

Lost TA Unit

Ministers and civil servants are hurriedly trying to discover how a Territorial Army Platoon based in Plockton, Rosshire has remained active 42 years after it should have disbanded.

2 Platoon, C Company of the 11 th Bn Seaforth Highlanders, formerly part of the 51 st Highland Division, has been meeting every Wednesday night at the Plockton Drill Hall and on occasional weekends on local landowners estates.



The entire regiment was disbanded in 1966 and followed the amalgamation of the regular battalions of Seaforth and Cameron HigWanders in 1961. "The order to disband never reached them,"said the local Provost William Maclean, "Communications in the sixties here weren't what they are today and the lads simply carried on."

The average age of the men at 57 is somewhat higher than that for a normal Territorial Army platoon. This is despite the OC, local magistrate and Shorthorn Breeders Champion, Captain Donald P MacGillivray, continuing to recruit, as older members have passed away.

Captain MacGillivray is quoted in the Highland News saying, "We thought it odd no one ever came to inspect us or query our annual returns but apparently we were sending them to a long defunct office at what we thought was Battalion Headquarters, but it seems it was demolished years ago and is now a Tesco supermarket."

Local crofter, Sergeant Malcolm Macleod expressed enthusiasm at the prospect of being brought back into the military mainstream. "The boys are looking forward to getting rid of the old battledress and gaiters and are raring to go."

The anomaly was brought to the attention of Ministers by the local MP Charles Kennedy, who said, "These men are a testament to the stoic, quiet loyalty and soldiering quality of the Highlander. I urge the Government to treat them properly and redress matters of pay, conditions and equipment." Government ministers and officials are examining British and European employment law and the matter of an estimated £6.3m in inflation adjusted backpay, bounties and recompense for expenditure on rations and petrol, previously met by successive Platoon Commanders.

Some observers suggested that the Government might try and spin the dreadful embarrassment and investigate the formation of more T A units manned by older personnel.

A recent study conducted by Glasgow University found that the average Scotsman walks about 900 miles a year.

Another study by the Scottish Medical Association found that Scotsman drink, on average 22 gallons of alcohol a year.

This means, on average, Scotsman get about 41 miles to the gallon.

Kind of makes you Proud to be Scottish.