

# On Her Majesty's Service


WASC 1797

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# Waltham Abbey

## WEST ESSEX Gazette

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# Blackspot crash trail of havoc

A VAN wreaked a trail of destruction as it ploughed through the garden of an elderly couple at a notorious Waltham Abbey black-spot on Saturday. Miraculously no-one was hurt as the vehicle left the Crooked Mile, destroyed a fence, and careered through a gar-

den, colliding with the side of a house. It then continued into the fence of the adjoining garden. Mrs Belinda Godfrey (70) said: "It was a shock for all of us to see the van in the garden." Mrs Godfrey, who is partially disabled, said her garden is now littered with broken glass everywhere. "I can't let the dog out to lie in the sun because the fence is down, and we can't keep a big dog indoors all day," she added. The accident has left residents counting the cost in time and money, as bulbs and shrubs were damaged. Residents on the Crooked

Mile have been campaigning for years about the number of accidents there. "This bend is a danger spot, people come off the motorway and go too fast to stop," Mrs Godfrey said. She says she is now joining her neighbours in calling for action from local authorities. Van driver Richard Livings (22), from Stanstead Abbots, received slight hand injuries from the broken windscreen.

# Axe threat to RARDE

A WHITEHALL report on the future of the Ministry of Defence establishment at Waltham Abbey has recommended closure, employees were told on Monday.

The announcement came just two days after celebrations were held at the 195 acre site in Powdermill Lane to mark 200 years service to the Crown.

Speaking to Gazette reporter Alan Davis, a spokesman from the Ministry cited "economic factors" as the reason

for the prospective relocation of the 70 scientists involved to a larger site in Kent. The site on which RARDE (Royal Armament Research

and Development Establishment) stands, first saw the manufacture of gunpowder in the 17th century, and as a Royal powder mill sold ex-

plosives to both North and South during the American Civil War.

If the report's recommendations are adopted, the main site will close by April 1990, with the Sewardstone Road site owned by Royal Ordnance being vacated by mid-89.

The plans come as part of a rationalisation programme by the Government to set up just one research establishment for each of the armed services.

But they leave a question mark over the future of some 50 support staff including technicians and industrialists who comprise half the workforce.

Unions involved have been invited to consider the proposals and make representations before a final recommendation is made to the Secretary of State for Defence, George Younger.

On Tuesday, the Ministry's spokesman dismissed all talk of redundancies as premature.

"No decision has actually been taken," he said.

But if the proposals are adopted it will mean the end of a long-standing relationship between Waltham Abbey and the defence industry and Crown. In the days prior to the first major re-organisation in 1945 the Royal Gunpowder Factory was the town's biggest employer.

And as a research establishment, work continued to focus on new explosives, and better production methods, together with chemical research into propellants for missiles and weapons.

A final decision on the future of RARDE Waltham Abbey is not expected until mid-November.

## £100,000 shoe haul

A LORRY loaded with shoes worth almost £100,000 was stolen from Ruggles, Gordón Road, Waltham Abbey, at the weekend.

The white Volvo F10 articulated lorry, (B148 UFC) held 658 cartons, each containing 12 pairs of shoes.

A silver Renault 11 worth £2,500, (index no. B879 OLN) was stolen from the King's Oak pub, car park, High Beech, on Monday night; owner is Robert Lowe of Paternoster Close, Waltham Abbey. An orange Ford Capri, (HLC 918N) was stolen from near owner Mark Fancett's Marle Gardens home the same night.

Fishing tackle worth £650 was stolen from a van at Fishers Green on Tuesday, and a sports bag and handbag containing cash was taken from a car at Claypit Hill, High Beech, on Tuesday evening.

## Bogus gas caller cons OAP

A BOGUS gas official tricked his way into the home of a frail pensioner and robbed her of £400 on Friday afternoon.

The 75-year-old woman, who is almost blind and partially deaf, answered her door to a white man aged about 30 at 3.35pm.

He said he was from the gas board and she let him into her Waltham Abbey home.

The man, who spoke with an Irish accent, went through to the kitchen and turned on all the gas appliances. Then, on the pretext of checking something, he went through to her living room.

He took cash from her purse and a box valued together at £400.

The man then left before the pensioner could stop him.

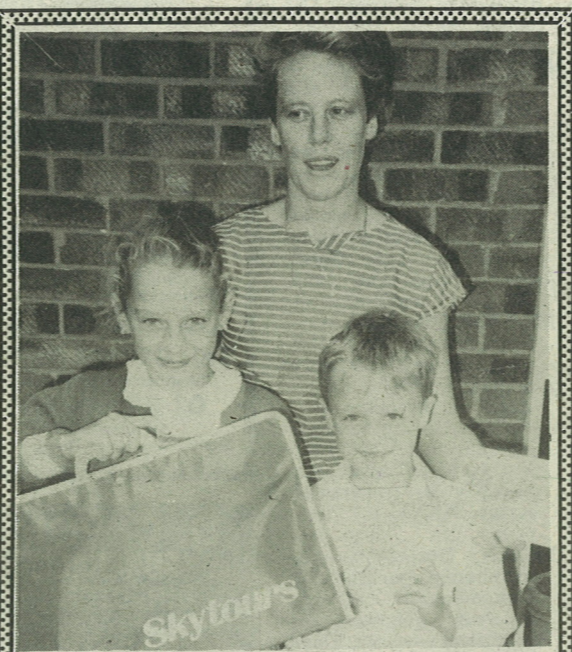
## Paint vandals

RESIDENTS in Cleal Avenue awoke to find paint sprayed on houses and cars on Sunday morning.

The attacks, on two homes and two cars, happened on Saturday night, and two neighbouring houses had crosses painted on windows and a line 5ft long painted on a car.

The name John was sprayed on a taxi belonging to a resident.

One victim, who did not wish to be named, said she thought it was just high spirited youngsters on their way



## Super-splash!

CURRENTLY enjoying the sunshine of Majorca is 10-year-old Jenny-Lee Clifford, of Roundhills, Waltham Abbey, thanks to Epping Forest Council's recreation department and holiday company Skytours.

Last winter, Leverton School pupil Jenny-Lee went swimming more often than any other youngster in Epping Forest district — and that won her top prize in the district council's Splash! swimming competition.

## Thugs attack boatman

YOUNG thugs kicked a man in the face when he tried to stop them breaking into his Ramme Marsh houseboat.

John Ferrell (45), from Bedford, was asleep in the boat just after midnight when he heard a noise at the back. He went to investigate and, as he opened the hatch, was kicked in the face.

His attackers then ran back towards the M25 flyover.

When Mr Ferrell chased them, he was pelted with stones, and one is thought to have broken his nose.

Nothing was stolen. The suspects are described as between 16 and 18, one male, one female.

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