

Larkhill

Queen Opens New Barracks



A Royal Garden Party – we could be inside Buckingham Palace, in fact we are at an Army Barracks on the Salisbury Plain. All is very peaceful, very British, but the air here is full of stories of distant wars & astonishing bravery.

The gunfire today was deafening but friendly – a Royal Salute for The Queen. Her Majesty is Captain-General of the Royal Regiment of Artillery which has moved to Larkhill. She officially opened the Regiment's new home, cheered by excited children who were keen to fly the flag.

Inside, displays have been set up showing the Queen the living conditions of British soldiers on the front line. Most of these men and women are just back from Afghanistan where missions are tough & unrelenting.



This looks like a toy plane but there's no play time in Afghanistan. It's armed with cameras which spy on the Taliban. Gunner Nyhyo Alfred said " Instead of sending troops on the ground to see what it's like before you actually send them out there – it saved a good bit of lives it did, just by using that alone."

Lance Bombardier Michael Frew is shorter than the Queen in height but a giant in the Army. He has won the Military Cross for his extraordinary bravery in Afghanistan.

Sometimes bravery alone doesn't save you – Ben Parkinson once a super-fit soldier lost both his legs and suffered brain damage in Afghanistan. "It's a huge price to pay but Ben's never expressed one minutes regret" says Ben's mother - Diane Dernie "so regardless of what we think and what we would have liked – Ben's proud of his Regiment and proud of what he did." He played his message to the Queen who seemed keen to chat. Our sovereign doesn't wear her heart on her sleeve but as a grandmother maybe she looked at Ben & thought of Harry.

The Queen's visit is a ceremonial affair but it is also an acknowledgement of the deadly risks being faced by British servicemen & women every day thousands of miles from here.

(BBC News – Friday 13 June, 2008)

Queen presides as barracks open

Soldiers who had recently returned from Iraq met the Queen when she formally opened the newly-named Royal Artillery Barracks in Wiltshire.

The royal visitor unveiled an entrance stone at the regiment's new home on Salisbury Plain following its move from Woolwich in south-east London.

The Queen, who is the Royal Regiment of Artillery's Captain-General, arrived at the base by helicopter.

She also met families of those killed in action since 2000.

The official opening ceremony included a Royal Salute by The Kings Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

(BBC News – Thursday 12 June, 2008)

Queen to visit Wiltshire barracks

THE Queen is to formally open the new regimental home in Wiltshire of the Royal Regiment of Artillery this morning.

She will be the first person to enter the newly-named Royal Artillery Barracks, the regiment's new home at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain, after its recent move from Woolwich, south-east London.

She will unveil a new entrance stone at the barracks and witness a Royal Salute by The Kings Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

During her visit, the Queen will meet soldiers who have recently toured in Iraq and Afghanistan and other parts of the world. She will also meet privately with some family members of those killed in action since 2000, an Army spokeswoman said.

At a garden party she will meet Lance Bombardier Ben Parkinson, who was severely wounded while serving with 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Afghanistan.

The Queen, who is the Royal Regiment of Artillery's Captain-General, will arrive by helicopter at 10.50am.

(Wiltshire Times – Thursday 12 June, 2008)