

Mail says...

Hope that long fight will bring family justice

RUSSELL Aston's bravery is beyond doubt. The Newhall soldier paid the ultimate price for his courage and dedication when, 10 years ago in Iraq, he and his fellow Red Caps died defending a police station from an angry mob.

We all owe soldiers like Russell a massive debt for defending the nation's interests in the most dangerous parts of the world and in the most difficult circumstances.

We also owe his family answers.

Russell's father, Mike, from Coton-in-the-Elms, has waged a long fight to get to the truth about exactly what happened to his son back in June 2003 and, at one time, hoped the killers would be brought to justice. But a trial ended with those accused walking free.

And, although an inquest in 2006 recorded a verdict of unlawful killing and found the soldiers had old radios, no satellite phone and too little ammunition, calls for a public inquiry and further investigations have fallen on deaf ears.

Now, the family has launched a landmark case against the Ministry of Defence for negligence.

Russell has a growing daughter, Paygan, who surely deserves any resulting damages after being robbed of having her father for so many years.

But, as well as the money, Russell's family deserve answers to the nagging questions and doubts which have plagued them since that tragic day more than a decade ago.

It has already been a long wait, which is why we hope that this legal action not only results in some semblance of justice, but also brings the family some well-deserved peace.

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TOP 10 MOST POPULAR STORIES ONLINE YESTERDAY

1

Body 'lay undiscovered in flat for around a week'

2

Grieving dad warns of swimming danger after teen son drowned on family holiday

3

Rock thrown through window of family home

4

St George's Park wedding creates unforgettable memories

5

Thug who kicked officer avoids jail

6

VIDEO: Queen's in special measures after damning Keogh report finds failings

7

Council orders gym to remove 'visual clutter'

8

'Nothing has changed at Queen's', says bereaved daughter

9

Tot left for dead

10

Shock as top finance chief quits council

Katherine's Diary

THE reception class teacher from Burton, who is battling against leukaemia, has described in her own words daily life on the hospital ward where she confined to in her fight against the disease.

Katherine Sinfield, 32, of Balfour Street, needs daily doses of antibiotics, fungal drips and blood transfusions after being diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia in April.

She has remained in hospital, in Birmingham, for the last six weeks after doctors said her only hope of survival was to receive a bone marrow transplant.

Last month, the Mail launched its Take Five Minutes campaign in a bid to locate a suitable donor, not just for Katherine, but for anyone who is in her position.

Here, Katherine describes life on the ward and her daily battle against cancer and against her increasing boredom of

being confined on the ward.

For more information on how to become a bone marrow donor, call the National Blood Service Donor helpline on 0300 123 2323.

Tuesday, July 30:

FF I was desperately hoping that I would be home by today as it's my dad's birthday.

But instead of the usual cards, cake and presents, the celebrations have been put on hold until I am allowed home for a few days.

My cell count is still yo-yoing and is back to 0.1 again today. I need at least two consecutive daily counts of 0.5 or above to be allowed out of the ward or home.



My daily schedule of treatment is now pretty intensive, as almost every drug I take is administered intravenously through my Hickman line.

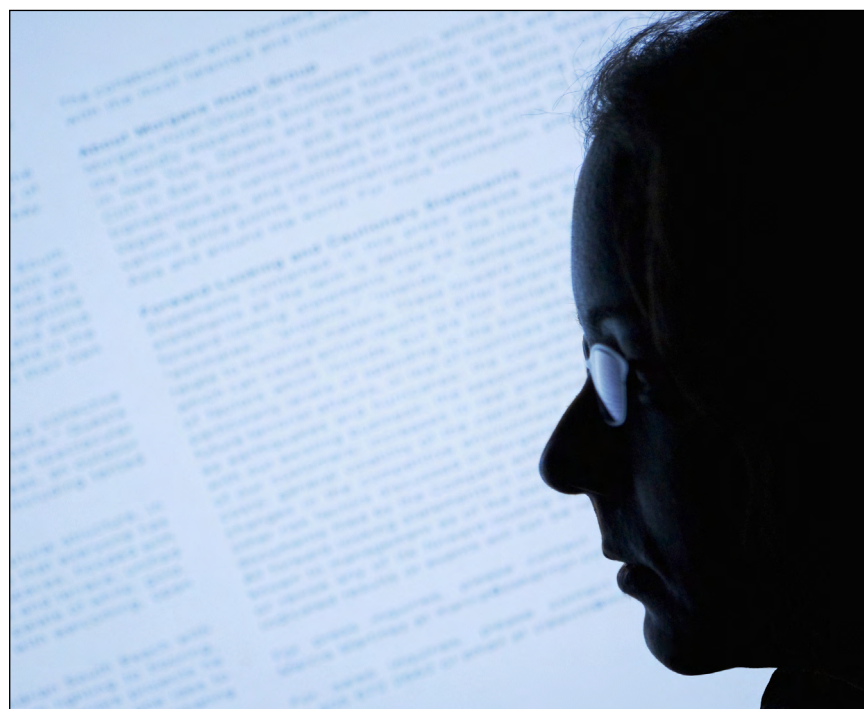
This means the day and most of the night is a constant cycle of drip changes, line flushes and warning beeps on the automated pumps.

A new medication to my ritual today was the addition of a chalky strawberry-flavoured calcium capsule.

Apparently the good weather returns later in the week. Hopefully just in time for my exit from the ward...

Katherine bolstered by leukaemia patient

The story of Katherine's battle against cancer and her bid to find a bone marrow transplant has struck a chord with readers. Ann, from Burton, got in touch to offer a direct message of support to the primary school teacher after going through a similar experience herself...



'I know you'll get through this as you seem a very strong person'

Anne

FF Hi Katherine, I have been reading about you in the Mail and just had to get in touch with you.

I was diagnosed with leukaemia last May.

My white cells were only at 37, but my platelets had gone to more than 3,000, so I was put on the chemotherapy drug hydroxycarbamide and I opted into the spirit 2 trial, and I have been on dasatinib (a cancer drug) since.

My bloods soon came back down to normal and my levels of cancer are now at zero per cent.

I am just waiting results on my last bone marrow test, but know I will be on

medication for life.

I wanted to get in touch with you because I know what a lonely business it can be sometimes, and I just wanted you to know that I was rooting for you and thinking about your journey towards your bone marrow transplant.

I don't know if you are on Facebook but there is a group on there called CML UK.

They are a cheerful bunch and at the moment have a few of the members going through what you're going through, and one has just come home after her transplant.

A couple of them had a transplant a while back but still chat with everyone in the group.

I just thought you'd like to know that if you wanted to have a rant, like we all need to now and again, there are people out there that have been there - you can ask questions if you need to.

I don't manage the group so I'm not trying to recruit you. It's just that I have found them all a big help this past year.

Anyway, I wish you well. I know you'll get through this, you seem a very strong person and I look forward to reading that you have gone home after your bone marrow transplant.

Love and hugs,

Anne

Follow Katherine's daily progress by logging on to our website:
burtonmail.co.uk/News/Katherines-Diary/

Hunt on for temporary home after car drama

FROM PAGE 1

The owner of the car is thought to have left the handbrake off, sending the car careering into the house.

Mark O'Shea, his partner Rebecca Smith and her two children, aged 11 and 12, have been forced to find alternative accommodation after being told their

house, which was only built seven years ago, was currently unsafe.

Part of the house will also need to be rebuilt before they can move back in.

Mr O'Shea said he did not know where his family were going to live.

He said: "The children were in the house at the time. Luckily they weren't

in the kitchen. All of a sudden they heard a big bang.

"We ran into the kitchen and saw it had caved in. The electric has been cut off, they're going to have to take out the whole corner and rebuild it - the whole lot is going to have to come out. But the main thing is that everyone is all right."



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