



## The Parachute Regimental Association Aberdeen Branch

HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, honorary branch life member

From The Chairman & Committee  
Gentlemen,

### Treo, the hero army dog who took on the Taliban.

Treo, I am told, is 'knackered'. He's been up since 5am and needs a bit of a lie down. Goodness. What could be wrong? But when he emerges an hour later, he looks like he's thoroughly enjoying himself - with a swagger in his step and a large medal bobbing round his neck on a silken ribbon. Treo is a nine-year old black Labrador who likes playing with tatty old tennis balls, chomping old bones and watching Manchester City Football Club on television. But he is also a war hero. And today a huge crowd of important dignitaries and his handler Sgt Dave Heyhoe, 40, are at the Imperial War Museum as Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra presents him with the Dickin Medal, the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross. He follows in the paw prints of 26 other dogs, 32 World War II messenger pigeons, three horses and a cat called Simon who have won the award, introduced in 1943 by Maria Dickin, the founder of the PDSA - People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. Certainly, Treo has seen more action in Afghanistan than many soldiers. At least twice he's saved the lives of hundreds of troops with his uncanny ability to detect Taliban roadside bombs. On August 15, 2008, he found a 'daisy chain' improvised explosive device - made of several bombs wired together and carefully hidden by the Taliban as he patrolled with Dave in Sangin, Helmand Province. A month later, Treo saved a platoon from guaranteed casualties when he discovered a similar device. 'He's basically a four-legged metal detector,' explains Dave.



Treo wasn't the only army dog in Afghanistan - at the time, he was one of 25 dogs deployed to support troops in various roles, including as protection and detection dogs and working in vehicle searches and as arms and explosives search dogs. He certainly looks every inch the military hero today. 'Love at first sight': Treo with Sgt Dave Heyhoe has been awarded for his bravery sniffing out Taliban bombs in Afghanistan. But he wasn't always quite so well behaved. Aged two, he was so naughty - snapping and growling at everyone - that his owners donated him to the army to straighten him out. He and Dave met on deployment in Northern Ireland. And fell in love. 'Treo's handler had just left the army. I looked at him and he looked at me and that was that - I know it sounds daft, but it was love at first sight.' At work, Treo has army issue dog biscuits and special army issue doggy kit - two pairs of nylon booties with rubber soles to protect paws over rough terrain and a heavy black protective coat filled with gel packs to keep him cool. There were other perks to Treo's life in Helmand. 'I built him a special kennel,' says Dave. 'But he never slept in it - he always slept with me on my bed.' I'm beginning to suspect Dave's a bit of a softie. In their five years together, he and Treo have only ever been apart once. 'I came home on leave for two weeks without him and missed him loads - but he had a nice holiday in Camp Bastion in an air conditioned kennel.' He claims their bond is better than with any dog he's ever worked with: 'I wouldn't say he's telepathic, but there was an incident in Afghanistan - when another dog handler was killed. Treo knew I was down. He jumped on my bed and licked my face.' Dave explains that Treo's training is all based on rewards. Every time he sniffs an explosive device he gets a treat. Nose for trouble: Treo, from 104 Military Working Dogs, St George's Barracks in Oakham, Leicestershire, has now retired (aged eight) maybe an army issue chocolate drop? 'Oh no. It might be a bit of play together with his tennis ball. Or just me cuddling him.' There's no getting away from the fact that Dave's job is extremely dangerous. Dogs and handlers do die. So does Treo ever show fear? 'He's a dog who wants to work. When there's a scent there he knows - he's excellent at saying, "Dad, look, there's something here."' But life has changed dramatically for Treo in the past six months. Last August he officially retired from the army aged eight and has spent the last few months winding down at Dave's house in Lincolnshire. Instead of sniffing out bombs, suffering in the heat and risking his life, he spends his days playing with his Dave's other dog, Blue (a

Weimaraner), sleeping on Dave's bed (poor Blue sleeps on the floor), working his way through enormous bones from the butcher and watching Man City on the box. Oh yes, and lolling about on his very own reclining armchair with very own footrest. Blimey. No wonder he looks so loved and cared for. 'He's usually a quite a feisty dog,' says Dave. 'But since he's retired he's over relaxed.' Soon army life will be over for them both - Dave retires at the end of March. So will the medal hang above Treo's armchair? 'We'll present the original to my unit, but we'll keep a replica displayed in the front room, might even get Treo to polish it.' A nice idea, but now he's finally off duty, I can't quite see Treo bothering especially if Man City's on the telly.

You know it leaves me bewildered that we had the technology in 1969 to put Neil Armstrong on the moon (allegedly). Remember those grainy black & white images and the immortal words of One Small Step? Yet here we are some 41 years later with nothing better at this time than a dog's nose to find IED's and other ordinance. These dogs and their handlers are truly awesome heroes!

## BAE Systems new Caiman Multi-Theatre Vehicle (MTV).



At the upcoming AUSA Winter event taking place in Ft. Lauderdale, FL this month, BAE Systems is introducing the Caiman Multi-Theatre Vehicle (MTV) - a new configuration of the combat-proven Caiman Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, implementing lessons learned from Iraq in a platform designed to operate effectively in Afghanistan. "As the requirements for MRAPs increase, the Caiman MTV is an essential solution designed to meet the tactical mission requirements in

Afghanistan" says Chris Chambers, vice president and general manager GTS Programs. "With the most armour-protected useable interior space than any other MRAP, coupled with its all terrain mobility, this vehicle can handle both the extreme terrain and environment of the Afghan theatre and the evolving threats our soldiers face there" Chambers added. Through modifying Caiman capsules pulled out of Iraq, using reset staff and facilities in Kuwait, BAE Systems will be able to build up to 50 Caiman MTV rolling chassis insertion kits per week in theatre starting in 2010. These vehicles could then be deployed directly to Afghanistan, relying on the logistics chain already in place. A vast majority of the Caiman MTV parts are already stocked in theatre supporting different types of BAE Systems' Family of Medium Transport Vehicles (FMTV) and Low Signature Armoured Cab (LSAC) platforms.

The Caiman MTV maintains a balanced combination of protection, weight and mobility enabling the vehicle to withstand the large IEDs typical encountered in Afghanistan. The vehicle can also accommodate effective protection against other threats, including Explosively Formed Penetrators (EFP) and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG). The enhanced monolithic floor, a concentrically-formed C-channel frame and high performance blast absorbing seats considerably improve protection from blast effect. The monolithic floor plate, employed on the Caiman MTV, eliminates floor separation during an IED blast comparable to the MRAP Capability Development Document (CDD) objective requirement. The new version of Caiman is designed for a maximum gross vehicle weight of 69,000 pounds; it is equipped with a Caterpillar C9 engine and two-speed transfer case combination for increased torque to navigate harsh terrain. The vehicle has a wider wheel base and more robust independent suspension and power-train systems suitable for operation in harsh terrain. Unlike the 4x4 wheeled MRAP configurations challenged by excessive ground pressure, the new Caiman provides all-terrain mobility with 6x6 wheel soft-soil advantage. Nevertheless, the vehicle retains the interior capacity and survivability of the MRAP, providing effective, protected and deployable platform for specialized vehicles including Command and Control On-the-Move (C2OTM), an ambulance accommodating four litters and a medical crew or protected troop transport, carrying 10 soldiers and a gunner on troop transport missions. BAE Systems claims the new Caiman offers more useable interior volume under armour than any fielded MRAP and therefore, it is ideal for specialized vehicle requirements based on lessons from Afghanistan. To support operations in cold or hot environment, the entire armoured protected capsule is supported by a 5-ton HVAC temperature control system provides optimum climate control to protect soldiers and critical computer equipment from hot and cold extremes. The independent suspension system employs a scaled-up system developed by Arvin Meritor. The new Caiman MTV was introduced to Army leaders at the Michigan Proving Grounds. It was then transferred to the Nevada Automotive Test Centre (NATC) and participated at the Vehicle Systems Demonstration Technology Rodeo in Nevada, earlier this month. "The Caiman MTV performed extremely well during its recent demonstrations in Michigan and Nevada" said Dennis Morris, president, BAE Systems, Global Tactical Systems. "We are now in a position to field this platform very rapidly and support critical troop level increases in Afghanistan while being sensitive to extreme defence budget pressures." Caiman MTV demonstrates it has 'the right stuff' protecting troops going through the rough terrain of Afghanistan. Through modifying Caiman capsules pulled out of Iraq, using reset staff and facilities in Kuwait, BAE Systems will be able to build up to 50 Caiman MTV rolling chassis insertion kits per week in theatre starting in 2010. Photos: BAE Systems

# The Jumper

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## Parachute Regiment mascot gets new box from Equi-Trek.

PEGASUS the pony will be representing his military masters in style, thanks to a new liveried horsebox. The Shetland pony is the Parachute Regiment mascot, and attends a number of engagements each year. But his travel arrangements hit a snag 12 months ago when the horsebox he was using was condemned. Since then, he and Pony Major Alex McCrea have been relying on friends and contacts to lend them trailers and horseboxes. Now Equi-Trek has presented them with one of its best models in the regimental colours of maroon and silver. Lieutenant Colonel John Handford said: "Alongside the Red Devils freefall team and the regimental band, the mascot is very important to us, and highly popular with the public. "This will ensure he takes his rightful place at many ceremonial events and military shows." The Pony Major,



Lance Corporal Alex McCrea, said: "We have not really had any proper transport for the past 18 months, so this is fantastic." Pegasus, named after the winged horse of Greek mythology, tours the country and appears at shows and military ceremonies. L/Cpl McCrea looks after 13-year-old Pegasus and his 26-year-old companion, Dodger, in the stables at the Colchester Garrison Saddle Club, in Fordham.

*A fun money spinner could be to sell the pony's manure as genuine "Airborne Horse Sh/t." £5 a bag and guaranteed to Beast Roses to grow properly! Got to be a winner! My old man, who was RE, always said there was money in Sh/!*

## Mess Dinner Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March.

As recently discussed, our second function in 2010 is a dinner planned for 26<sup>th</sup> March. To keep it simple for the catering we've agreed a set meal of Scottish Broth, Roast chicken with all the trimmings, Cheese and crackers with Port, coffee or tea for the fixed price of £15 per head. As usual we can only make this work with your support. At the February meeting, due to the Arctic conditions, there were only 13 members in attendance so it was hard gauge the level of support for the dinner. 8 of the 13 present said they would attend, which is great, but we really need a minimum 20 to make it viable for ourselves and the Sportsman's club. So, gentlemen, we need the support of another 12 of you to make this work. Once you get this newsletter please have a think about it and check with the higher command for a pass. Well worth £15! As ever, this is a stag do. We will have 2 other functions where the ladies will be attending. Please let myself, Norman Laird or any of the committee know as soon as possible so we can proceed with this dinner.

## The Parachute Regimental Association Annual General Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

Members are advised that the 2010 Annual General Meeting is planned (subject to the approval of the Executive Committee) to coincide with the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event and will be held in the Merville Barracks Lecture Theatre. Detailed timings will be published as soon as the event program is available. Branches may also wish to take this opportunity to have branch photographs taken beside the Dakota aircraft.

## PARACHUTE REGIMENT TRAINING COMPANY PASS OUT PARADE FORECAST 2010.

Captain John Wilson - Vice Chairman of The Parachute Regimental Association and Regional Secretary for the North East Region has sent the forecast of passing out parades for 2010. Please note, in case you have made plans, the cancellations are included.

SER	PLATOON	PASS OFF PARADE	REMARKS
	730 Bruneval Pl	05 Mar 10	
	731 Normandy Pl	30 Apr 10	
	732 Breville Pl	14 May 10	
	733 Arnhem Pl	23 Jul 10	
	734 Rhine Pl	17 Sep 10	
	735 Bruneval Pl	15 Oct 10	Cancelled
	736 Athens Pl	12 Nov 10	Cancelled
	737 Oudna Pl	26 Nov 10	Cancelled
	738 Normandy Pl	21 Jan 11	
	739 Breville Pl	04 Feb 11	Cancelled
	740 Arnhem Pl	18 Mar 11	

# The Jumper

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## Manchester Branch Battle March 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

In aid of Help For Heroes, Mr Jim Crocker and Mr. Ged Breslin will be doing the Battle March again this year on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Fort William. The Battle March entails a 7.5km speed march in full battle order with a Bergen weighing 46lbs. The Manchester branch has donated £500 and will also assist with their expenses. Salford Van Hire is donating a van for the weekend and Sainsbury's are covering the fuel costs. Should any branch or member wish to make a donation please contact Mr. Jim Crocker through the Manchester branch Secretary, Mr Jim Brooks on 0161 7908625.

## Blether & Laugh

### First lesbian prison wedding conducted

Two inmates in a Surrey jail have tied the knot in what is thought to be Britain's first lesbian prison wedding. Killer Sara Crane and drug dealer Joanne Davies, both 31, married in a private ceremony earlier this month. The service was conducted by an official from Guildford Register Office at Send Prison in Surrey. The Sun newspaper reported. Prison governors are required to consider requests from gay couples who wish to enter civil partnerships. Crane was jailed for life for murder in 2003 and Davies was jailed for two and a half years for intent to supply drugs. A Ministry of Justice spokesman said: "We cannot comment on individual offenders held in custody at HMP Send." Offenders are entitled to apply to the governor to register a civil partnership in prison under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, so long as certain criteria defined under the Act are met."

**I'm totally speechless with the crap that's going on in this country these days but it does lead nicely on to the first Joke!**

- I get on extremely well with the lesbians next door. They asked me what I would like for my birthday. I was stunned when they gave me a Rolex. It was very nice of them, but I think they misunderstood me when I said, "I wanna watch."
- Honestly some folk will take offence at anything. I met a bloke with no legs this morning while at the bus stop and all I asked was "How are you getting on?"
- My missus has just gone into hospital with two black eyes and a broken jaw. It seems we were on different wavelengths when she said she wanted decking on the patio.
- A biker goes to the doctor with hearing problems. "Can you describe the symptoms to me?" asked the doctor. "Yes. Homer is a fat yellow lazy basket and Marge is a skinny bird with big blue hair."
- "Blonde Phone Call" "Hi Mom, how are you?" "Hi Sally, where are you? I thought you were with your father at B&Q" "Yeah, we were but I got arrested and they've let me make one phone call." "What happened?" "Oh, I punched this African woman in the head." "What on earth ~ why did you do that?" "Well it wasn't my fault. Dad told me to find a Black & Decker!"
- I asked the wife, what she would do if I won the Lotto...She says "I'd take half, then leave you." "Excellent," said I, "I just won 10 Quid, here's £5 – now bugger off!"

**All very Chick Murray orientated jokes which no doubt has put a smile on the face of a certain Rangers supporter we know as the special wan!!**

There are times I struggle to write these newsletters. I dry up and stories and articles are hard to come by and especially when I've got my hands full in my day job with the sub sea operations of 2 drilling rigs and nothing going right! We all know the demands of keeping the military going but I can assure you when the rig's ice cream breaks down or they run out of chips all hell breaks loose all the way up the tree! My point is I could do with help from yourselves. If you have a story from days gone by, pictures or if you would like something included please feel free to pass it on to myself, Norman or any of the committee and I'll include it in the newsletter as soon as I can. The jumper is your newsletter. Please contribute to it so we keep it going!

## Support Our Soldiers.

Bob Campbell M.M. Aberdeen Branch Standard Bearer and committee member is also a joint area co-ordinator for **SOS** (Support Our Soldiers) they are holding a fund raising stovie dance on the 10th of April at the Buchanhaven Hearts FC social club in Victoria Street Peterhead, tickets are £7 each and for a very worthy cause, if you would like tickets please contact Bob directly on mobile 07952 399925 or robertcambell@btinternet.com

Best Regards

Bob Crocker, Chairman

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**Remember Meetings now start at 1930**

**Next Branch meeting takes place on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, 1900 hours for 1930 hours**

**To Airborne, the world O'er, Shall brithers be for a' that**

Disclaimer.

The Aberdeen Branch of The Parachute Regimental Association issue a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branch members by way of this newsletter. This newsletter provides a conduit between the branch members to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by its members. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of the committee or the membership.