

## **DEFENCE MINISTER PRESENTS MEDALS AND VETERANS BADGES DURING VISIT TO EDINBURGH**

On 5th October, the Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans, Kevan Jones MP presented medals and HM Armed Forces veterans badges to people from Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Glenrothes and Motherwell. The presentation, at The Lothian Chambers, Edinburgh, was assisted by the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, The Rt Hon George Grubb and was witnessed by senior members of both the Armed Forces and veterans groups.

The event was part of a wider campaign in the region to raise awareness of the help and support provided for current and former members of the Armed Forces by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, in partnership with Scottish charity and voluntary bodies. Contact points for veterans help and support are via a helpline 0800 169 2277 and website [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info).

Kevan Jones MP, Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans said:

*“We owe a great deal to our Armed Forces and veterans – and it’s a real privilege for me to be here today to present these medals and veterans badges. There are thousands of veterans and Armed Forces personnel in Scotland, so I can’t overstate how important this awareness campaign is. I want to be sure that we are getting the message through to all of them, and their families, about the services and support we provide in partnership with Scottish Government and voluntary bodies, including Armed Forces’ charities.”*

The Minister presented the *Operational Service Medal for Afghanistan* and *Royal Naval Reserve Decoration* to:

**Lt Cdr David Chauvelin** from Edinburgh who joined the RN reserves in 1991 and spent 14 years within the Mine Warfare Branch – serving on almost every Minehunter in the fleet. During his Service, he has taken part in one of the first major exercises in the Baltic with former Warsaw Pact countries and spent time on operations clearing WWII mines from the seas around Sicily. Following a transfer to the Communication Information Systems (CIS) branch, in May 2008, David was mobilised for a six month tour to Afghanistan. Although based in Kandahar, his role took him on extensive travels throughout Helmand Province.

The Minister also presented the *General Service Medal with Palestine 1947-48 Clasp* to:

**Mr Robert Watt** from Edinburgh who was called up to the RAF in 1946 and trained as a Mechanical Engineer. He was soon sent to the Middle East where he served for 16 months at Habbanyia airfield near Baghdad, before being posted to support the British withdrawal from Palestine. Whilst there, Mr Watt worked on the Hawker Tempest and De Havilland Mosquito aircraft. As a young airman of only 19 years of age, these times were quite scary and he especially recalls a time when a troop train he was travelling on de-railed. Mr Watt was discharged in 1948 and he receives his medal in recognition of his Palestine Service.

The Minister, assisted by the Lord Provost also presented Armed Forces veterans badges to:

**Mr Iain Monro** from Linlithgow enlisted with the TA in March 1995, attached to the Royal Military Police based at Edinburgh Castle. After deciding to join as a regular in 1997, he trained to be a gunner in the Royal Artillery and then went on to complete driver training in Leconfield. In January 1998, Iain joined his regiment in Bergen-Hohne in Germany, followed by a 6 month tour of Northern Ireland. Mr Monro then saw two tours of duty in Bosnia, serving at Glamoc and Sanski Most and also served as a member of the regimental police. Regrettably, he was later discharged on medical grounds after taking a reaction to the anthrax vaccine in preparation for deployment to the Gulf.

**Ms Helen Edgar** from Glenrothes joined the Women's Royal Navy Service (WRNS) in 1953, at which time the role of the WRNS was promoted as "Free a man for sea service". Ms Edgar received basic training in Reading, Berkshire and then went on to undertake specialist training in Yorkshire. Helen served in an administrative office support role at the Royal Naval Air Stations at Fareham and Winchester before finally serving with the Royal Marines in Chatham. Ms Edgar's service ended in 1955.

**Mr John Romanes** from Motherwell served in the REME from 1981 to 1992, seeing Service in West Germany, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Canada. During his training, he was proud to be nominated best recruit in his intake at the REME Army Apprentice College. He was also first in his unit to volunteer for the 1991 Gulf conflict, being promoted to Corporal during active service in Kuwait and Iraq. Whilst serving in Berlin, Mr Romanes undertook regular guard duty at Spandau prison at the time Rudolf Hess was imprisoned there. On other occasions, he was fortunate to meet HM The Queen and other members of the Royal Family at official occasions. An avid sportsman, Mr Romanes played Army hockey, squash, golf and was a sprinter in the Army 4x4 100m relay team.

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

1. The SPVA awareness campaign includes prominent newspaper advertisements across Scotland from 1-9 October, the distribution of over 2,000 poster and leaflet packs to local libraries, shops and clubs as well as a mobile advice unit visiting Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. Veterans are invited to visit the unit for free advice between 1000 and 1500 on:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	
Tuesday 6 October 09	Castle Street	Edinburgh
Thursday 8 October 09	Argyle Street (by M&S)	Glasgow
Tuesday 13 October 09	St Nicholas Street	Aberdeen

2. Medals not previously claimed can still be issued for Service dating back to WWII. Those requiring more information should call 0800 169 2277.
3. The extremely popular HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge was launched in May 2004 and is now available to anyone who has served in the Armed Forces. Over 700,000 have been issued to date. Badges can also be claimed by calling 0800 169 2277 or by visiting the website [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)
4. Images (available on request):
  - a. Veterans Mobile Advice Unit
  - b. HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge
  - c. Kevan Jones MP, Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans.



#### **For Further Information**

5. For further information on the campaign, please contact David Johnson, Service Personnel and Veterans Agency press office on 07717 882014.