Weekend troopers tested to the limit

TO anyone who thinks the Territorial Army is all dressing up and playing at soldiers — think again.

Quite a weekend it was with the Southend and Grays troops from the 51 (Eastern) Signal Regiment and the 64 (Hertfordshire) Artillery Regiment. The Territorials were put through their paces in Germany and Tenby and the next three days in Southend and Grays.

Not just for show, the men were taught how to get across the water by boat and on the ground by foot, and what to do in the event of being captured. They were also taught how to stay in the field for up to three days without food and water.

The training began with a long march through the town and then onto the beach, where the men were taught how to rig up a tent and survive for the night.

The exercise continued with a march through the countryside, where the men were taught how to use maps and compasses, and how to navigate through rough terrain.

Several miles away, the men were put through their paces in a simulated battle scenario, where they had to use their equipment to take on the enemy.

After a long day of training, the men were given a well-deserved rest, before being put through their paces again the following day.

The training was designed to prepare the Territorial Army for real-life situations, and to ensure that they are ready to serve their country when called upon.

Keeping faith in times of war

"I have always believed in the power of faith," said David Eaton, a veteran of the Territorial Army. "Even in the darkest of times, faith can help us to overcome our fears and doubts."

Eaton, who served in the army for 20 years, said that faith was a vital part of his life, and that it helped him to keep going during the toughest of times.

"I have always been faithful to my country and to my faith," he said. "And I know that, no matter what happens, I will always be there for my country and my faith."
PROFESSIONAL FIGHTING FORCE

St Thomas opts for global fete celebration

By GREG DEMETRIDIO

A CELEBRATION of different global cultures will help make this year's St Thomas of Canterbury School Fete an outstanding success.

The United Nations theme will see many of the world's cultures represented on the day in food, song and dance.

Organisers are hoping to raise thousands of pounds and attract visitors from around the borough.

More than 50 stalls are expected at the Wart Aymon school in Graves for the big day on Saturday, July 13.

Final preparations are being put in place with the emphasis on enjoyment catering for all the family.

The annual event has grown and grown with organisers predicting this year will be the best yet.

Phil Cooper, FTA chairman, said: "This is a very important day for the community of Purfleet as the sheer scale of the organisation is very similar to a country fair."

"We are always amazed at what the FTA can do and people are always willing to help again."

"I believe with our largest entry of stalls, our football competition, and the main areas attractions ranging from country music to Space Girl dancers - this year will be the best yet!"

Foods from various cultures will be represented in the marquee and can be washed down with wine and beer from around the world.

John Paterson, FTA coordinator, said: "The parents at the school really get together and give their full support, and this is reflected in both the quality and the size of the event."

SCHOOL WILL HAVE 50 STALLS

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Nethermayne, Basildon, Essex SS16 5NN
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