing rugby for the Army while he studied for his degree.

For a commission in the Green Howards he had to complete the full Sandhurst course, which he did with flying colours.

He now works for the Director of Army

Recruiting and is about to assist the new Army Rugby Union Youth Development Officer. He recognises the platform and encouragement the Army gave him in the "hard graft" years but thinks it unlikely other officers could follow in his tracks, particularly completing the year at Sandhurst.

"Sandhurst and top league or international rugby simply do not mix in this professional age," he said. Doctor Rob, on the other hand, studied medicine on an Army Cadetship at Cambridge and, in addition to playing rugby for the University, gained a boxing Blue.

Being a doctor, he was only required to

attend the "Vicars and Tarts" course at Sandhurst and saw absolutely no reason why today's young professional could not emulate his rise, within the Army, to international level rugby.

He saw one of the evils of the professional game as rich clubs attempting to lure exciting young players with unrealistic salaries. Life will settle down, he is convinced, and bright young men who play promising rugby will be looking for a balanced professional life as well as top-quality sport. For a few years they can certainly go hand in hand, to the benefit of everyone.

As breakfast beckoned and the world's press entered the hotel lobby, the doctor and the infantryman were asked for a final prediction.

Rodber was convinced that, man for man, the Lions were better than the Boks. He predicted a series win. Wainwright, bedside manner to the fore, was a little more cautious. "Players will develop or underperform on this and every other tour," he said.

"The Lions in five weeks time will be vastly different from what is up-front today. We must wait and see."

The following morning the British team left Heathrow for South Africa. The Lions are stalking the Springboks. It is time to eat.

Rockets Galore!

THE roar and blinding pyrotechnic display of a rocket engine shatters the bleak peace of the isles, as a missile is launched and guided to detonation over the cold Atlantic.

But the several thousand locals who live on the Outer Hebridean islands of Benbecula and Uist barely look up from their work. Even the cattle and sheep continue munching the grass as if nothing unusual is going on.

Indeed nothing unusual is going on. The locals are well used to the flashes and bangs. Many of them have, after all, been living next to the Royal Artillery's main rocket range since its inception in April 1957. They have come to accept the military camp, the concrete bunkers, the launch pads and the hill-top tracking and control station (known as "Space City"), not only as part of the landscape, but also as a vital part of the local economy.

When, on April 9, Field Marshal Lord Vincent, Master Gunner, St James's Park, marked the 40th anniversary of the range by unveiling a commemorative plaque at the Army base, many islanders raised a glass to the day Benbecula went ballistic.

One of them was Councillor Mairi Bremner, who was just 12 when the range was opened. Her father had been employed on the range, and two of her brothers still work there. She insists that Benbecula and the neighbouring islands of North and South Uist would be affected badly if the Army was to pack its missiles and go.

"The range has been a life-saver for the Islands," she said in her soft Celtic accent.

"Back in the 1950s there was very little work here, and some people lived a very poor life. But the rocket range changed all that. Young people returned to the Islands; we had roads built, community centres and improved health services. All of these things came because the community had been stabilised."

However, back in 1957, not everyone welcomed the missile men. Some islanders, led by a charismatic Catholic priest, Father John Morrison, wanted nothing to do with the Godless technology of the Cold War.

Dubbed "Father Rocket" by the press and frustrated Army and Whitehall officials who frequently came up against him, Father Morrison preached peaceful opposition, and led a small band of "rebels".

They picketed the range site and did

their best to halt development. English film makers even made an Ealing comedy based on the affair.

Rockets Galore, starring Donald Sinden and Ronnie Corbett, was the sequel to *Whisky Galore*, Compton McKenzie's famous story about the Hebrideans who took on the Customs when a ship laden with whisky ran aground. Now the canny islanders were taking on the Cold War warriors.

But, in reality, most islanders saw the military investment as the answer to their economic ills. They wanted the range for the jobs it would generate, and so Benbecula got its rockets. Since then, the Royal Artillery Range Hebrides (actually two; the Deep Range, for larger missiles, and the inshore range for smaller weapons) has hosted thousands of test firings.

In the 1950s, gunners from the Royal Artillery School made history there by launching the Corporal rocket, the first long-range ballistic missile to be fired in Europe after the German V2 of the Second World War.

Corporal was designed to carry nuclear weapons, although none of those fired from Benbecula were fitted with warheads – nuclear or conventional.

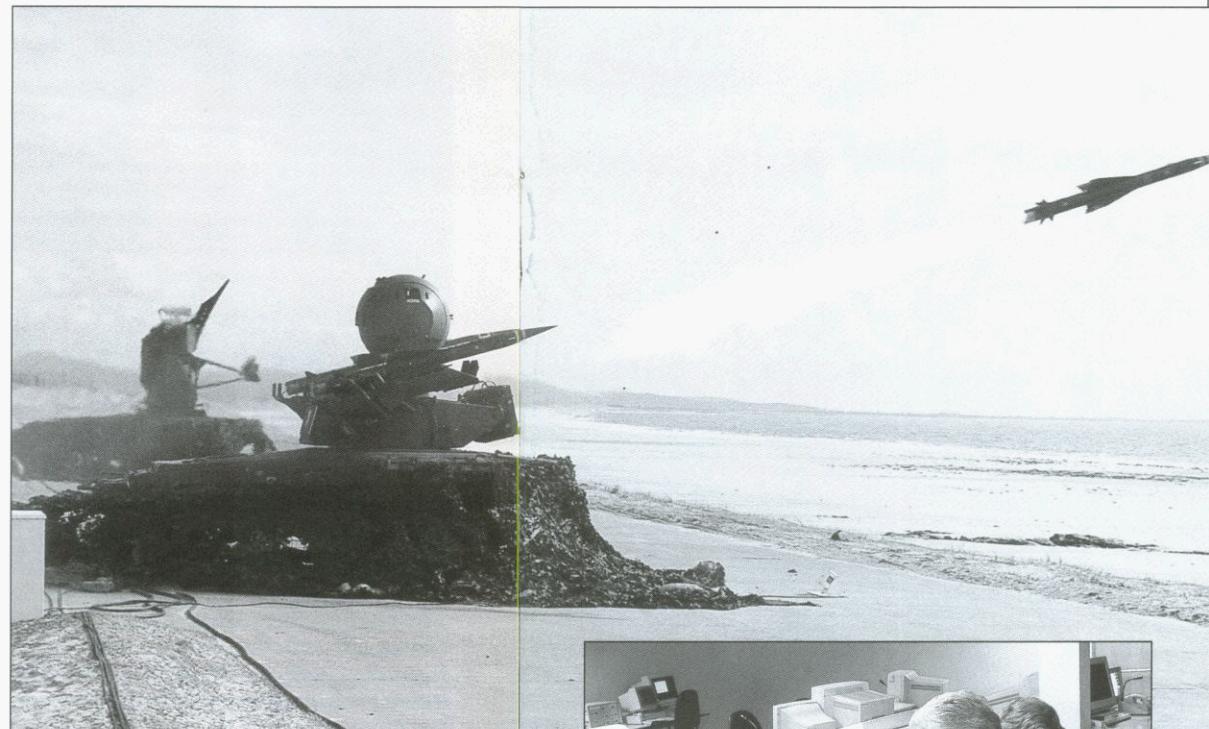
Even so, towering 45ft above the sand-bagged bunkers where the gunners sheltered, Corporal demanded respect, and it always got it – thanks largely to the rocket's disturbing habit of going haywire.

The rogue rockets were usually destroyed by radio command in mid-flight. But one particular launch in 1966 is etched in the memories of those who were there. Seconds after lifting off, the rocket turned almost 180 degrees and headed in the general direction of both civilian crofts and Army bunkers.

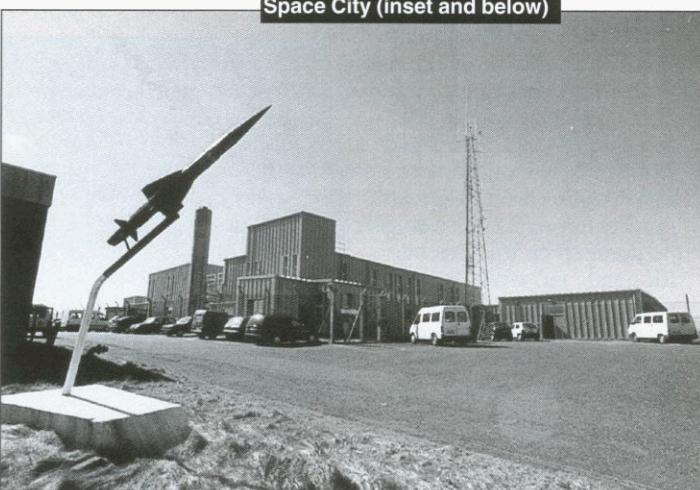
After frenetic but failed efforts to detonate the missile, it crashed spectacularly into Loch Drudibeg. No one was hurt, but it was far too close to both civilians and military for comfort.

The ballistic rocket business boomed through the Sixties. The American Army took Sergeant, Corporal's big brother, there for testing (it behaved a little better) and other NATO allies followed with their own weaponry.

In the seventies Rapier became the range's bread and butter. Since its intro-



Missile away: Another Rapier soars away from the range (above), to be tracked inside Space City (inset and below)



Space City: the hill-top tracking and control station

duction in 1971, there have been more than 14,000 launches of the missile which, in its latest form, Field Standard C, remains one of Britain's main air defence systems.

The technology of the Benbecula Range has changed greatly since those early days. As late as the 1960s, the range controllers were using Second World War "predictors", cumbersome number-crunching machines that processed the data needed to control launches. It was slow, but it worked

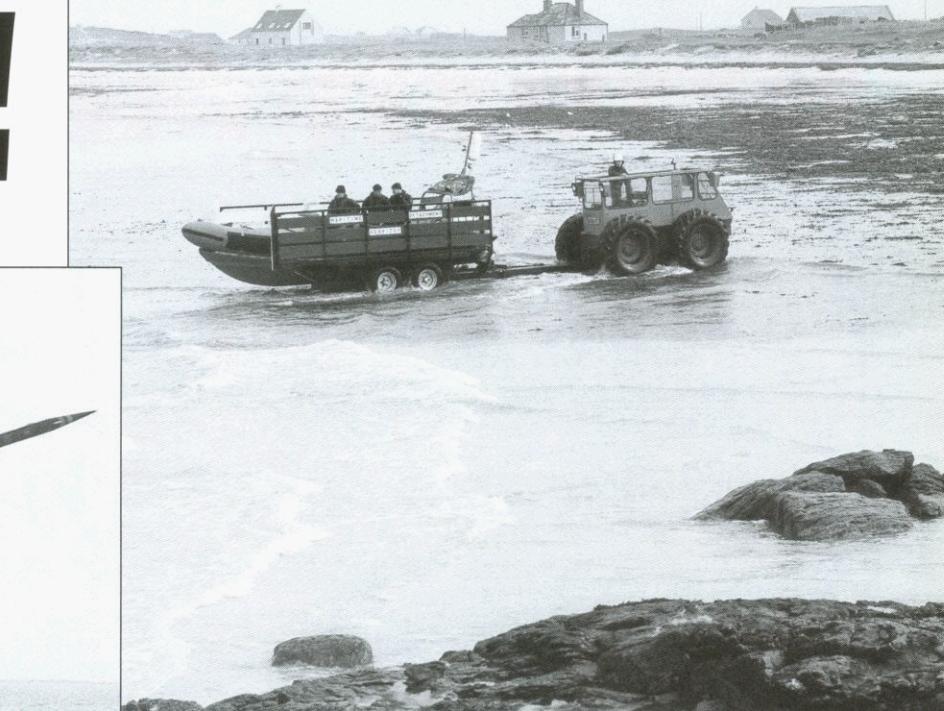


Lt Col Andy Pedder, in command of military detachments

because the missiles of the time were also relatively slow.

But now, as the range enters its fifth decade, the latest technology has taken over. During the first few months of this year, the range was fitted with a new and highly sophisticated computer control and communications system.

Changes in technology have had little affect on the community. The Benbecula of 1997 remains, essentially, the Benbecula of 40 years ago. There is still a sense of bleak



Maritime safety: half a dozen soldier-sailors run an inshore safety boat that patrols the range area

isolation that the locals love, and some of the military personnel merely tolerate. Many islanders have kept up their crofting and fishing traditions, although most also need regular jobs of the type offered by the MoD.

And the islanders are still prepared to speak up loudly when necessary. A few years ago, Whitehall planners threatened to close the range, but, in a reversal of Father Rocket's protest, a group of islanders, including Mairi Bremner, flew to London to lobby against the closure. Officials changed their minds.

The range of today is different in one major way. There are now far fewer military personnel stationed on Benbecula: just 39, plus another 11 running the missile-tracking radar station on the even more remote St Kilda. The soldiers, who are posted to Benbecula for two years, but to St Kilda for just six unaccompanied months, work closely with about 200 civilians, the majority of whom are employees of the civilian management company, SERCo.

Lt Col Andy Pedder, who commands the military detachment, says that some soldiers adapt to the isolated lifestyle and the often bleak climate more easily than others, but on the whole, morale is good. Certain units, he says, can gain a great deal from a Benbecula or St Kilda posting.

"The maritime detachment, the half-dozen guys who run the inshore safety boat that patrols the range area, are particularly

keen to be here because it's one of the few places where they can bring their wives." Normally, the soldiers in blue have a lonely time at sea.

"It's also great for the detachment from 242 Signals Squadron," said Col Pedder. They enjoy it because they get to work with fibre optics and microwave technology, instead of just working with the usual telephones and radios."

But the soldiers are in the minority. Even range director Pat Dean wears tweeds instead of camouflage. He was a soldier when he first came to the islands in 1962. The then Private Dean married a local girl, and the Army took the couple all over the world. Pat Dean returned to the islands as a major in 1995, commanding the missile tracking station, "Space City".

It resembles the sort of computer and radar-filled complex from which the villains of James Bond films plan world domination.

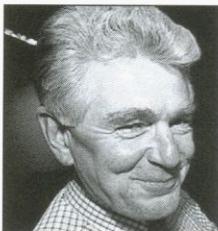
Pat Dean's plans are more modest. As an employee of SERCo, he is just looking forward to a busy range programme through 1997 and beyond.

"Most launches this year will be Rapier, but we'll also be firing Sea Eagle anti-ship missiles and the older Petrel rockets, which simulate a type used by the ex-USSR. We're also looking forward to having some Territorial Army artillery units, which will be firing Javelin air defence missiles."

"But," he added a touch wistfully, "with the demise of the American Lance rocket a few years ago, the really big and noisy missiles are things of the past."

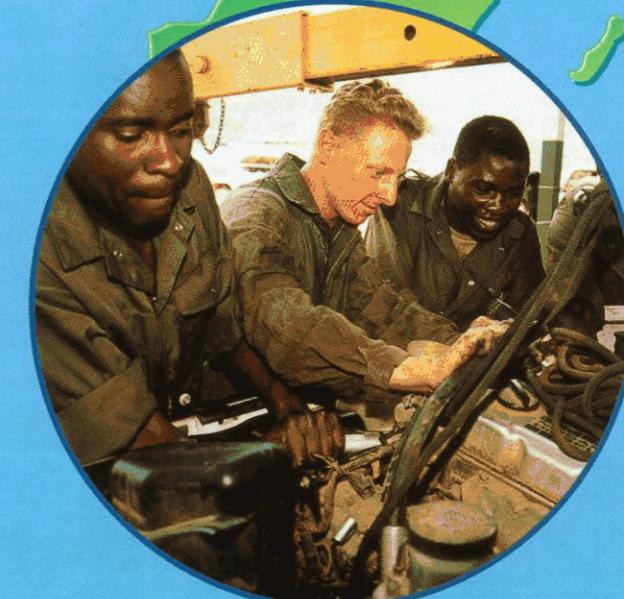
"We're even moving into new areas that are not strictly missile-firing. For example, the Royal Navy is hoping to deploy a big radar here for testing. It's not the same, but the future still looks good."

If Father Rocket is watching over the isles (and he never was the type to sit back on a cloud for eternity) he might even approve.



Lt Col Andy Pedder, range operations director

British Army overseas deployments



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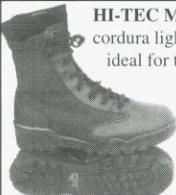
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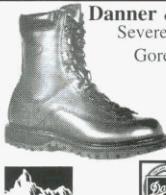


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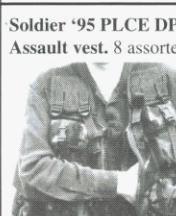


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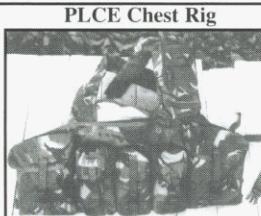
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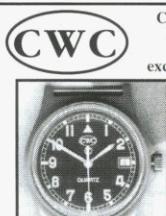


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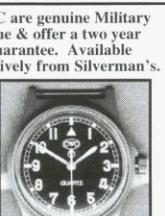
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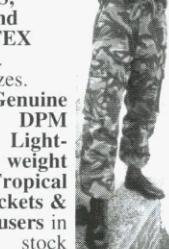


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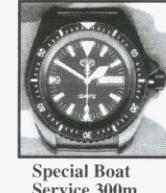
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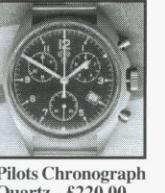


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Black Watch in white for the big parade

CEREMONIAL occasions and royal duties are second nature to the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch but June 30 promises to be a bit special.

As the last resident infantry battalion in Hong Kong, 100 or so of its soldiers will be on show to the world as they take part in the historic events leading up to the handover of British sovereignty to China.

It will be particularly memorable for the commanding officer, Lt Col Alasdair Loudon, who will take the tri-Service parade during the British farewell celebrations.

“This is a high-profile event and The Black Watch will be representing British sovereignty, representing the British Infantry, representing the British Army,” he told *Soldier*.

“We are going to be part of a highly significant historical occasion.”

Rehearsals for the handover events were starting in earnest in mid-June. A pool of soldiers has been selected and measure-

ments taken for the white, lightweight cotton ceremonial jackets which will replace the green jackets normally worn at their hugely popular public appearances.

The regiment has attracted extraordinary media interest in Hong Kong – a Press corps of 80 even watched a company conducting the last New Territories training exercise.

As resident battalion, 1 BW took over from 1 Staffords in February the primary role of maintaining Hong Kong’s territorial integrity until the handover.

Initially half its number were based at Stonecutters Island, with a company each at Osborn Barracks and High Island training camp.

Four companies rotated around the main roles of border surveillance and anti-smuggling support; guard duties and fatigues; infantry training; and standing-by for civil emergencies.

When 200 soldiers left for home at the end of April the remaining 300 concentrated on the major task of guards and

fatigues, limited operational and reserve commitments and the preparations for June 30.

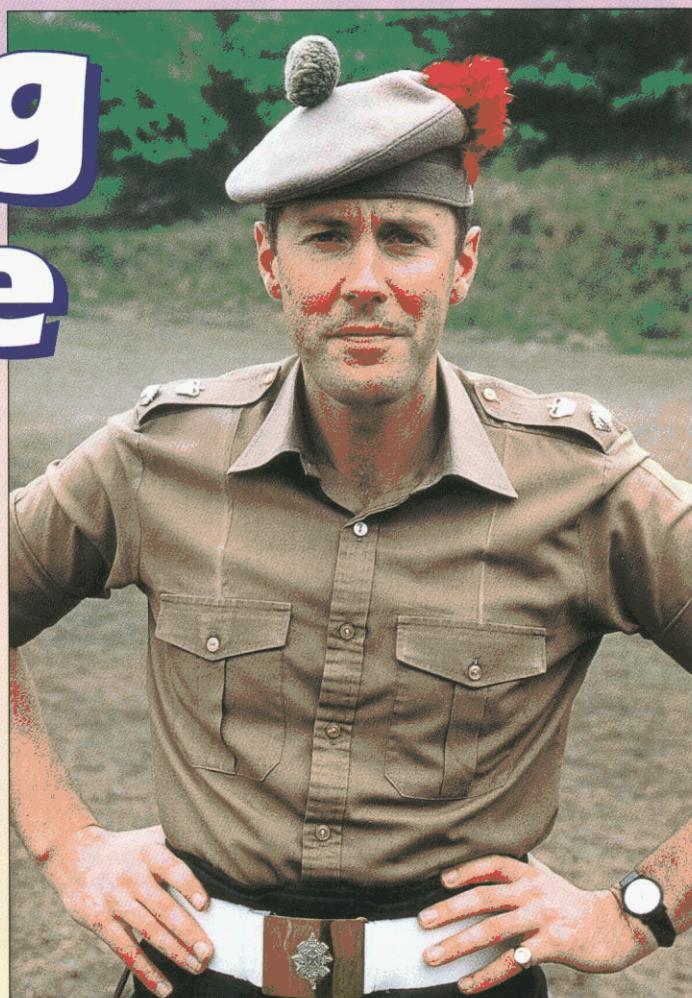
Border duties will continue until the last day and when its final ceremonial duties are over in Hong Kong the battalion will return to Inverness for leave. In August a company will take up royal duties including the guard at Ballater, while another will provide admin support for the Edinburgh Tattoo.

Further training and infantry duties will follow, with a Tactical Engagement Simulator exercise on Salisbury Plain next February.

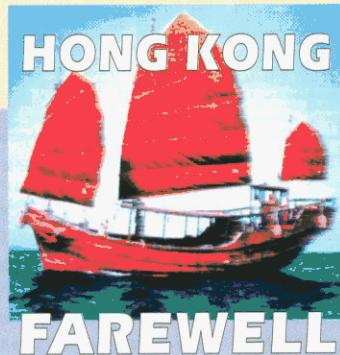
But the popular Pipes and Drums of 1 BW will be kept as busy as ever, with a three-month tour of the United States on the not-too-distant horizon.



Britain's farewell parade will be one of the biggest events in the career of the 1 BW regimental sergeant major, WO1 (RSM) Alan McEwen, pictured here taking part in the last British exercise in the New Territories



Lt Col Alasdair Loudon, CO 1 BW: will take the parade



Reports: Chris Horrocks
Pictures: Terry Champion
and Mike Weston

SUCH is the nature of what must be the shortest-lived regiment in the British Army that it was able to muster just 70 soldiers for its formal disbandment parade on May 31 (see picture, Page 28).

They were watched by 500 spectators, including 200 from the media.

The Hong Kong Logistic Support Regiment, created in April, 1994 and given the approximate nickname of the 1,000-day regiment, has performed a clever balancing act with something of the illusionist's art about it: making the garrison (and itself) disappear before your very eyes while sustaining its diminishing presence.

As June 30 approaches, the residue of the regiment is in the final phase of its mountain-moving task.

Key role for Syd as regiment goes out with a smile

ON THE LAST day of the British Garrison in Hong Kong, Sgt Syd Starling will have a key role.

If necessary he will go around picking locks.

"We don't want to leave anything locked up for the People's Liberation Army when they take over," the REME locksmith confided to *Soldier*.

"My job will be to open up everything that is still locked on June 30. Should any keys have been lost, my task will be to pick the lock."

On the day we visited the Hong Kong Logistic Support Regiment's REME detachment in Prince of Wales Barracks, Sgt Starling had already opened up two filing cabinets, a desk drawer and a combination lock – all before lunch.

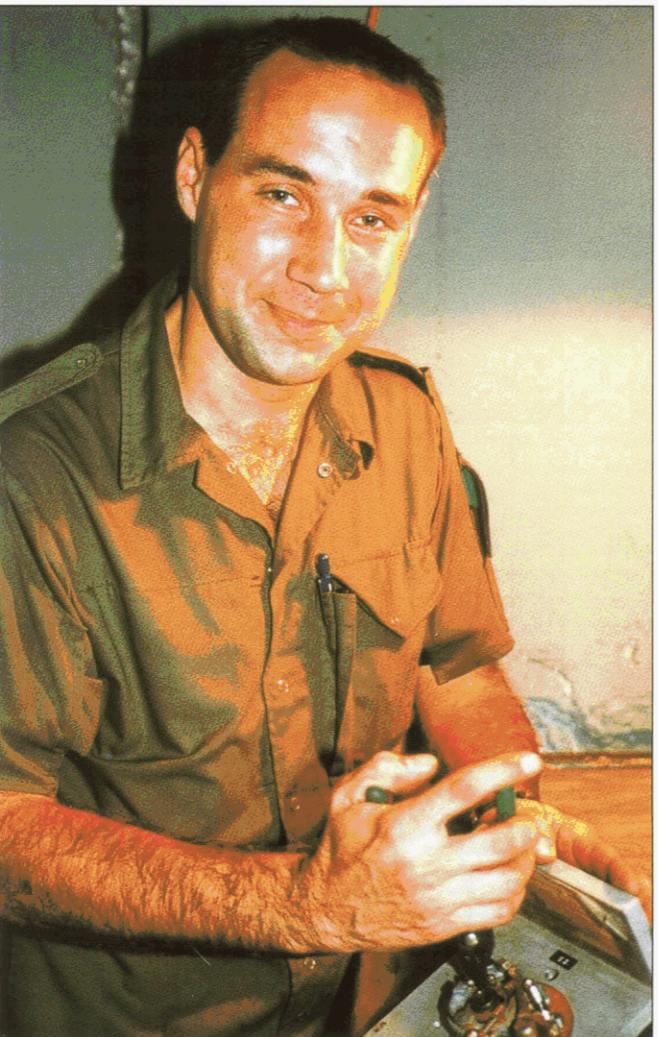
"And it will get busier," he said with a grin.

Everything has been done with a smile in this unusual regiment – even though generally its job has been to close things down rather than open them up.

That massive job, involving the disposal of a division's worth of real estate and materiel, has been a triumph of quiet organisation and planning down to the last minutely-audited detail.

On its formation the regiment was tasked to amalgamate all the existing logistic support in Hong Kong, reduce it, and clear the real estate – effectively working towards zero hour on June 30 when there would be nothing left.

This involved massive tasks such as shutting down Blackdown Barracks supply depot, with its £3 million, 9,000-item range; clearing 800 tons of ammunition from Stonecutters Island; and closing the British Military Hospital, the ranges, and accommodation including 3,200 married quarters with their attendant schools.



Sgt Syd Starling at work on the mechanism of another lock

its own regimental business and soldiering.

Reducing the regiment itself from 1,093 to 525 by the end of 1994 included redundancies for Hong Kong Military Service personnel, locally-employed Chinese and Gurkhas, as well as the 36 Sikhs who ran the ammunition depot at Stonecutters.

Real estate has been handed over to the Hong Kong Government, stock holdings disposed of through auctions, and services contractorised.

And throughout it all, a secure audit trail has been left.

"This must be the most audited regiment in the British Army in terms of management checks," said commanding officer Lt Col Nigel Lloyd.

"At this stage, after the garrison has been in existence for such a long time, you would expect there to be skeletons in the cupboard."

"But now we have opened up all the cupboards – there are no more cupboards to open."

When 50 Hong Kong Workshop REME at Sek Kong closed at the end of last year, the regiment took on all equipment support for the garrison, becoming almost a combat service support unit. By April the workshops were just 20 strong with the full range of REME tasks and even looked after the medical and dental equipment.

The Postal and Courier Squadron of nearly 40 originally, with post offices in Nepal and Brunei, had reduced to a detachment of seven.

Just as vital for morale as keeping the mail flowing was keeping soldiers and, until March 1997, their families properly housed and Lt Col Lloyd praised the work of the Accommodation Services Unit.

"They are the unsung heroes who have kept soldiers and their families happy,

Disposal experts

IN THREE years Hong Kong Logistic Support Regiment Transport Squadron drivers covered more than four million miles in a territory whose farthest extremities are only 50 miles apart.

The Supply Squadron issued nearly three million items, counted by the Global computer system.

A small organisation of three or four RLC soldiers, working with contractors from the UK, disposed of 700 tons of scrap, 6,000 cubic metres of stores and 1,000 vehicles.

Cars were sold to Zimbabwe, helicopters to Uruguay.

A total of £1.25 million was recovered in revenue.

Eighteen major barrack



What am I bid? The Army's oldest ceremonial Land Rover

sites and more than 3,200 furnished quarters were disposed of, each quarter fully equipped with more than 500 items from teaspoons to sheets and curtains to carpets.

Accommodation handed over to the Hong Kong Government has now started being let to the public. For example, penthouse flats at the former garrison block, Royden Court, are going on the market at 100,000 Hong Kong dollars a month.

maintaining morale through the standard of the quarters – and then having to go through the process of disposing of the real estate."

As CO of a regiment which contained a unique blend of British, Chinese, Nepali and Sikhs, he also had special words for the locally-employed civilians such as the tailor, cobbler and barber who left at the end of April.

"How do you say goodbye to people like that who have worked all their lives for the British Army?" he asked.

Throughout all the business of withdrawal, the regiment has looked after its

soldiers. "We haven't sent a soldier away from here who isn't fit, hasn't passed his annual personal weapon test, done his NBC training and all those soldiering skills."

As June 30 approaches and the garrison becomes ever smaller, the regiment itself has reduced to the Logistic Support Squadron in Prince of Wales Barracks.

The most obvious evidence of its existence will probably be the soldier who drives the Commander British Forces to the final parade. But others will still be working away in the background, helping to close down the barracks, ferrying other VIPs, getting the last kit loaded on to the departing aircraft.

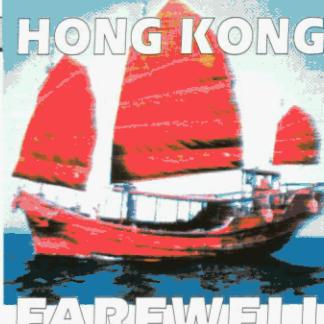
"There's not a lot of the British Garrison to show now," said Lt Col Lloyd. "We have moved mountains. We have closed down an army, a navy and an air force. The logisticians have had to take a professional approach, simply because of the scale of the challenge."

"We don't bang a big drum; we just quietly get on with it. We're judged by what we do."

"But we are one part of a jigsaw. We don't claim to have done it all ourselves – there are so many people who have been involved with us."

"We have been, if you like, the undertakers and hatchet men. By keeping the momentum going, by being robust, we've pushed things through."

"But everything we have done, we have done with a smile on our face."



Enterprise zone



While the Durham Light Infantry was in transit to Korea we spent two months in Hong Kong, and I have fond memories of both the Colony and its people.

The photograph, taken in the New Territories before we left for Korea, shows three of us with a Chinese girl we nicknamed "Sew-sew" because she visited the camp to darn socks and sew on buttons. I am on the left of the photograph but regret I cannot remember the names of my two colleagues.

One day on manoeuvres, with full packs and miles from anywhere, we were told to take a break, whereupon a Chinaman on a bicycle appeared out of the blue to sell ice cream. How's that for enterprise? – David A Potts, DLI, 1951-53.

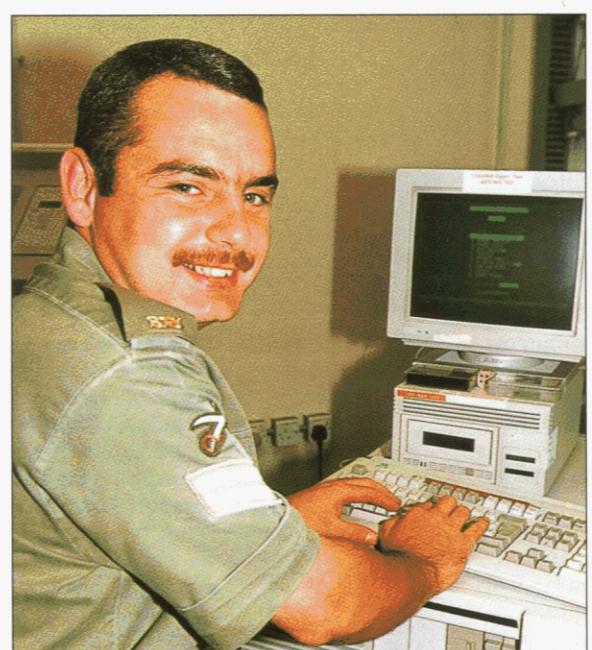
Bespoke too soon

One of the horror/comedies of Hong Kong were the bespoke tailors who allowed soldiers to design their own clothes. No quiet understatement ever; if baggy trousers are in, let's add a yard. No three-button waistbands, let's have five . . . no, six . . . and never mind the quality.

Someone dreamed up a Gestapo black leather coat, adding a bold (some would say, astonishing) large check collar in black and white rabbit fur. The resultant cuddly-gangster-on-halogen look never took off . . . but every girl did.

One soldier-bridegroom designed boots with six-inch heels that Elton John would have died for; our boy came skating up the aisle in what resembled silver orthopaedic boots. His emergency stop employed as a crash barrier the the best man, who, as King of the Teds, was in a gorgeous shimmer of green silk with black facings. A legend in his own VW Beetle-cowpat shoes.

Oh yes, when the troops come back from Hong Kong, fashion designers the world over can relax at last – and stop laughing. – Neil Griffiths (ex-private, 1 R Hamps, Gun Club Barracks, 1975-76), now editor of Scottish Legion News.



Cpl Alex Johnstone, computer database administrator, operates the Global system pioneered by the supply squadron, which tracked the issue of nearly three million items in the regiment's short lifetime



Neil Griffiths

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Rooftop 'wok' proves most useful

ON THE ROOF of the Queen's Gurkha Signals headquarters in Prince of Wales Barracks sat the biggest wok the Hong Kong Garrison could find.

It took two helicopters to lift it there in January and would be taken off again by the same method well before the garrison's departure, *Soldier* was assured.

But in case this conjures up the image of a huge, Chinese-style, end-of-Empire barbecue it should be explained that the item of hardware was not a cooking utensil but a dish of the satellite variety.

It was providing transitional communications to the UK until the arrival of the Royal Navy in Hong Kong waters in the shape of the command ship, HMS *Chatham*.

This piece of modern technology, called MOST (Military Off-the-shelf Satellite Terminal), is one of five owned by the Ministry

of Defence and took four men four hours to put up.

"It's the biggest thing I've ever seen dangling on the end of an 80ft strap," said Maj Alan Eames, QG Signals technical officer (communications).

With other equipment fast being dismantled, disposed of or sent back home, MOST proved a useful communication link as the drawdown gathered pace.

Main task of QG Signals has been to provide fixed and tactical communications in Hong Kong and links to the UK. The regiment also administers Prince of Wales Barracks and Headquarters British Forces.

While reducing its sites in Hong Kong and its numbers – of 150 several months ago, only 30 will be left on the last day – the regiment has been responsible for providing all the communication needs of Commander British Forces.

"HMS *Chatham* will pick up a lot of the headquarters communications support," said Maj Tim Craven, officer commanding the Hong Kong Gurkha Signals Squadron.

"We will still provide the Commcen message distribution system, but the *Chatham* will pick up some of the live traffic."

British Forces Hong Kong's anti-smuggling role means the squadron, with its mobile communications Land Rovers, will stay operational for as long as possible.

The squadron is also responsible for removing all old radio equipment in the territory, providing the PLA has not asked for it to remain.

"So as well as having an operational communications role I have a technical support role involving maintenance," said Maj Craven.

"But because of the drawdown much of our work also involves decommissioning equipment either by getting it back to the UK or by disposing of it locally."

And "downsizing" took on a whole new meaning when the squadron's Commcen reduced two

AS A YOUNG, newly-qualified signals technician, one of Navindrabikram Gurung's first tasks was to install the cables in the new Prince of Wales Building.

That was 22 years ago. Now, as the most senior Gurkha officer left in the Territory, it is one of his jobs to rip it all out.

Navindra Sahib, as he is generally known, first arrived in Hong Kong as a 20-year-old, the fifth generation of his family to serve in the British Army. Now, at 42, he is preparing to leave after spending most of his Army career there.

Promoted to captain (QG) only in 1995, he had to step into the shoes of the Gurkha Major, who was taken ill last June.

"It was a critical time for the Queen's Gurkha Signals," he explained. "We had to manage the redundancy programme and relocate all the families."



Capt Navindrabikram

represented the British Army Rifle Team in Canada and was chosen to represent Hong Kong in 1990 in full bore. He was also responsible for training QG Signals' current team, which had great success at last year's Bisley competition.

After long leave in Nepal, he will take up a post at the Royal School of Signals, Blandford, similar to his present one in Hong Kong.



Pictures: JSPRS Hong Kong

Above – "It's the biggest wok we could find": The three Mike Troop sergeants with the MOST satellite dish on the roof of HQ QG Signals are Pete Doherty, technician, Pete Woolley, rigger (the regiment's only RAF representative), and Steve Griffiths, telecomms mechanic

Below – Sgt Laxman Pun uses all his skills as a technician to set about decommissioning a roomful of communications equipment

THE LAST OF A KIND

EVEN though he says so himself, Lt Col Jeremy Ellis, commanding officer of the Queen's Gurkha Signals, is the last of a kind.

He has served in Hong Kong in four ranks – as a troop commander on his first tour, when he was promoted to captain and became adjutant, then on his second posting as 2iC in the rank of major and finally as CO.

"When I first came here in January 1978 as a subaltern we had three large



Lt Col Jeremy Ellis

squadrons – one on Hong Kong island, one in Gun Club Hill Barracks and a third, the Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron, at

Sek Kong, which was also home to the Regimental HQ.

"Borneo Lines

was my military

home. Now it is all

much changed, with

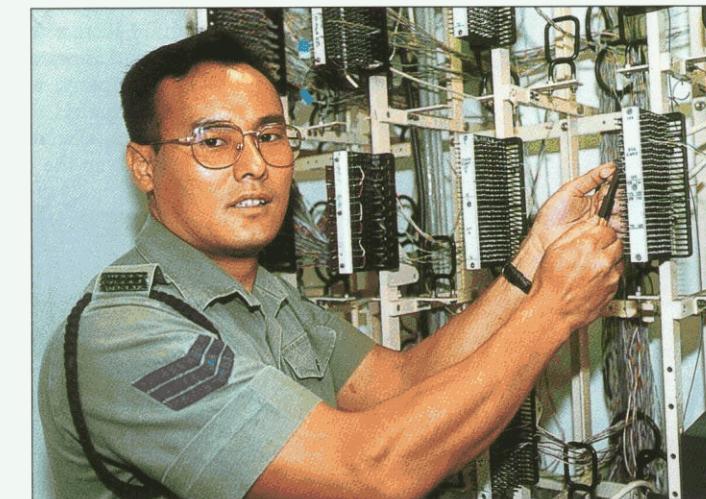
new buildings in-

cluding a large PLA

store.

"It really makes me quite sad to go there. It was bordering on a colonial existence in my early days – it is quite different now."

Lt Col Ellis is a member of the team which has been holding weekly meetings with the PLA advance party.



8ft by 10ft computers to a desk-top terminal.

One man closely involved in the disposal of equipment is the regimental quartermaster, Lt Col Ian Buckley, who in a five-year tour in Hong Kong has had three separate jobs.

He was QM to 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade until its disbandment, then ran the admin unit at Sek Kong for two years before moving to Prince of Wales Barracks earlier this year. "I find it all very sad," he said. "I have seen the garrison run down from full strength.

"But what saddens me more is the personal aspect, the redundancies of the Gurkhas and the locally-employed Chinese.

"For many of these people the British Army has been their sole income for years and for their fathers before them.

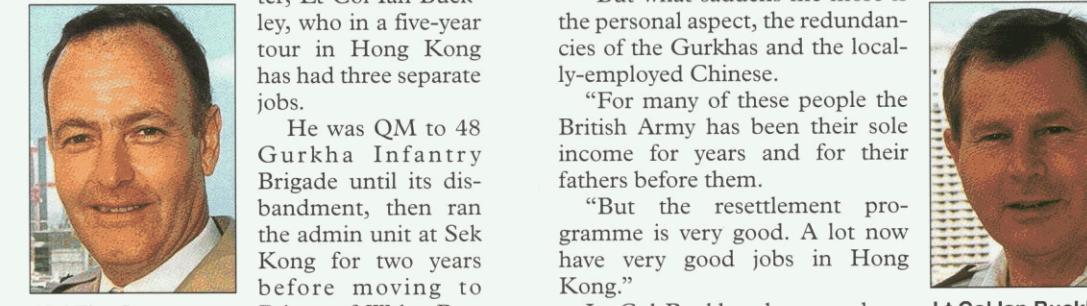
"But the resettlement programme is very good. A lot now have very good jobs in Hong Kong."

Lt Col Buckley shares perhaps

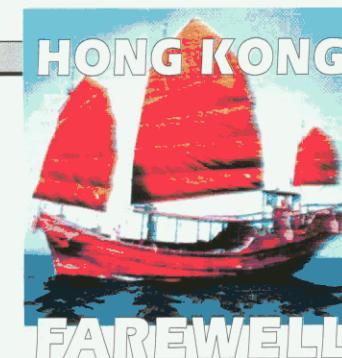
more than most the "end of an era" experience. At the age of 54 his next move will be to Bicester, where he and a warrant officer will close the QG Signals accounts.

Then, after an Army career which started with an apprenticeship at Harrogate 38 years ago, he too will be "resettled" – into, he hopes, a job as a school bursar.

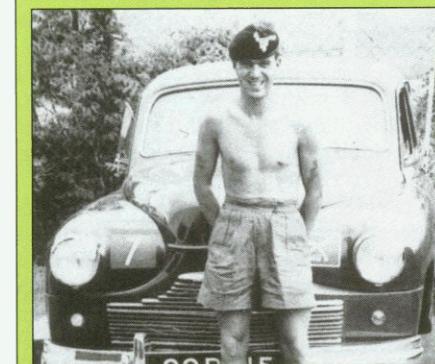
Meanwhile, after its formal disbandment this month the regiment, which includes most of the remaining Gurkha soldiers still serving in Hong Kong, reduces to squadron size and relocates to Bramcote.



Lt Col Ian Buckley



A right stinker . . .



George Hazeldine

A fusilier on the run from the military police after being found in an "out-of-bounds" area took a short cut back to camp through some paddy fields. Half way across he fell into a cesspit.

He dragged himself out and charged through the main gate of Queenshill Camp in the New Territories shouting to the duty driver: "You haven't seen me, mate." The MPs followed quickly and asked if a fusilier had entered camp.

Given a negative reply, they carried out a search anyway, but failed to find the miscreant.

Next morning the driver spotted the fusilier at breakfast and asked him how he had avoided the redcaps. Back came the reply: "I stank to high heaven, so I hid for the best part of the night up to my neck in the officers' mess fresh water tank." – Fus George Hazeldine, 1 Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Queenshill Camp, Farling, New Territories, 1959.

Cruiser from the front line

There is a place called Electra House where our band broadcasts every second Wednesday in the month. The programme is called *Forces Bandstand* and it is for the citizens of Hong Kong.

One day last week the cruiser HMS *Belfast* came into Hong Kong. It is a lovely ship, just come down from Korea where it was in action against the Reds. I think it is one of the biggest cruisers in the Royal Navy. We played with 1 KOSB on Saturday on the *Empire Halladale*. They have come to Hong Kong after being in Korea for 16 months.

Extract from a letter by Band Boy William Young, The Royal Ulster Rifles, New Territories, 1952, to a friend back home. The RUR had just completed a tour of active service in Korea.



William Young

End of line for Golden Thread

ALTHOUGH officially disbanded on March 31, the Hong Kong Military Service Corps (HKMSC) will be represented in the garrison until the final seconds of its existence at midnight on June 30.

Its valuable translators and drivers will be needed until the very last moment, indicative of the value of a unit described as "the golden thread" that runs through the garrison, writes John Elliott.

The HKMSC dates back, through its predecessors, to the first recorded employment of Hong Kong Chinese by the British Army during the second China War – the "Opium War" of 1857. The need for extra manpower led to the raising of the Cantonment Commissariat Corps on July 21 of that year.

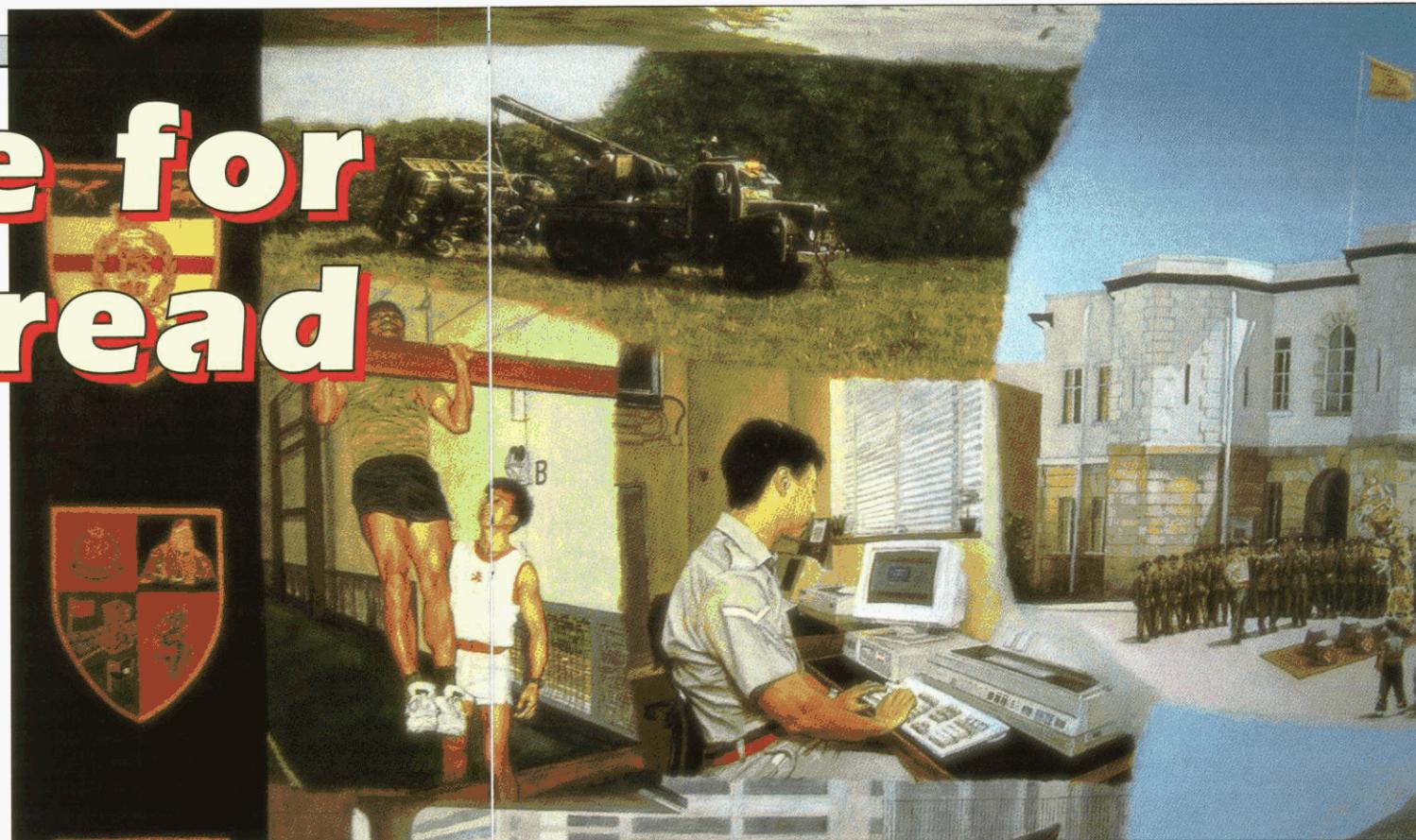
Its Hong Kong Chinese soldiers provided logistic support to the British Expedi-

tary Force. But the Chinese had to wait more than 20 years, until 1880, before they could serve with a regular British Army unit... 40 Fortress Company, Royal Engineers.

Volunteers from 40 Coy, and from the civilian population of Hong Kong, formed labour battalions during the First World War and saw service in France.

From 1918 to the late Thirties the Chinese soldier's role became increasingly that of a trained artisan. This policy was reversed in 1937, when they trained as regulars with 22 Company, RE.

With the threat of Japanese imperialism looming ever larger, it was decided to increase the contribution of the local Chinese community to the defence of the territory, and the Royal Artillery began to recruit soldiers for its coastal defence bat-



Detail from a montage of HKMSC history painted by Capt Damien Bush, OC of the Defence Animal Support Unit. It is to be hung in the National Army Museum on permanent display

teries. The Hong Kong Chinese Regiment was formed in October 1941, so was still in embryonic form when the Japanese attacked on Christmas Day.

Some were casualties of the fighting, others were captured. But a few escaped to China, where they joined the British Army Aid Group formed to help escapees from Hong Kong, provide intelligence to the Allies and conduct a guerrilla campaign against the invaders.

About 140 made their way from China to India and formed the Hong Kong Volunteer Company, which took part in the Burma campaign, serving behind enemy lines with the legendary Chindits. By the end of the war the Chinese company was re-formed into the South East Asian Guides and trained for the assault on Malaya and Singapore.

It returned to Hong Kong in 1946 and joined the Hong Kong Pioneer Company which had been set up on the liberation of the territory. The two companies carried out duties at barracks and other military installations until their numbers had been so reduced by demobilisation that a new

organisation was needed. It came in the shape of the Hong Kong Chinese Training Unit, formed in January 1948, which prepared recruits for the garrison. On passing out, trained soldiers were posted to a unit for the duration of their military service. There was little opportunity for advancement.

That state of affairs was rectified in 1962 when the HKCTU became the HKMSC, changing not only its name but its organisation. For the first time the Hong Kong Chinese soldier was offered the opportunity

for a full career in the British Army.

The spirit of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps is to be perpetuated within The Staffordshire Regiment, which has renamed its D Company. In future it will be known as Dragon Company, holding the banner of the HKMSC company in memory of which it takes the title, and the corps flag.

The Staffords, the resident battalion in Hong Kong at the turn of the year, appropriately have a dragon battle honour in their regimental Colour dating from the Opium War of 1842.



Guarding a hillside

Hi, ho, and off from work we go... Gds Eric White, LCpl Graham Christie, Gds George McIntyre and Gds John Black descend Crest Hill in the New Territories after sprucing up the regimental badge of the 2nd Battalion, Scots Guards, first carved into the hillside in about 1928.

The landmark gave its name to the hill. This photograph was taken in late 1971 when men from Edinburgh-based F Company, 2 SG marked their departure from Hong Kong by weeding and re-painting the badge. Mules of 414 Pack Transport Troop RCT worked with F Coy on exercises during the unit's 14-month stay in the colony as part of 1st Battalion, Irish Guards.

Jack's battle never ends

JACK Edwards's campaigns on behalf of ex-Servicemen and their dependants have become a byword in Hong Kong.

Ex-Royal Signaller Jack, who was seconded to the Royal Navy because of his ability with flags and lamp, was taken prisoner by the Japanese in Singapore in February 1942 and imprisoned in the notorious Changi camp.

He saw thousands of civilians massacred and was forced to work in a labour battalion. Shipped to Taiwan in appalling conditions, he somehow survived, returning to the Far East to assist in the identification, arrest and interrogation of war criminals.

His controversial book, *Banzai you Bastards*, ends with the words "None of us should forget". It has been used as the inscription on memorials in Singapore, New Zealand and the UK.



Jack Edwards with members of 1 Staffords who helped deliver poppies around Hong Kong for the city's final Remembrance Sunday last November. Clockwise from back right are Pte Guy Griffiths, Cpl Peter Allen (wearing tie), Pte Lee Venables (glasses), Pte Anthony Brayford, and 2nd Lt Simon Wilcockson AAC, who was on a six-month attachment with the battalion.

Jack became active in charity work for war widows and the disabled, and for many years was chairman of the South Wales ex-Far East PoWs Association. Now nearly 80, and with health ruined by wartime hardship, he is the irrepressible chairman of the Hong Kong and China branch of the Royal British Legion, and a voluntary representative of ex-Servicemen and PoW groups.

His wife is Chinese and he has lived in the city for more than 30 years. Although his campaign for

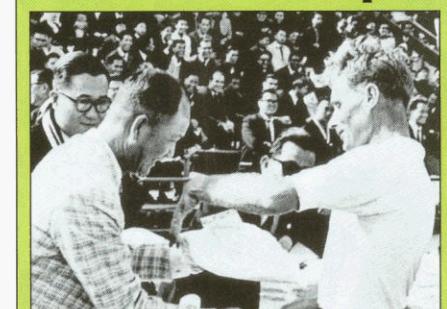
British passports for Hong Kong volunteers and Chinese ex-Servicemen achieved concessions, he refused to let the issue die.

Change of sovereignty will make no difference to Jack's efforts to win a better deal for those he represents. Hong Kong might have seen its last Remembrance Sunday, but he has already won agreement that a Poppy Day collection will be held in the Territory on November 8, 1997. Monies collected will be used for the 150 or so Chinese veterans in the area.

Although his campaign for



Of football and warships



Referee's medal for CSM MacCormack after the Europeans v Chinese match at the Police Stadium in Kowloon, 1965

I was stationed at Stanley Fort from October 1963 until June 1965 with the 1st Battalion, The South Wales Borderers.

One of my duties was to meet visiting Royal Navy ships to arrange sporting fixtures and entertainment. We particularly enjoyed the visits of the Albion, Lincoln, Hartland Point, Victorious, Bulwark, Manxman, London and Triumph.

As a football referee, I officiated at the Hong Kong stadium, Soakunpoo, the police ground at Boundary Street, Kowloon, the South China stadium at Caroline Hill, and the Hong Kong Club ground at Sports Road. I remember taking charge of the HKFA Jubilee finals and the annual fraternity games between Hong Kong and Kowloon.

There were some good Chinese teams, including South China, Kitchee, Kwong Wah, Yuen Long, Tung Wah, Sing Tao, Eastern, Happy Valley, KMB Police, 517 and Caroline Hill. I wonder what happened to them? – CSM R J MacCormack, 1 SWB, 1963-65.

Salad days...

In 1949, in the company of several hundred others, I had the good fortune to board the *Empress of Australia* en route to Hong Kong, where I spent three happy years in the New Territories and Kowloon.

As young men will, we idly dreamed of nights full of Eastern promise in exotic Hong Kong. For me, however, the most abiding memory of my favourite station was a superb restaurant called Gingles on Nathan Road in Kowloon. Huge, succulent T-bone steaks with trimmings cost four dollars and 70 cents (great value at \$15 dollars to £1).

Never before or since have I enjoyed any meal as I did those superb steaks in those halcyon and happy days.

There must be many thousands of us who remember the place with much affection. – Spr David Shields, 41 CRE RE.



David Shields



Picture: Sgt Kevin Gray RAF

Marching into history: British, Gurkha and Hong Kong Chinese soldiers mark the end of the line for the Hong Kong Logistic Support Regiment with a disbandment parade on May 31. The salute was taken by Commander British Forces, Maj Gen Bryan Dutton



FAREWELL

Sadness and pride as flags come down

AS AN inevitable part of his role as the last Commander British Forces Hong Kong, Maj Gen Bryan Dutton admits to becoming an expert at making farewell speeches.

In recent months he has been present at a series of final parades and closures and bade farewell to British, Gurkha and Chinese soldiers and the remaining Forces families.

"I am afraid I have presided over more Union Flags being hauled down, more regimental and station colours being lowered over different barracks, than I would ever have wished.

"People ask me if it makes me sad. I've actually wrestled with my personal response to this and ultimately yes, it is very sad.

"But it is only sad in that you are closing down something on every occasion which has meant a lot to the people who have worked there, who have deliberately inculcated an *esprit de corps* around that unit, around the role they performed there.

"There has been a sense of pride, a cohe-

sion, a community, and inevitably you're presiding over the breaking-up of that – so that is what is sad, almost more so than, on these occasions, the coming-down of the Union Flag."

The lowering of the flag on June 30 would, on a larger scale, represent the same sentiments for everything Britain had achieved in Hong Kong, he said – and for the same reasons.

He had found it inspiring that at each farewell the sadness was mixed with great pride.

"I believe that that is how we should feel about leaving Hong Kong. Of course we're sad that what has been a marvellous relationship is ending – but that's a fact of life and will be a fact of history."

"At the same time I don't feel any reason at all why Britain should not feel very proud of what it has achieved here and how it has done it and, indeed, how it is actually finally leaving."

● After running the Hong Kong rear party in the UK until the end of Septem-

ber, Maj Gen Dutton will say his own farewell – to the Army. "I'm retiring," he said. "And I shall be looking for a good job!"

And, finally...

APART from disbands and closures, Hong Kong is witnessing a series of final events linked to the British presence.

The colony's last military race day included the final running of its two feature races, the Centurion Trophy and the Kukri Cup. The trophies themselves will go on display in the Jockey Club museum.

Other final sporting events have included the last rugby and hockey fixtures between the Taipans' and CBF's teams, while the colony's Anzac Day celebrations and June passing-out parade of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force were also the last to be held.

In the next issue:

- The Volunteers, an exclusive club
- Stonecutters Island
- Sek Kong Station
- Life in Gun Club Barracks
- In remembrance
- Plus more readers' recollections

Memories of a hill in Korea

BY CHANCE I happened to buy *Soldier* in the Stationery Office bookshop in London the other day and read with interest the articles about Korea – in particular, “Return to Hill 504” (May 26).

In 1955-56 I was a sergeant in the band of The Northamptonshire Regiment, then doing a tour of duty in Korea. We performed the ceremony of Beating Retreat one night.

During the bugle playing of the Retreat call, with *Lead Kindly Light* being played by the band – in total darkness but for the torch which the bandmaster was using to conduct – a searchlight beam was suddenly thrown up to the peak of Hill 504.

It picked out the cross erected in memory of the Gloucestershire Regiment’s heavy losses there.

We had not known about this in advance and the sudden onset of lumps in the throat made playing the tune very difficult for a few minutes.

In your pictures, there was no sign of the cross. Is there an explanation? – John Curtis, Chelmsford, Essex.

● Is it possible that the cross was situated on Castle Hill, overlooking the Imjin Valley, where the Glorious Glosters suffered heavy losses? – Editor.

Yorkie's pride

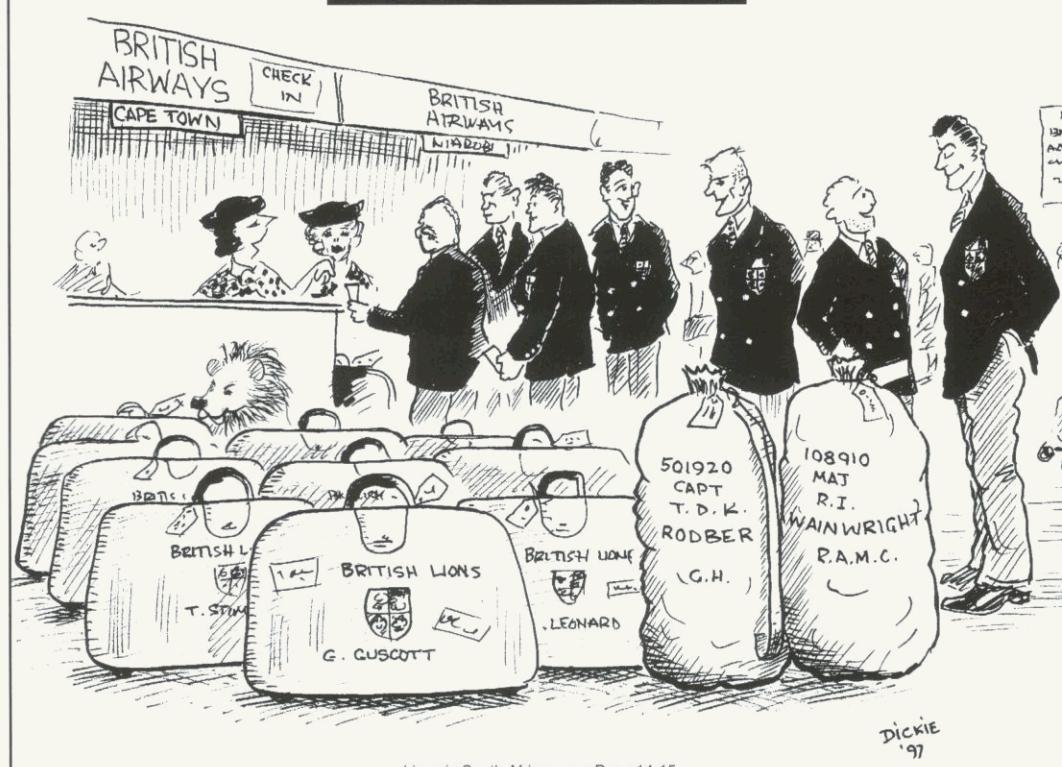
SSGT Armstrong (May 26), took issue with Yorkie’s earlier plea for a medal for three-year men.

What Yorkie meant was a General Service Medal with the ribbon denoting the colours of the regiment in which they served.

I happen to know Yorkie left the Army for compassionate reasons and just wants a medal to say he served – something to be proud of. – Jack Knife, (former three-year man, 1 DWR), Halifax, W Yorks.

Soldier welcomes letters for publication from all readers, whatever their status. Letters must be brief, typed or written clearly and include the correspondent’s name and address in block capitals, not necessarily for publication. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to edit for length, clarity or style.

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



Lions in South Africa – see Page 14-15

Day Mutley took Queens' shilling



YOUR story about Mutley the dog being promoted to second lieutenant by the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment after covering hundreds of miles with troops on patrol (“Dugged determination pays off”, People, May 26) reminds me of the day he “joined up”.

In 1988 I was a young corporal doing a six-month tour with 2 Queens in Girdwood Security Forces base. A patrol came across a half-starved dog looking very much the worse for wear.

He was given a snack and followed the patrol back to camp, where we gave him a bath, a good meal, and the name Mutley after the cartoon dog in *Wacky Races*.

My photograph shows me with Mutley when he was

about a year old. – CSgt G A Smithers, PSI, 6/7 PWRR, Brighton, E Sussex.

● **Paw-note:** Mutley’s military career has not been stainless. A previous promotion to the dizzy dog rank of second lieutenant ended in acrid recrimination after he was unable to contain himself on the parade ground.

Legend has it that Mutley’s rapid return to the ranks followed an incident during which he relieved himself down the trouser-leg of a personage who demanded that he be cashiered forthwith.

Following a period of good behaviour, his pip was restored.

A team from *Soldier* bumped into Mutley during a visit to 2 RTR this month and report that, as befits one so long in the tooth, he is serving out his time in comfort. – Editor

Good intent

I AM currently serving on a six-month tour in Bosnia and am looking for a suitable charity to support by making a canoe trip around the island of Brac in the Adriatic.

All I am asking for is a couple of T-shirts with the charity’s name on them. – LCpl Bryce, 2 Battalion, REME, Koncar, BFPO 544.

● We have passed on the address of the Army Benevolent Fund to LCpl Bryce. – Editor

POINTS IN QUESTION

– see Page 32

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Sappers lay foundations for a fence in the rain forest. They are helping to construct a compound for green iguanas. Right: LCpl Steve Rotherham with a shirtfront of iguanas

WHEN soldiers of 34 Field Squadron (Air Support) RE arrived in Belize, they realised this phase of Exercise Swordfish would not be easy, but they could not have known they would soon be dodging potentially lethal coconut "bombs".

The sappers were soon finding life in the Caribbean rather exciting, with a variety of out-of-the-ordinary working hazards . . . including the falling coconuts, poisonous snakes and nasty scorpions.

They were faced by two major projects located 100 miles apart, one site virtually inaccessible on a jungle mountain top, the other on an island eight miles off the coast.

Their mission was to fit out a new adventurous training base on St George's Caye and build a jungle camp at Cooma Cairn on Pine Ridge Mountain in central Belize.

Capt Martin Herrington, the garrison engineer, said: "The island is idyllic, but there are coconut trees everywhere and as they ripen they become a real health hazard. They are such a potential problem that everyone working around the site has to wear a hard hat in case of accidents."

A work force of about 100 soldiers has been involved with the two projects. On St George's Caye they have been constructing

Coconut shy!

buildings and fitting out a new ablution block. All the materials and stores – weighing more than 500 tons – had to be transferred to the island under contract by boat.

Sgt Carl Harries discovered the discarded hulk of a 26ft Mexican skiff, once the pride and joy of the adventurous training centre. He persuaded the boat yard owners to let him have it, and in just seven days he and his men transformed the wooden hulk into a sleek and shiny water taxi. Painted in corps colours and renamed *Sapper*, she repaid the effort by ferrying passengers to the mainland, giving the engineers freedom of movement and saving the project a large amount of money.

Cooma Cairn was a different proposition altogether. It could be reached only by helicopter or via a very demanding road. Here there were no falling coconuts, but snakes and other nasty creepy-crawlies more than made up for it. Soldiers had to check their boots and clothing every morning to



ensure no uninvited guests had moved in.

Troop commander Lt Richard Baker described it as difficult terrain, but said his men were there to do a job. It was not their only project. They also constructed separate compounds in the jungle to provide havens for two threatened species, the Central American spider and the green iguana, known locally as jungle or bamboo chicken and regarded as a delicacy.

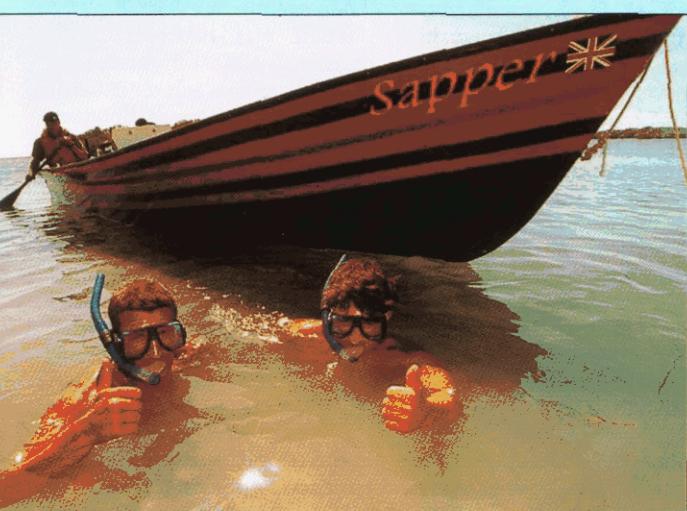
When Belize Zoo learned that 34 Fd Sqn was working in the jungle, director Sharon Matola asked Maj Richard Cripwell, the OC, if some of his sappers could be "borrowed" to help on two of the zoo's internationally acclaimed conservation projects.

"I asked for volunteers," he said, "and everybody wanted to give a hand. Our normal role is to give air support to the Royal Air Force and rebuild their bases if they are bombed, so we have a complete set of tradesmen with us, and the zoo were paying for all the materials, so that wasn't a problem."

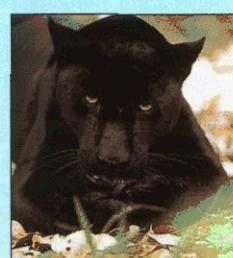
LCpl Steve Rotherham, who helped in the construction, said it was a privilege to take part.

Spider monkeys were by no means the only animals the soldiers bumped into. They also met Ellen, a rare black jaguar, and a beautiful and powerful living representation of the squadron's badge.

Soaring temperatures and high humidity made work difficult, but the compensations included swimming, diving and snorkelling in the brilliant, clear tropical waters off the Belize coast.



Two soldiers cool off after diving from *Sapper*, the discarded Mexican skiff refurbished by Sgt Carl Harries (with paddle)



Ellen, a three-year-old black panther

Report: Dennis Barnes
Pictures: Kevin Capon



China Dragon

FURTHER to P D Griffin's explanation of "Steady the Buffs", dating from 1858 (May 26), a much earlier source traces the expression back to the Peninsular War, when the Buffs were in the line with the 28th Foot, nicknamed the "Slashers".

Seeing his regiment outpacing the 28th, the Buffs' Colonel called out: "Steady the Buffs, give the Slashers a chance." — F H Hole, Maidstone, Kent.

Service numbers

FURTHER to earlier correspondence, in 1942 all recruits were put into the General Service Corps for their initial six weeks at a primary training wing and were then badged regiments.

My number was 14215748, which I believe was either a first or second GSC intake. My second Territorial Army enlistment in 1948 produced the number 21012298. — A J Moore, Liverpool L23.

AS a 1939 peacetime conscript I reported to E Militia Company RAMC as No 10138562 and around October 20 I became No 7266487, E Company RAMC. Did the July intake change their numbers? — H E Clarke, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Bayonet charge

BOB Lambert wrote (Sept 2, 1996) that B Coy, 2 BW made a bayonet charge in the break-out from Tobruk on Nov 21, 1941.

I know the question concerned British units taking part in such charges, but you may be interested in one involving a South African regiment.

A few weeks later — Jan 1-2, 1942 — I was involved in a night attack at the Battle of Bardia with the Rand Light Infantry, in which I was serving as a company sergeant major.

Having advanced under fire to 100 yards from the enemy, the regiment rushed forward as one man in a bayonet charge, yelling and screaming to meet their enemy face-to-face with cold steel. The position surrendered immediately and the men lined up the prisoners, all Germans, with their hands in the air.

They were badly shaken and kept looking at our bayonets with fear in their eyes. Littered over the ground were many dead Germans who had been killed during the advance and the charge.

What a victorious bayonet charge it was, and it will stand out in the history of the regiment as a magnificent achievement. — B G Simpkins (Lt Col, Retd), Weltevreden Park, South Africa.

TO OBEY or not to obey an obviously wrong order — that was the dilemma facing 21-year-old Driver Eric Bull.

He chose to follow the instructions of "Happy Harry", a QM captain with 1 RHA and so called because of his miserable disposition.

As a result he found himself looking down the wrong end of a German machine-gun.

Covering 18 months in just

Stung by hornet and crazy QM

a few pages at the start of his autobiography *Go Right, Young Man!* Eric Bull describes his departure from the UK in November 1939 and his capture in North Africa following action with his unit, the 64th Medium

Regt RA TA (a "London mob, also known as the 64th Comedians") in Greece, Crete and Syria.

He joined 1 RHA after a spell in hospital to recover from a hornet sting and his eventual capture came about

when "Happy Harry" was leading a ten-truck convoy in the desert to rendezvous with a long-range desert patrol.

They were to head east, but when Harry (who, it turned out, had his map upside-down) ordered a right turn

and the sun appeared on their left, Bill knew they were driving south and into trouble. Meanwhile the rest of the convoy sped to safety.

Harry's next gaffe was to insist that the approaching armoured cars were friendly —

until, that is, they started firing.

When their captors abandoned them, Harry insisted on obeying the German officer's instruction to march south. "It's an order," he said. Bull headed east and never saw him again.

This well-written book moves at a terrific pace throughout its 350 pages to tell the story of one soldier's

experiences over six years of war.

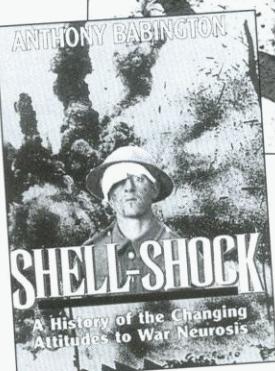
Sadly Eric died during the writing of the book, which was completed by his cousin, Bruce Webb.

Go Right, Young Man! by Eric Bull, with cartoons by Smiles. Available from Blaisdon (Publishing), 3 Park Chase, Hornby, Bedale, N Yorks DL8 1PR, price £14.95 plus £1.95 p & p (cheques payable to Blaisdon).

When mental illness was no defence against execution



Picture: Mike Weston



case of Royal Air Force air-crew) to "lack moral fibre". But it is

not only those in the front line whose mental state is aggravated.

Take the author's report of the 62 soldiers attached to the Army War Graves Service in the Gulf War. Their job was to recover and identify the dead from the battlefields and prepare the bodies for burial.

Coalition forces lost 234 killed (US 148), while estimated Iraqi losses totalled 100,000. Nine months after the war at

least half the members of the recovery team were found to have the symptoms of PTSD. Their average age was 28.

Their war neuroses were diagnosed almost immediately after the events which caused them, but Anthony Babington lists instances where men have suddenly succumbed to nervous disorder many years later.

Why? They may have attended a commemorative event or reunion which revived horrific memories.

Even in these enlightened days of mental therapy not everyone agrees with modern thinking.

Some argue the process has gone too far the other way. Asked for his reaction when shipmates were killed during the war, he reports the Duke of

American Servicemen collect bodies from a Gulf War battlefield. Many of those involved in this unpleasant duty later developed PTSD symptoms

Edinburgh as saying: "We didn't have counsellors rushing around every time someone let off a gun asking 'are you all right'. We just got on with it."

This is not a medical book, but it distils in words which any layman can understand, the long struggle by the medical profession to persuade senior Army officers in particular that soldiers can stand only so much fighting.

In her column (June 9), Cari Roberts described the book as a valuable contribution to the debate on soldiers and stress. It is also an excellent read. — JM

The Desert Fox: single-minded but no superman

"I DO not subscribe to the theory that Rommel was a superman.

"Close to him, I found him much more unimaginative and stolid than the romanticised pictures that have been drawn of him by both friend and foe."

So writes Heinz Werner Schmidt in *With Rommel in the Desert*, first published in English in 1951 and now issued again.

It is a perceptive account of the Second World War in North Africa from the German viewpoint, even if the translation is occasionally uneasy.

Main interest is the fact that it was written by a junior officer on the staff of Erwin Rommel, serving in close proximity to one of the great war commanders.

Schmidt wanted command of a fighting unit and eventually got one. Desperate actions and escapes followed from El Alamein to Mareth until he went on leave to be married shortly before the Germans were driven out of Africa.

This part of Schmidt's experience is an adventure story and one can but wonder how he escaped more or less unscathed.

Some colourful characters of the German Army appear, such as Capt (later Maj) the

Rev Bach, a pastor in civilian life who had become a fighting soldier, beloved by his men because of his considerate treatment of them.

Schmidt affords us fascinating details of life in the desert. He notes that "two great nations were slogging it out in an almost uninhabited and uninhabitable wilderness, but still the nomads trekked round in the midst of war, seemingly regarding the struggle as no concern of theirs, but merely the madness of the Infidels".

What of Erwin Rommel, who achieved a meteoric rise from colonel to field marshal in three years? Rommel's style of command

With Rommel in the Desert by Heinz Werner Schmidt, published by Constable, hardback, £15.95.

did not meet with universal approval. He led from the front, inviting criticism from those who believed a general's role was to control operations from his headquarters and not to be with his troops in the fighting line.

"Often, to the annoyance of the tactical staff, he would give orders on the spot, changing plans to meet the situation. His subordinate commanders found this to be a real thorn in the

flesh, and resented it bitterly." Rommel himself seems to have recognised his active involvement as something of a fault because when Lt Gen Paulus, acting chief of the OKH in Berlin, "dropped in", Rommel was careful to stay at his headquarters as was expected of a commander.

According to Schmidt, he had no time for frivolity. He was impatient and unsympathetic to explanations of failure and he demanded of his subordinates initiative and aggressiveness in the face of the enemy. When these qualities did not seem to be forthcoming, heads were more than likely to roll.

The theme running through much of the book is the besieging of Tobruk, the taking of which was Rommel's obsession for more than a year. When the town eventually fell to him in June 1942 he knew that his great ambition had been achieved and felt that he could go on to take Egypt.

This, we know, was not to be; an opposing commander, Montgomery, and his Eighth Army had other plans for Rommel and the Afrika Korps.

The book, written more than 46 years ago, leaves us with a fresh perspective of the man the British called the Desert Fox; not so much a general of genius — a reputation gained in the interim years — but a courageous, single-minded and determined commander. — BJ.



Gen Erwin Rommel

Good night out is a racing certainty

FANCY an evening at the races? The Army Benevolent Fund is aiming to raise £100,000 through events staged around an evening race card at Royal Windsor on June 30.

The Band of the Coldstream Guards and a special dinner (to be attended by the Duke of Kent) are among the attractions. Everyone with a ticket (gates open 5.30pm, first race 6.40) will be entitled to enter the ABF national raffle, with prizes including a Ford Probe.

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Glamorgan Army Cadet Force, comprising 47 detachment locations and 1,000 cadets, changed its name on May 30 to the 3rd (Cadet) Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales.

△ △ △

After 28 years as chairman of the Aldershot Militaria Society, Hugh King has been made president. Co-author of *Head-dress Badges of the British Army* and a well-known hairdresser in Farnham, Mr King trimmed the hair of Field Marshal Montgomery at his Alton home.

△ △ △

Soldiers from two Kent-based TA units – 221 and 222 Field Squadrons (EOD) (V) are to recover four "bouncing bombs" from the North Sea this month. The devices, used by the RAF to practise for the Dambusters raid on the Mohne Dam in May 1943, are in Reculver Bay.

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A 19th century Coldstream shako and epaulette has been loaned to the Guards Museum after the curator of the Highland Folk Museum recognised the items in a painting. The shako and epaulettes, regarded as a spectacular find, belonged to Col Daniel MacKinnon, Coldm Gds, and had been in the Highland museum's reserve collection.

They were accepted by Lt Gen the Hon Sir William Rous, Colonel Coldm Gds, whose great grandfather had served with MacKinnon.

△ △ △

Inveraray's Combined Operations Museum has been given a facelift, including new displays, for its summer season. A highlight for the museum dedicated to Scotland's secret wartime training base will be the unveiling by Canadian veterans of a memorial on July 10.

△ △ △

A cheque for £1,000 was presented by the Association of Military Remembrance to the Royal British Legion, and not to the National Army Museum as reported in the April 28 issue.



Soldiers of 200 Signal Squadron have left their mark on a Bosnian hillside. Their brigade emblem (the unit is part of 20 (UK) Armoured Brigade) is a mailed fist, so OC Maj Jim Richardson decided to reproduce it in white stones at one of the signallers' hilltop locations.

Capt Paul Smith, the 2iC, enlisted the help of the British-led HQ Multi-National Division (South West) map-making Geo Troop to draw up a grid pattern that could be followed on the ground. They did so, even taking into account the slope of the hill and the required size of the finished article.

On the ground, a grid was

staked out to correspond to the one on paper and the laying of stones began. After a passable imitation of a chain gang at work, the 13-strong team of officers and soldiers succeeded in humping enough rocks into position to make the six-metre deep version. Lisia West, the site on which the fist was made, is a rebroadcast station about 40 miles north-west of Banja Luka.

Modern war too tough to write about

hospital, too ill to tell the doctors what happened. It has already been short-listed.

Anyone can enter, including serving or retired, families, relatives or friends. Stories – fiction or non-fiction on Military Life, Wartime or Peace – must be no longer than 1,000 words.

Entries, accompanied by £5 (of which £4 is a donation to the charity), to Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, Broadway House, The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RL by Aug 29.

Exception is an entry from a *Soldier* reader, Mark Rickman, whose story is narrated through the eyes of a soldier who remembers being blown up in an explosion and reawakes in a military

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, June 1947

LEAVE IT OUT

I can just pip Lt A E Brittain's record of serving 18 years with one battalion and 19 years without taking leave. Here's my claim: 19½ years with the 2nd Bn, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment; 21½ years without taking leave.

On May 24, 1947, I completed 25 years' service. Of this, 15 months have been spent in England, including 6½ months depot training.

(Letter from Cpl F Newton, HQ Pln, D Coy, HQ BAOR.)

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, June 1972

TOP OF THE POPS

Someone had the bright idea of releasing "Amazing Grace" with its pipe solo by Pipe Maj Tony Crease as a single. Then a chance spin on a late-night record show triggered sales to 20,000 a day, taking the tune, played by the band, pipes and drums of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, to Number One in the hit parade.

A square in an Italian mountain village has been named Piazza Ernest Foster in honour of a Hampshire Regiment soldier who saved the life of a baby boy hit in crossfire in 1944. A plaque to Pte Foster, who died five years ago, was unveiled by the baby, now aged 54.

Among the horses which took part in the State Opening of Parliament last month was Waterford, a four-year-old black gelding born in Ireland. He is the first to bear the name since the previous Waterford was killed in the IRA attack on The Queen's Life Guard in July 1982. Seven horses died along with an officer and three soldiers.

The year of enlistment for a Household Cavalry horse is identified by a letter (just like a car). This year it is W, hence the new Waterford.

Duke's tribute to Victory Services Club visionaries

VISIONARIES – people who look ahead, foresee that changes are necessary and have the courage to do something about it – were singled out for special praise by the Duke of Edinburgh at a Victory Services Club lunch in London on May 20.

The Duke, in his 41st year as patron-in-chief of the club, was referring to its great success – it has 38,000 members – when he



Above: the AGC recruiting roadshow. Inset: 3 RWF's picturesue new caravan

On the road to recruiting success

ARMY recruiters have found a sure-fire way of making certain the public gets the picture... by painting their messages on the sides of very large vehicles.

Pictured are two striking examples: the Adjutant General's Corps mobile recruiting display vehicle, complete with a long-awaited face-lift; and the new recruiting caravan of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, launched recently in Hightown Barracks, Wrexham.

The AGC's 22ft long towed recruiting trailer is said to feature the largest full colour photo mural in the Army. Visitors who venture inside will be dazzled by photographic images of life in

the corps... and a huge video screen, interactive computer multimedia display and mobile Internet site.

The trailer "pictorials" were designed in-house by the Media Resources Department at the AGC Centre at Worthy Down, using photographs taken by Maj Joe Bright and Maj Eddy Payne, both based at Worthy Down. The large self-adhesive panels were made by Instant Image of Southampton.

Capt Guy Willans, the corps recruiting officer, pronounced himself well pleased with eye-catching result.

SEARCHLINE

RAMC OTTs and ORA: If you served or are serving in the Army as an operating theatre technician and are interested in a reunion in Portsmouth in September, please send a 5in x 9in sae to Tony Valeisa, Operating Theatres, Royal Hospital Haslar, Gosport, Hants PO12 2AA.

Canal Zoners: Veterans group planning a 1998 reunion in Liverpool and a weekend in the Channel Islands. Membership details from Canal Zoners, 16 Bridgewater, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 7JJ

(please enclose sae) or tel 0181 894 6771.

Reunion planned at Fallingbostel in October for ex-prisoners of war interned at **Stalag XIB** during the Second World War. Details from LCpl A Hone, 16 Tank Transporter Squadron RLC, BFPO 38 (tel 05162 971 2420).

Korean War Veterans: A photographic display will be part of the Aldershot Museum special events day on July 20. Details from Ted Beevor on 0181 841 2775.

JUNE

- 14: Queen's Birthday Parade, F Coy Scots, Guards, Horse Guards.
- 21: Sherborne Military Tattoo, Sherborne Castle, Dorset, in aid of Poppy Appeal and Army Benevolent Fund.
- 28-29: Victorian Military Society celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, Historic Dockyard, Chatham.
- 29: Colchester Garrison County Day, Fingringhoe, including Red Devils and Army tug-of-war.

JULY

- 4: Evening lecture by Maj Gen Anthony Deane-Drummond CB DSO MC, captured in Italy and again at Arnhem, escaping both times. Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot. Tickets (£6.50) from 01252 349614.
- 6: RMA Sandhurst 50th anniversary open day. Displays, activities and stalls. Profits to charity.
- 6: 30 Signal Regiment, open day, Bramcote, featuring White Helmets, R Signals and Brigade of Gurkhas bands, APTC display team (01455 222551).
- 15-27: Royal Tournament, Earls Court. Tickets: 0171 244 0244.
- 20: Aldershot Military Museum special events day, from 1.30 pm. Details: 01252 314598.
- 27: Middle Wallop Challenge 97 air show. Tickets: 01980 674421.

SEPTEMBER

- 6-7: Berwick Military Tattoo, The Barracks, Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- 13-15: Military Survey 250th anniversary, Hermitage.

OCTOBER

- 7-8: Cyprus Walkabout.
- 24: Isle of Thanet Festival of Remembrance. Tickets: 01843 292882.
- To include public events in this diary, contact the Editor.

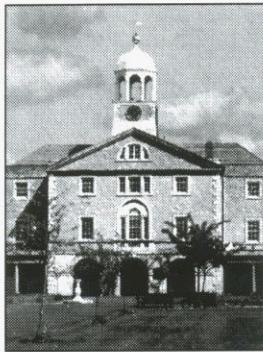
REUNIONS

WFR Regimental Association: Annual Crich dinner takes place on July 5, followed by annual pilgrimage to the regimental memorial on July 6. Contact RHQ WFR, Foresters House, Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Notts NG9 5HA (tel 0115 9465415).

54 Engr Sp and Amb Sqn RCT: New date for reunion is Aug 16 (not Aug 23) at Stadhalle Lubbecke, Germany. Contact WO2 Taff Curtis on Gutersloh Mil (05241-84) ext 2576, Mac MacMillan on 05741 12967 or Baz Buckle on 05741 40261.

CLOSURES

With the demise of **HQ Engineer Resources**, Long Marston, all personnel who donated presentation pieces to the officers' mess are asked to contact the QM, CEP, Long Marston, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 8QR (tel 01869 259390) if they wish the items to be returned. Replies by Dec 31.



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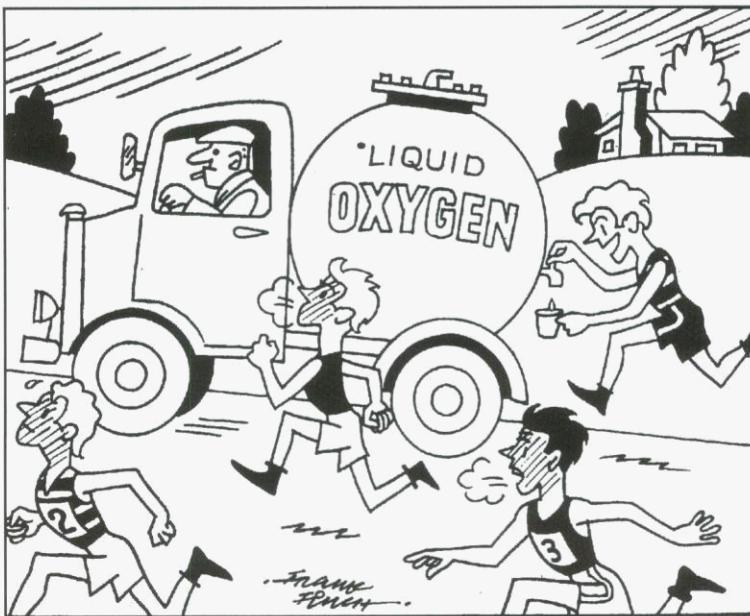
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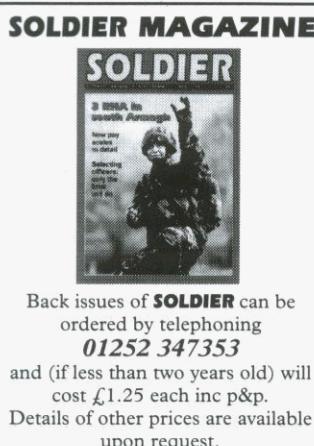


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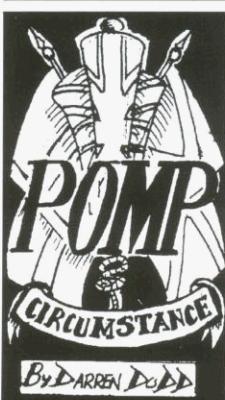
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First (264 runs, £2,500): Maj GR Wadsworth, HQ Land, Wilton
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Third (247 runs, £750): Sgt AA Skinner, 34 Fd Hosp, Strensall.

Fourth (246 runs, £450): Cpl MJ Reeve, 1 RTR, BFPO 22; SSgt S Spafford, DSMRU Epsom.

Sixth (245 runs, £300): Cpl PSR Goodey, HQ 2 (SE) Bde, Shorncliffe.

Seventh (244 runs, £200): LCpl PG Chambers, 721 EOD Sqn RLC, Morton-on-Lugg.

Eighth (238 runs, £100): Sgt SJ Bishop, SEAE, Arborfield.

Note: Winning scores are based on Hampshire No 2 Batsman (Mathew Hayden's) not out score of 235 on Saturday May 31. Any addition to his score on Monday June 2 will affect winning scores, but not the overall result.

MAY 31, 1997

First (564 runs, £2,500): Maj CEA Mayo, The Light Dragoons, BFPO 30

Second (556 runs, £1,250): Sgt GM Cassidy, 2 Signal Regt, York.

Third (549 runs, £750): Sgt RG Lond, 242 Signal Sqn, Edinburgh.

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Sixth (531 runs, £300): Tpr AG Porter, 2 RTR, BFPO 38.

Seventh (526 runs, £200): LCpl JD Norris, F1 Admin Unit, BFPO 655.

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Kiwi Kevin's military mission

IF YOU want a professional opinion on the Army's Rugby League team, Kevin Tamati is the man to ask. The one-time New Zealand international, a full-time coach for ten years, has turned his attention to improving the Army game.

Even a 46-14 victory over the Civil Service did not prevent some serious post-match criticism from Kevin. "They're a good amateur team," he says, "but they have got to build the individual's understanding and responsibility for the game and then concentrate on putting that into a team context."

Kevin's knowledge of the British game was gained as a player for Widnes and Warrington, followed by a four-year spell as manager of Salford.

His involvement with the Army came when coach Taffy Curtis asked him to help after a crushing defeat by the Police at Chester.

The improvement is evident. Since Kevin's input began the Army has lost just one game.

"Because of operational commitments the squad can change from game to game. Team-building is difficult if you have to field a different mix of players for each match," he said.

He is, however, convinced of the talent. "They're winners, which ever way you look at it. The Army is consistently beating opponents even with this handicap. There's a lot of individual skill there, but it needs blending."

Kevin's ideal is to have a stable

squad that will learn from match to match, but on current form, and with other amateur teams facing similar problems, the Army is still a force to be reckoned with. And its commitment to Rugby League will ensure it stays that way.

Most of the team involved in the Civil Service fixture have played since their school days.

Cpl Tony West, from league hotbed St Helen's, started playing at seven, and was a member of both Blackbrook Amateur RL Club and Portico Panthers before joining The Queen's Lancashire Regiment. His team-mate and coach, Cpl Jason Grant (RDG), who also claims Rugby League is a big part of his life, sums up the advantages of their situation:

"The best thing about being in the Army is the unique support you get for playing sport."

Jason took the team to Morocco for a tournament and faced the challenge of keeping the players hydrated while they competed in the North African heat.

But that is one area where the Army players have an advantage. The level of personal fitness built into their daily lives is a real asset on the sports field.

Kevin Tamati has no doubts. "They have got great stamina and can carry through when opponents are beginning to flag."

With his advice and their determination it looks like the Army team will manage to "be the best" on and off the field.

Lightweight Lancers lose

FIELDING a weakened team, the 9th/12th Royal Lancers – Army champions for a record five times – were knocked out by the Gurkha Demonstration company, RMAS in the men's semi-finals of the 1997 inter-unit volleyball championships at Aldershot.

A tired Army side lost 3-0 to the RAF who also beat the Navy to claim the championship.

The women, missing key players, put in a spirited performance against both RAF and Navy, SSgt Anne Wilde and Pte Zoe Burnett playing well, but could not prevent the RAF completing the double.

The Gurkhas were highly mobile throughout in beating 9/12 L in a close game, and in the other semi-final, 1 RGR beat ITC Wales, thanks to a strong outside spiker performance by Rfn Dilraj Thapa.

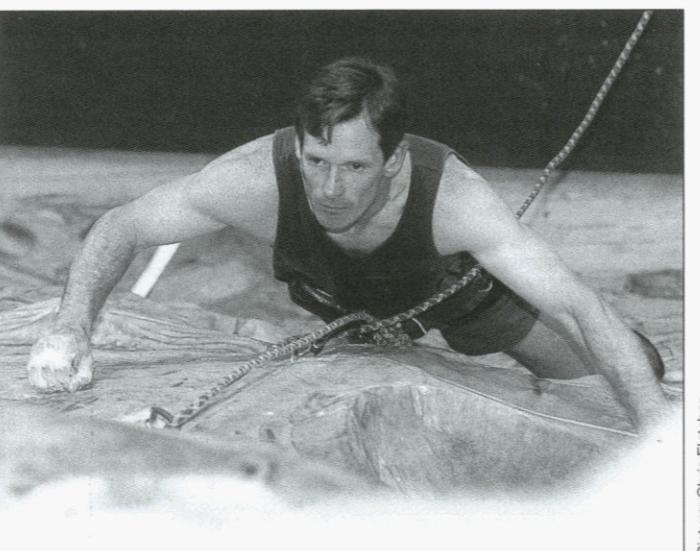
The women's final was the first five-setter of the day, with 11 Sig Regt taking a 2-0 lead.

But the back court spiking of Sgt Steph Geeson and net play by Pte Shirley Reid turned the game around as HQNI and 15 Sig Regt, last year's winners, retaining their crown 3-2.

In the men's final, GDC RMAS were overpowered by the spiking of 1 RGR, especially Rfn Mahendrakumar Phagami, and the imaginative setting of LCpl Ganesh Sherchan.

With a mix of old and new players, the Army men were hoping to reverse last year's result against the Royal Navy in the Inter-Services at HMS Collingwood.

Despite reliable hitting from



Picture: Chris Fletcher

Scaling the heights at the Army School of Physical Training in Aldershot during the finals of the fourth Army sport climbing championships is Capt Steve Blake.

A TA officer from London, he was second overall and also claimed victory in the veterans' competition. Blake was among more than 100 climbers from Regular, Territorial and Officers' Training Corps units in the UK, Northern Ireland and Germany who pitted their wits

Top man

indoors against a 40ft-high wall and each other. Climbers, who included every rank from private to brigadier, were divided into three categories of competition, according to experience. Overall winner was TA trooper Nathan Pike, with WO2 Graham Carter (ASPT) third. Top woman climber was Lt Leanne Callaghan (RAMC).

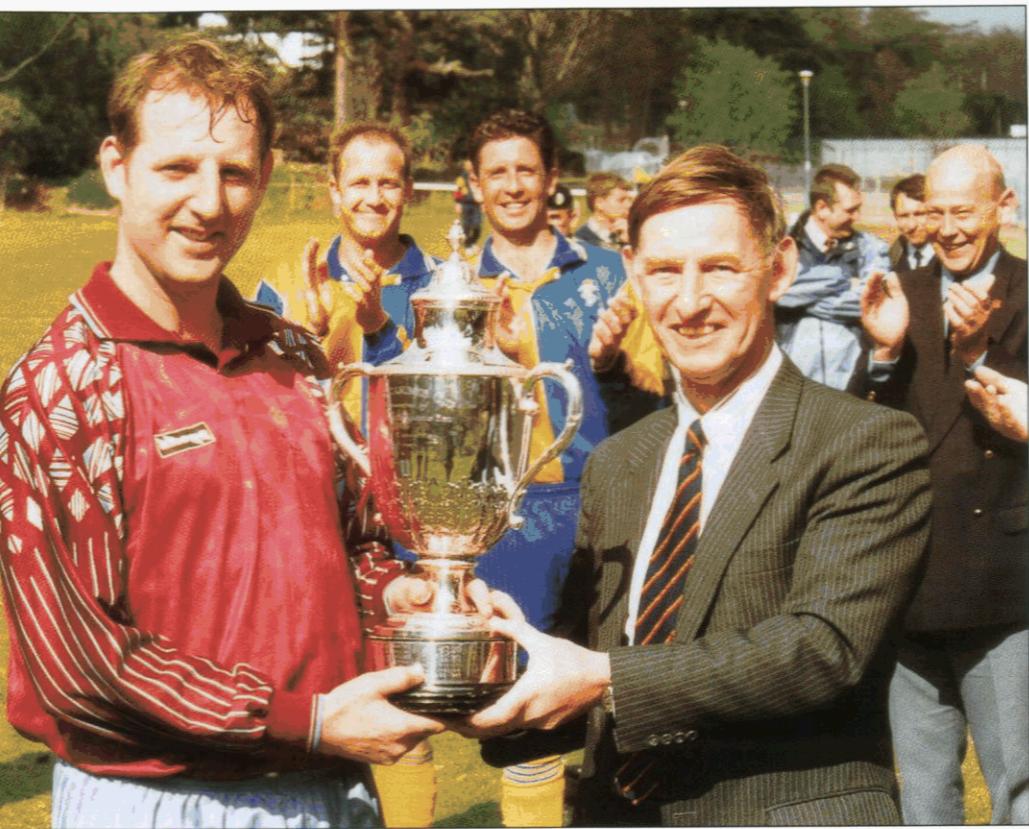
Soldiers' martial arts triumph

THE Army "swept the mat" in the inaugural Inter-Services martial arts competition, held at Land Command's School of Physical and Recreational Training at Bulford Camp.

Competition was divided into karate and tae kwon do sections. Winners of the karate trophy (the Hopkins Cup) and the tae kwon do trophy (donated by the RAF Martial Arts

Association), were decided by the team which won two out of the three events in each section.

The eight-man karate squad did very well in the individuals, convincingly beating their RAF counterparts. In a more even tae kwon do contest, the result was not decided until the last match, when SSgt Alan Bissett beat his RAF opponent.



Sgt Steve Booth (left) receives the Stanbois Cup from Col Mike Selby, the chairman of REME football

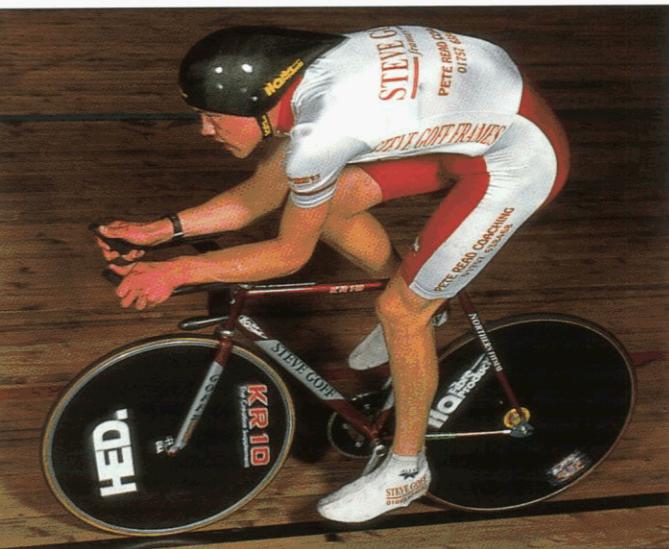
Keith's hour of glory

THE MILITARY version of cycling's blue riband event, the world one-hour record, has been conquered by LCpl Keith Murray of 38 Engineer Regiment.

Covering 46.267km in the hour, the 22-year-old sapper bettered the previous military record of 45.550 set by Flt Sgt John Pritchard of the RAF at Rome's Olympic Velodrome in 1979.

On the verge of international selection, Murray already holds Army cycling records over 10, 25, 50 and 100 miles and the 12-hour event, as well as three Inter-Service records. He is ranked among Britain's top triathletes.

For his record attempt he chose the super-fast Manches-



On track: LCpl Keith Murray on his way to the one-hour record in the Manchester Velodrome

ter Velodrome, where both women's and men's world bests were set, the latter by Olympics star Chris Boardman.

Murray completed just over 185 laps of the 250m track, using a hi-tech fixed-wheel racing bike that had no brakes or gears.

Guided in his attempt by national track coach Marshall Thomas, the soldier kept to an intensive training programme drawn up by his personal coach, Peter Read.

His talent has been recognised by national coaches and

Loggies retain Stanbois Cup

RLC 2, REME 1

FOR the final of the Stanbois Cup competition at Deepcut, the visiting REME footballers were buoyed by the knowledge that the RLC had in the previous week suffered their largest ever defeat at the hands of the Infantry.

But non-availability of players for that game was a major contribution to the result.

The final began at a frantic pace with neither side able to impose themselves. Midfields were by-passed as the ball was knocked long.

First goal of the match came after 16 minutes through the RLC's Zoldan. In the 23rd minute, the loggies took advantage of a defensive error by REME to make it 2-0. A cross from Whitty on the left should have been cleared, but a REME defender attempting to pass the ball back to the goal-

● Former Army striker Lee Bradbury made his internationally football debut when he led the England Under-21 attack against Poland in Katowice. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Peter Taylor, the England coach, said of the Pompey star, a former private in The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment: "You can tell with Lee that he's experienced in the real world and that he's come out of the Army."

keeper could only look on in horror as Mills stole in to score easily.

Regular watchers of the RLC team knew that there was no room for complacency: too often this season they have squandered leads with poor second-half performances.

Predictably, REME lay siege to the RLC goal in an attempt to get back in the game. They were denied only by good goal-keeping from Jeremiah, stalwart defending from Booth and Stevenson and woeful finishing by the REME forwards.

In the last minute, REME finally broke through the defences to score a consolation goal.

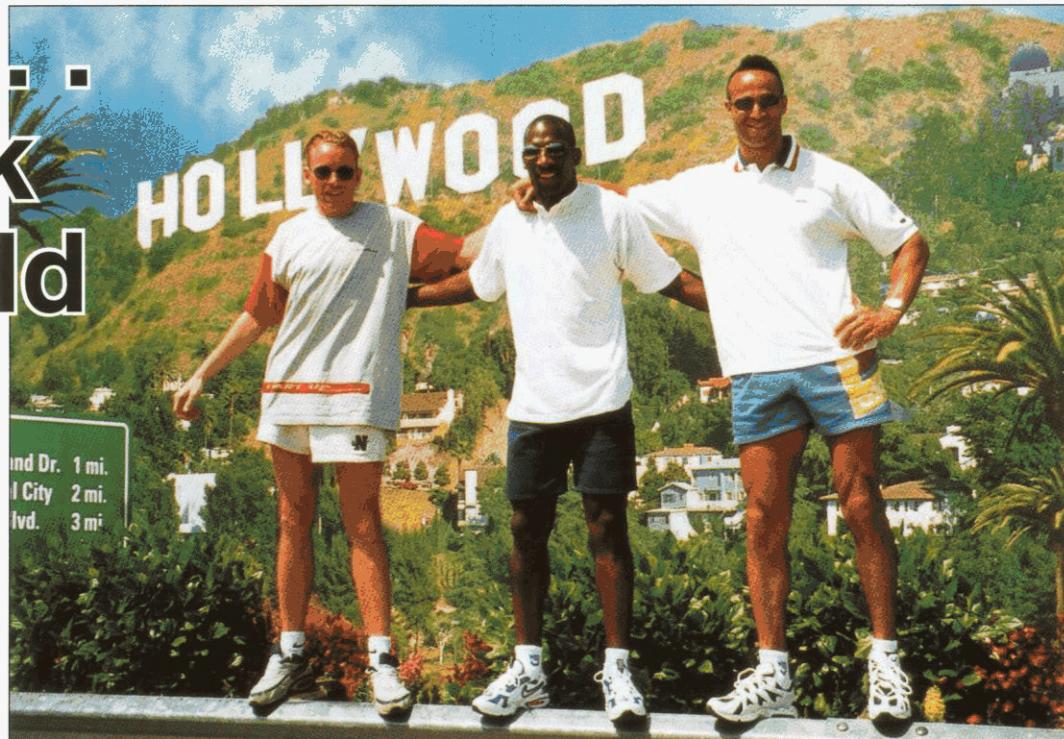
Stars . . . of track and field

TWENTY-NINE lucky members of the British Army athletics squad travelled to Los Angeles to attend a warm weather training camp during which they were able to fine-tune all the hard work they had put in over the winter.

Most of the training sessions took place on a new track at Huntington Beach High School, where the British soldiers rubbed shoulders with Olympic-standard track and field athletes including 100m finalist Donovan Reid.

Four of the Army athletes, Sgt Alvin Walker (REME), LCpl Dave Nolan (RRF), Sgt Wayne Vincent (AGC) and Sig Carmen Michalska (R Signals), took part in an invitation 4x100m relay at Pomona.

Nolan and Vincent were part



Balanced view: Three stars of Army athletics enjoy a visit to Hollywood during a break from training. From left to right are LCpl Dave Nolan and Sgts Wayne Vincent and Alvin Walker

of a winning Army-civilian team that knocked three seconds off the track record.

A new Army talent emerged in the shape of Pte Donita Benjamin (RLC), a long jumper

and sprinter, who impressed with her ability and technique.

The training exercise was organised by five-times Inter-Services decathlon champion Maj Terry Gyorffy, and each of

the athletes was supported by a grant from the Army Sports Lottery, supplemented by funding from their individual regiments and corps and civilian sponsorship.

Steve rises to the occasion

SGT Steve Grey's rise to fame in the tough world of international powerlifting continues.

Less than 12 months after taking up the sport, Grey (APTC) has powered his way to the top, shattering several records on the way to becoming British champion and then world champion, a title he claimed in South Africa last November.

Now the 28-year-old Army physical training instructor has won a bronze medal in the European championships in Austria.

He has also tried his hand at the more familiar Olympic weightlifting discipline and, at the first attempt, became the South West Counties champion in the 59kg group.

To help him compete in the European event, Grey was supported by a grant from the Army Sports Lottery and by Maximuscle, makers of a food supplement.

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Sgt Maj David Gell AAC takes time out for a mug of tea as his Gazelle helicopter flies over a giant human teapot formed by children from schools at the British military base at Dhekelia, Cyprus.

Cyprus. To mark the amalgamation of the Service charities SSAFA and Forces Help, a worldwide fundraising Big Brew Up was planned for June 11. From Hong Kong to the Falk-

lands, in the air, on the sea and under it, Servicemen and women and their families were planning to drink up to half a million cups in the world's largest tea party. Picture: Glyn Genin



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