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HELP IS NEAR. Now the helicopter is over the "target." In this case the victim is Master Signaller Gordon Roy. Sgt. Rae descends slowly, ready to hook the pick-up harness over him.



Another helicopter crew of the Flying School, Valley, Anglesey, who have just returned from a training mission (right): Flight Sergeant Jim Clark (crewman instructor), Master Signaller Gaird Flight Sergeant Alan Hart (student crewman). The pilot on this trip was Johnson (chief flying instructor), who is in the cockpit (top right) partly hidden.

Saturday Evening News

weekend
MAGAZINE



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THE PICK-UP. The rescue is nearly completed . . . Sgt. Rae, the rescuer, and Master Signaller Roy, the survivor, are winched aboard by Master Signaller Harris.

THE FIRST spinning moment when you step out of a helicopter hovering 100 feet above the sea seems like a lifetime.

You are dangling on the end of a one-quarter-inch thick wire, with the roaring downdraught from the rotors. It's exhilarating and a little frightening. Frightening, that is, to you and me. But for the men of the RAF's search and rescue teams it's a sensation they know well—and all in a day's work.

Thousands of holiday-makers have watched the silver and red Whirlwind helicopters of the Central Flying School practising off Anglesey, plucking a "drowning" victim from the waves.

TEAM WORK

This is how it is done. A crewman is lowered on a wire. He places a harness round the victim's chest and both are winched into the helicopter. It's all over in a matter of minutes and it looks so simple.

About 120 pilots a year are trained at Valley, Anglesey, in this specialised work.

Flying Officer Fred Ayris, a 33-year-old Londoner who joined up as a gunner in the RAF Regiment 14 years ago, became a helicopter pilot nine years ago, and is now at the top of his profession.

His pupil in our picture story is 21-year-old Pilot Officer Stuart Mould, from Leicester. After three years in the RAF he has com-

pleted his basic flying training, and has chosen to fly helicopters.

The man floating in the rubber dinghy on the choppy sea off Holyhead is Master Signaller Gordon Roy, 38, an instructor who normally teaches pupils the job of being lowered on the rescue wire, and saving the person in the sea.

KEY MAN

The student winchman is 23-year-old Sgt Peter Rae, from Dublin. He began training at Valley in December. "Being lowered from the helicopter to make the pick up is good fun," he said. "Our immersion suits keep us fairly warm, although our hands and feet get a bit chilly after we've been dunked in the sea several times."

The key man in the "rescue" is instructor winch operator, Master Signaller Norman Harris, 40. The helicopter pilot loses sight of the man in the water

Snatched to safety

**Words: Bernard Spilsbury
Pictures: Robert Corfield**

over the last 50 yards as he approaches, because the aircraft's nose cuts off his view. The winch-operator has to "talk down" the pilot to hover over the victim.

And while the rescue continues his "running commentary" to the pilot keeps the helicopter in the right spot and at the right height.

It means a high degree of teamwork and trust between the crew as they fight to keep their machine steady over a corklike object bobbing about in the sea, with a gusting wind trying its best to separate the two.

Usually the pilot flies over the victim at a height of 100 feet and at a speed of 55 mph. Then he banks into a 180 degree turn. As the starboard side of the helicopter comes into a position for the pilot to see the victim, the winch-operator

starts calling out the bearing, so that the pilot can concentrate on his next descending bank to the right, slowing down as a second 180 degree turn completes a "racecourse" shaped circuit. If all has been carried out as planned it brings the target dead ahead—just as the pilot loses sight of it under the helicopter.

By now the man on the end of the wire is dangling towards the sea as the winch operator's "talk-down" brings the chopper to a halt 20 feet above the target. The rescuer is lowered the last few feet, expertly secures his quarry and both are hauled safely onboard.

Around 80 per cent of the lives these men save are civilians who get out of their depth in one way or another, so it's no wonder that the roar of the helicopter's engine is one aircraft noise that the locals don't regard as a nuisance.

Another helicopter crew of the Central Flying School, Valley, Anglesey, who have just returned from a training mission are (left to right): Flight Sergeant Jim Clark (crewman instructor), Master Signaller Gordon Roy, and Flight Sergeant Alan Hart (student crewman). The pilot on this trip was Sqdn. Ldr. Johnson (chief flying instructor), who is in the cockpit (top right) partly hidden.





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Hopeman hero tells the story behind his 'Man of the Year' award

MASTER Signaller Jim Clark is in his mid-30s, lives with his wife and two children in the Moray village of Hopeman and is honoured to have been chosen as one of Britain's "Men of the Year."

At the recent banquet given in London by the British Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Jim rubbed shoulders with the 11 other men of the year.

Among them were Special Air Service soldiers who had climbed Mount Everest, a bomb disposal expert attached to the Metropolitan Police and the severely handicapped survivor of an accident who is now doing work for the disabled.

By Alan Forbes

A cliff hanger!

Winchman

When the BCRD, who organise the men of the year awards for "courage and achievement," asked the Royal Air Force for its nomination, Jim, a helicopter winchman with "D" Flight of 202 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth, was chosen by the Under Secretary for the RAF.

This choice was made after Jim had been awarded the Air Force Cross, the RAF's highest peacetime decoration, for his part in the rescue of a climber from the Cuillins of Skye in the summer of last year.

This rescue was one of many Jim has taken part in, while dangling from the end of a Whirlwind helicopter's winch cable. But it was the way in which he did his job on a dangerous cliff face that earned him the recognition.

A party of three climbers were attempting a route on the rugged and steep Cuillins when their leader strayed on to more difficult rock and, at about 1000 feet, fell off. Although held by his rope, the leader had been badly hurt.

When the helicopter, piloted by "D" Flight's

commanding officer, Flt Lt Geoff Leeming, arrived, Jim was lowered with a lightweight stretcher. The climber was on a small ledge with some members of Skye Mountain Rescue Team beside him," said Jim. "At that point I couldn't see how we could tackle the whole thing.

"Then the helicopter went out a bit and we got a swing on the cable. We encouraged this swing and I came in and got a touch of the rock — but it was too smooth so we had to go out for another try."

When Jim eventually made a landing on the rock he detached himself from the safe link of the cable and, wearing smooth-soled aircrew boots and pushing the

stretcher, he set off on his first serious rock climb. "I have only done a bit of hillwalking. If my dog can go up it, I will," he remarks.

Radioed

He went on: "I got up to the ledge and found it was just big enough for me and rescue team members to roll the climber on to the stretcher. I then radioed the pilot and asked for a rope to be attached to the end of the winch cable (giving a total 180 feet length). This was done and the Skye team leader, Jerry Akroyd, who had belayed himself to the rock, was able to lean out and catch the rope.

"I tied myself and the stretcher on to the rope

and double-checked everything because I could see we would be taken off 1000 feet up and flown some distance through the air before we could be landed in the coire.

"I can remember after we were lifted off, how quiet everything was... it was a beautiful summer evening and the stretch in the rope put the helicopter 200 feet above us. I was able to chat to the fellow in the stretcher but I don't think he was really able to say much."

Another vivid memory Jim has of the rescue is of the injured climber's mates standing on the rock face directly above the helicopter's rotor blades.

"One of them had a camera round his neck. He could have got a fantastic



picture looking down on top of the helicopter as it hovered close to the rock. But if the climbers had knocked off a boulder they would have hacked us off."

Dangers

The jagged peaks of the Cuillins provide exceptional dangers for airborne rescuers. He remarks: "I suppose Skye jobs are the most difficult, because they are the ones where I use the most nervous energy." Jim has taken part in other rescues since then, although this year has not been "too busy" for him. He also serves part-time with Lossiemouth Coastguards.

He and his wife, Jean, are parents of Jennifer (13) and Andrew (10). His

parents, Mr and Mrs James Clark, live in a cottage at Gordon Castle, Fochabers, where his father is a gardener.

"I suppose you could call him an itinerant gardener, really," said Jim. "He was born in Nairn, but during the time I went to school we lived in places such as Lanarkshire, Gospie, Forres, Alness, Elgin, Drumlithie and Inverness. My parents are retiring to Nairn next year."

Jim joined the RAF in 1955, worked on Shackletons until 1964 when he switched to Whirlwinds. He will leave the service in 1982 when he is 52... "So I am looking forward to a few years on rescue choppers and so long as I keep reasonably fit, there should be no chance of me being deskbound."

EVENING EXPRESS POSTBAG

• WRITE TO: Postbag, "Evening Express," Mastrick, Aberdeen, AB9 8AP.

OAPs who don't claim enough

IT IS estimated by the Department of Health and Social Security that about 50,000 old people in Scotland do not take up benefits to which they are entitled. Some other estimates put the number higher and even as high as 100,000.

Age Concern Scotland is anxious that old people take advantage of the benefits to which they are entitled particularly over the winter period but, of course, continuing on a permanent basis. The key to most benefits is for old people who are entitled to supplementary benefits to take advantage of these which makes them automatically entitled to apply for further benefits.

Most old people who are on basic pension and are householders will be entitled to supplementary benefits. The procedure for applying for those benefits is very simple. Either an old person can fill in the blue form at the back of his pension book and return it to his nearest Department of Health and Social Security office which will result in a confidential visit from an officer of that

Department and advice on applying for supplementary benefits or he or she can obtain form SB1 from a post office which will give all the details.

We would encourage all pensioners whether or not they think they are eligible for supplementary benefit, to complete the blue form or obtain leaflet SB1 and find out now if they are not receiving benefits to which they are entitled.

When the old person is in receipt of supplementary benefits they are then entitled to additional allowances. Particularly relevant over the winter are the heating allowances which are available to people who have difficulty with mobility, are in poor health or have problems with the heating of their homes. Full details of these heating allowances are obtainable in the booklet OCB which is also available from post offices.

I hope that all your readers who are in touch with old people will encourage them to take the action described above. — George Foulkes, Age Concern Scotland, 33 Castle Street, Edinburgh.



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226th Year

No. 36,933

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Helicopter rescues girl in Skye

AN RAF helicopter landed in a narrow corrie 2000ft. up a mountain in the Coolins of Skye at the weekend to airlift a young girl climber to hospital after she had been injured in a rockfall.

Buffeted and tossed by high winds, the helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth hovered over a rescue team carrying the injured girl down from the south-west peak of 2900ft. Sgurr A' Mhadaidh on Saturday. It was the first time a helicopter had been used in a Skye mountain rescue.

The pilot, Flying Officer Tim Wood, and crew—Flt. Lt. Dave Pells and Master Signaller Jim Clark—landed in the corrie and took the girl, 19-year-old Patricia Allen of Glenavy,

Crumlin, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland, to Broadford Hospital, South Skye.

Miss Allen, who is studying at Edinburgh University, and lives at a student residence, Baird House, Pollock Hall, received head and body injuries when she fell 40ft. after the rockfall. A hospital spokesman said: "She is in fairly good condition and improving."

Last night Mr Peter Thomas, Skye Mountain Rescue Team leader, said: "The helicopter was invaluable and got the girl to hospital six hours quicker than would have otherwise been possible."

"The helicopter picked us up—Mr Bob Taplin, from the Glen Brittle Hostel, was with me—and tried to

land us as near as possible to the casualty. The strong winds at that height and the turbulence foiled several attempts but he managed to winch us down to a point about 350ft. below."

The helicopter then flew to Plockton, South-west Ross, to refuel while the rescue team, helped by other people on the mountain, carried the injured girl 600ft. down to a suitable point in a corrie.

The helicopter returned, landed beside them and in the late evening lifted off for Broadford Hospital, 20 short minutes away.

It was the fourth successive mountain accident involving young women climbers.

ROYAL LINK —M.P. WILL ACCUSE

THE GOVERNMENT will be accused in the Commons this week of deciding not hold their inquiry into the affairs of Lonrho in public partly because of the connection with Royalty.

The charge will be made by Mr William Hamilton, Labour M.P. for West Fife, who said yesterday that he would "raise specifically" the question of Mr Angus

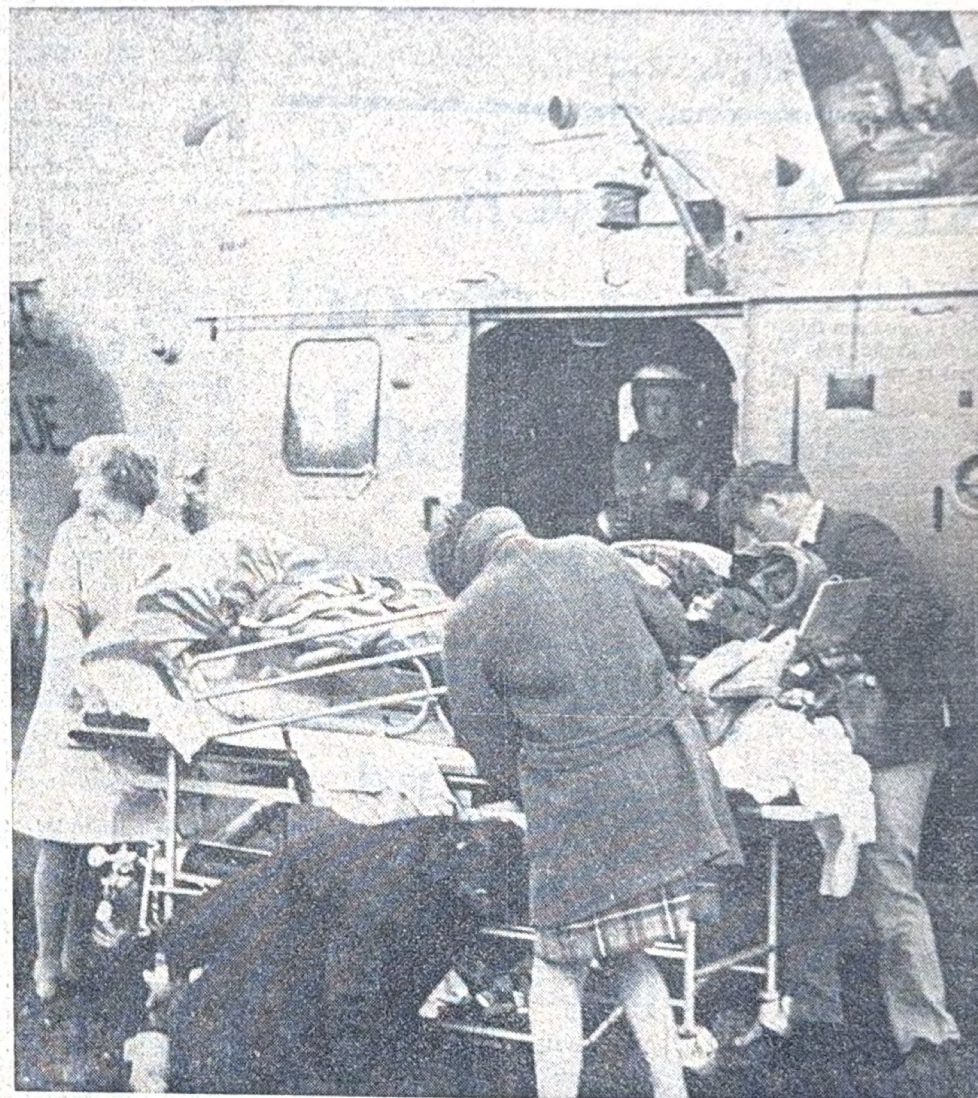
Ogilvy's involvement. Mr Ogilvy, husband of Princess Alexandra, is a former Lonrho director.

But Government circles last night denied that the fact that Mr Ogilvy was connected with Lonrho had been a factor in the decision as to how the inquiry should be conducted.

Mr Tiny Rowland, controversial chief executive of Lonrho, who is fighting a bid to overthrow him by eight "rebel" directors, sent a new letter yesterday to shareholders.

He described allegations that he was living rent-free in a £350,000 house bought by the company as "a distortion." He also denied that it would be difficult to get reputable businessmen to join a reconstructed board.

A decision on whether or not dealings in Lonrho shares will be permitted to continue on the London Stock



INJURED girl climber is lifted from the rescue helicopter at Broadford Hospital, Skye.

Dinghy boy saved in high-speed rescue



Mrs. Grant and Ian Geddes after his ordeal

INSIDE TWO HOURS yesterday, schoolboy Ian Geddes was plucked to safety from the Moray Firth by an R.A.F. helicopter, whisked to hospital, treated for shock . . . and was home again. And air-sea rescue experts agreed last night it was a record breaking mercy mission.

It began when housewife Mrs. Betty Grant saw 12-year-old Ian, of High Street, Ardersier, Invernessshire, drifting helplessly in a dinghy in the dangerous tidal entrance to the firth.

She alerted a Peterhead coastguard who contacted R.A.F. Lossiemouth within two minutes.

Then came the quick action of the chopper crew, Flight Officer Tim Wood, the pilot, navigator Flight Sergeant Bob Taylor and winchman Master Signaller Jim Clark, who were in the air only three minutes later.

The Whirlwind from 292 Squadron had Ian in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, 33 minutes later.

Marker

While he was treated for shock, the helicopter waited. And after being given the OK by doctors, the lad returned to his home village where a white linen bedsheet had been laid out by Mrs. Grant, of Isle View, as a landing marker on the local football field.

Said Mrs. Grant: "I spotted the boy about a mile out in the Firth and realised he was in danger. The sea was running rough. I lost no time in alerting the coastguard and it's great to see the wee boy back home safe and sound."

Last word from Ian, tired and cold after his ordeal: "I could do nothing with the paddles, the tide was too strong for me. Then I fell into the water but managed to clamber into the dinghy again after about three minutes."

"I will never forget Mrs. Grant. She saved my life."

It was the first sea rescue from Lossiemouth since the R.A.F. moved in on February 16 to take over the maritime and mountain duties formerly carried out by the Navy.

Day the Angels walked home

THE peace - shattering invasion of the Highlands, by more than 100 Hells Angels, fizzled out yesterday with many hitch-hiking home.

Behind them they left their powerful motor cycles, with their distinctive "Easy Rider" handlebars, awaiting repairs at local garages after breakdowns in Highland glens.

Clad in gang uniforms of studded leather jackets, decorated with swastikas, the "Angels" from Glasgow and Leeds, invaded Aberfoyle, Arrochar and Oban in their own form of rally.

Police forces were warned of their gathering but there were no reports of trouble.

And last night a police spokesman said: "They seem to have split up. There are only about eight left heading for Dunoon."

River move by Sikhs

Sikhs in the West Midlands are to approach river authorities for permission to hold funeral ceremonies on river banks followed by the disposal of ashes in river waters.

Britain on show

HANOVER: Britain will send the largest number of foreign exhibitors—283—in the trade fair this week. The fair is West German's show window of industrial progress.

Galilean city

And the Israelis how the terror spotted and triggered by Israeli before they cut out their mass

Had they slaughter might as bad as the Lebanon outrage last

Then, a suicide squad—th were Japanese—100 arriving pilgr 23 died.

The site a slaughter this t the Lebanese bo packed with touri and the celebrati 25th anniversary.

The time was 7 p.m. last night streets of the c were swarming emerging just aft the Sabbath.

Said a Galilee "That is when t usually most crow

But green be police detected squad as it

Lebanese border a few miles from Arivin itself

memories, for it u a busload of children was hit rockets three ye ing 12.

Border police killer commando f slightly injuring o of fire, before they

Train

Today 32-year-leader, stubble-cl hada Ahmed Must deduced in his u jacket and green under heavy mi guard, at a Tel A ference to describ over Plot."

"We were to l people as we coul was to kill indis men, women or cl

"I was select mission. I was or and I did not vol orders after carry attack were not and not to be tak

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"We had no c anything before v tured," said c Mustafa.

He said his nu Fatah terrorist 14096 and he equivalent of a

He had served the Jordanian Ar King Hussein a terrorists in September, 1970 deserted to their

Mustafa added trained at Hamor but for the first y based at Rashad Lebanon.

The Israelis p freshly caught ter hours of being c



Shehada M

Britain and Fra others, at the U Council for their raid in Beirut tw when Israeli comm three top terrorist

Behind Mustafa today lay the gri found on him an Three Malach machine-guns, tw pistols, grenades, and bandages.

Mustafa said the on Beirut had great shock beca commander is kill bad effect on mor

An Israeli Army said the Lebanese which the terrorist already been hit Israeli Air Force.

Arab and Is traded fire in t Golan Heights, b casualties were re

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Headache pills for kidnappers

HEADACHE pills were given to the Herrema kidnap couple yesterday—the 13th day of the siege.

A complete change of clothing for Dr Herrema and various individual items for the kidnappers were also supplied, said a police spokesman.

Sand bags, rubber sheeting, wooden poles and other material were taken into the ground floor of the siege house in Monasterevin, but there was no sign of an end to the "softly softly" approach.

Police said there had been a "continuing dialogue throughout the day" between security forces and the kidnappers. But there had been no change in the relationship between the two parties.

A spokesman said he had information about reports from Mr Felix van Raalte, the Dutch ambassador, was ready to mediate.

Meanwhile, the IRA gang was now raging in the areas of Belfast. Another victim last-

night when a 22-year-old ex-member of the Republican Clubs was shot dead at his home.

Two gunmen called at the home of Mr Jim Fogarty in Rock Grove, White Rock. When his wife answered the door, they pushed in and shot Mr Fogarty at point-blank range. He was hit in the chest and died instantly.

Mr Fogarty is the fifth person to die since the Provisional IRA started attacking members of the Republican Clubs—the political wing of the Official IRA.

Mr Malachy McGurran, chairman of the Republican Clubs in Ulster, said: "The seeds of hatred have been sown deep in the streets of Belfast and they have been well watered by the blood and tears of innocent victims of the Provisional's pogrom."

According to the Republican Club's headquarters, murder bids were made on two more of their members yesterday—one in New Lodge the other in Short Strand. No one was injured in either incident.

Is close on Monday English doctors

start of closures as far as casualties are concerned.

There will be huge pressures on ambulance services. It will mean a transfer of services to hospitals which will remain open.

Dr Sakalo claimed: "We have been told about a meeting with Social Services Secretary Mrs Castle last Thursday. She told our negotiators he would prefer to see the health Service collapse than see the junior doctors."

BBC view

BROADCASTING foundation will be set up to run a TV channel and a national radio network. It has been given a Government head, the BBC says.

copter hero of Coolins



AN RAF Lossiemouth helicopter winchman who carried out a death-defying rescue in the Coolins during the summer has had his bravery recognised.

Master Signaller Jim Clark (left), whose parents live at Fochabers, has been awarded the Air Force Cross, the highest peacetime decoration in the RAF. He is being congratulated by Fit-Lt. Geoff Leeming, Commanding Officer of RAF Lossiemouth's rescue helicopter unit.

Fit-Lt. Leeming was pilot of the rescue mission in Skye for which Master Signaller Clark has been decorated. On July 17 a Lossiemouth helicopter of No. 202 Squadron was scrambled to go to the aid of an injured English climber, Mr George Yeoman (21), from Taunton — who was lying stranded on a ledge more than 1000ft. up the Sron na Ciche peak after a fall.

A rocky overhang prevented the helicopter from getting close in to the climber — so Master Signaller Clark, using the helicopter winch as a pendulum, swung himself bodily on to the rockface 20ft. below the climber.

Then, detaching himself from the safety of the winch and ignoring the near-vertical drop below him, he managed to push a stretcher up the cliff-face to where the injured man was lying.

'MAGNIFICENT'

The helicopter, navigated by Fit-Lt. Bill Gault, had already had to jettison fuel to continue hovering and this cut the rescue time down to a maximum of 20 minutes.

To get the injured man off the cliff, Master Signaller Clark had to attach an extra 120ft. of rope to the helicopter's normal 55ft. winch — thus allowing both men to be lowered to flatter terrain before both were winched into the helicopter.

The AFC award citation praises Master Signaller Clark for his "skill, courage and selfless determination to succeed" and his "coolness and ingenuity under extremely difficult conditions."

It adds: "His magnificent example in the face of great personal danger was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service."

Winchman Clark — who already holds the Air Force Medal, awarded for his instruction and training ability—is one of the RAF's most experienced winchmen, having taken part in around 200 rescues.

His parents, Mr and Mrs James Clark, live in a cottage at Gordon Castle, Fochabers, where his father is a gardener.

Jim, a married man with two young children, lives at Hopeman.

warning by Yard chief

OWNERS of large cars with distinctive number plates were warned last night to be on their guard against London's car bombers.

The warning, from Scotland Yard, came after 34-year-old solicitor Mr Richard Charnley had a miraculous escape when a bomb blew up beneath his Mercedes — registration number R 46.

Police warned that more of this type of terrorist attack was expected.

Yesterday's blast, in London's exclusive Connaught Square near Marble Arch, hurled the Mercedes into the air.

Mr Charnley was suspended upside down by his safety belt for a time but escaped with only a fractured leg and cuts and bruises. His condition last night was satisfactory.

Police believe the IRA campaign is directed against anything which might indicate an "Establishment" target.

Bomb squad Chief Commander Roy Habershon, who described Mr Charnley as the "luckiest man alive" in London "last night," said yesterday's bomb was a carbon copy of the one that wrecked M.P. Mr Hugh Fraser's car in Holland Park last week, killing a top cancer expert.

Anyone parking their car overnight in central London should check underneath it before driving away, he said.

One theory is that the bombers' intended target was Tory M.P. Mr John Gort, who moved from his home in Connaught Square three months ago. Mr Gort was at one time associated with the Middle Class Association.

Peterhead talk

RECTOR of Peterhead Academy Mr Jim Buchan, gave an illustrated talk on the National Trust for Scotland at a meeting of Peterhead Rotary Club yesterday.

Funds boost

AN AFTERNOON tea sponsored by Peterhead Rotary and Inner Wheel Clubs in the Palace Hotel on Saturday raised £303 for their Old and Lonely fund.

... that's the forecast for today
See page 9
LIGHT - UP: 1448 - 0654

CANTERBURY'S REJECTION
NOBLE HONOUR
... at 1.40pm

FRANCO SURVIVES OPERATION

Genissimo (20) survived operation last night to stop severe stomach haemorrhage.

Fix-the-Ball prizes

TOP Consolation prize in this popular local contest is now £250, part of the weekly total of £385 which must be won every week.
All this with a chance of the jackpot, now standing at £2000.
Your entry coupon is on Page 4.

Used cars

This weeks best buys

Aberdeen

Menzies Road Tel 52206

CORTINA 1600L 1973, 1 owner.
Sapphire Blue 'L' Now £1050.

Inverness

Harbour Road Tel 38001

CORTINA 2000E, 1974, 18,000 miles,
Sebring Red/Tan interior.
Was £1795..... for £1695.

Buckie

High Street Tel 32321

VAUXHALL VIVA DE-LUXE, 4 Door,
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Hopeman hero tells the story behind his 'Man of the Year' award

MASTER Signaller Jim Clark is in his mid-30s, lives with his wife and two children in the Moray village of Hopeman and is honoured to have been chosen as one of Britain's "Men of the Year."

By Alan Forbes

At the recent banquet given in London by the British Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Jim rubbed shoulders with the 11 other men of the year.

Among them were Special Air Service soldiers who had climbed Mount Everest, a bomb disposal expert attached to the Metropolitan Police and the severely handicapped survivor of an accident who is now doing work for the disabled.

Winchman

When the BCRD, who organise the men of the year awards for "courage and achievement," asked the Royal Air Force for its nomination, Jim, a helicopter winchman with "D" Flight of 202 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth, was chosen by the Under Secretary for the RAF.

This choice was made after Jim had been awarded the Air Force Cross, the RAF's highest peacetime decoration, for his part in the rescue of a climber from the Cuillins of Skye in the summer of last year.

This rescue was one of many Jim has taken part in, while dangling from the end of a Whirlwind helicopter's winch cable. But it was the way in which he did his job on a dangerous cliff face that earned him the recognition.

A party of three climbers were attempting a route on the rugged and steep Cuillins when their leader strayed on to more difficult rock and, at about 1000 feet, fell off. Although held by his rope, the leader had been badly hurt.

When the helicopter, piloted by "D" Flight's

commanding officer, Flt Lt Geoff Leeming, arrived, Jim was lowered with a lightweight stretcher. "The climber was on a small ledge with some members of Skye Mountain Rescue Team beside him," said Jim. "At that point I couldn't see how we could tackle the whole thing."

"Then the helicopter went out a bit and we got a swing on the cable. We encouraged this swing and I came in and got a touch of the rock — but it was too smooth so we had to go out for another try."

When Jim eventually made a landing on the rock he detached himself from the safe link of the cable and, wearing smooth-soled aircrew boots and pushing the

stretcher, he set off on his first serious rock climb. "I have only done a bit of hillwalking. If my dog can go up it, I will," he remarks.

Radioed

He went on: "I got up to the ledge and found it was just big enough for me and rescue team members to roll the climber on to the stretcher. I then radioed the pilot and asked for a rope to be attached to the end of the winch cable (giving a total 180 feet length). This was done and the Skye team leader, Jerry Akroyd, who had belayed himself to the rock, was able to lean out and catch the rope."

"I tied myself and the stretcher on to the rope

and double-checked everything because I could see we would be taken off 1000 feet up and flown some distance through the air before we could be landed in the coire."

"I can remember after we were lifted off, how quiet everything was... it was a beautiful summer evening and the stretch in the rope put the helicopter 200 feet above us. I was able to chat to the fellow in the stretcher but I don't think he was really able to say much."

Another vivid memory Jim has of the rescue is of the injured climber's mates standing on the rock face directly above the helicopter's rotor blades.

"One of them had a camera round his neck. He could have got a fantastic



picture looking down on top of the helicopter as it hovered close to the rock. But if the climbers had knocked off a boulder they would have hacked us off."

Dangers

The jagged peaks of the Cuillins provide exceptional dangers for airborne rescuers. He remarks: "I suppose Skye jobs are the most difficult, because they are the ones where I use the most nervous energy."

Jim has taken part in other rescues since then, although this year has not been "too busy" for him. He also serves part-time with Lossiemouth Coastguards.

He and his wife, Jean, are parents of Jennifer (13) and Andrew (10). His

parents, Mr and Mrs James Clark, live in a cottage at Gordon Castle, Fochabers, where his father is a gardener.

"I suppose you could call him an itinerant gardener, really," said Jim. "He was born in Nairn, but during the time I went to school we lived in places such as Lanarkshire, Golspie, Forres, Elgin, Drumlithe and Inverness. My parents are retiring to Nairn next year."

Jim joined the RAF in 1955, worked on Shackletons until 1964 when he switched to Whirlwinds. He will leave the service in 1992 when he is 52... "So I am looking forward to a few years on rescue choppers and so long as I keep reasonably fit, there should be no chance of me being deskbound."

WRAF volunteers 'ditched' in air-sea rescue training

MEMBERS of the Women's Royal Air Force are helping to perfect the air-sea rescue work of the helicopter teams stationed at Leuchars, Fife, one of Britain's major R A F fighter stations.

Volunteers from the 50 women attached to the station are deliberately "ditched" in the Firth of

Tay to be rescued by Whirlwind helicopter crews in training.

Two of the keenest volunteers are F.O. Val Banford, of Abingdon, Berks, and P.O. Barbara Bird, of Edinburgh, who have each "survived" over a dozen rescues. The helicopter squadron is commanded by Flt.-Lt. Denis Keys.

PICTURES BY KENNETH MASON.



● The rescue operation gets under way as Sgt. J. Clark is lowered from a Whirlwind to the two WRAF officers.

● Pilot Officer Bird is taken from the sea by Sgt. Clark, watched by Flying Officer Banford, who awaits her turn to be hoisted to safety.



● Soaked, but still smiling, they are flown back to base after the exercise.



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● AN AIRMAN thrashes in the water like a hooked salmon, and soon he'll be hooked. The airman is Flt-Sgt Jim Clark, an instructor at RAF Central Flying School helicopter detachment, Valley, Anglesey. Into the water to join him (below) goes student winchman Flt-Sgt Alan Hart.

In another phase of training (bottom, right), Flt-Sgt Clark, in dinghy, plays the part of a "ditched" airman. Piloting the plane was F/O Fred Ayris (in helmet, right).

With him is student pilot P/O Stuart Mould.

