



*A P.P.A. jeep – the seminal transport of the unit. On the role of the jeep in P.P.A., Yunnie wrote: ‘Crews were fussy about their jeeps ... and developed feelings for them like cavalymen for their horses and, like cavalymen, preferred their own mounts.’ This is a rare, and possibly unique, photograph of a flamethrower on a jeep during World War Two.*

*Bob Yunnie (aka ‘Park’; pictured right), the skipper of ‘B’ patrol, and his companion Ben Owen (below). Both are photographed while still serving with P.P.A. Owen’s tribute to his skipper appears on page vii, while Yunnie wrote in praise of ‘the real Ben Owen’ after accompanying him on several perilous patrols in Italy: ‘a man of sterling character, intelligent, intuitive, quite fearless, and with a happy knack of making the best of things.’*





*Service with P.P.A. was voluntary, and demanded that officers and N.C.O.s forego their former rank and start from scratch. Among the recruits to join P.P.A. during the Italian campaign were*

*Ron Cokes (pictured above) and Don Galloway, MM with two bars (pictured adjacent), a shy individual who displayed surprising leadership whilst on patrol.*



*Jeep patrol in Southern Italy, 1943. Driving the leading jeep is Mike Mitchell. A black disk can be seen between the two men in the second jeep. This is a miniature searchlight, which was traditionally attached to the commanding officer's jeep (Popski is driving). The contraption was later discontinued after a number of jeeps were lost at Tenna Valley.*

*Ali Stewart, MBE. An ex-member of the Long Range Desert Group, he graduated easily to P.P.A., where he became a mechanic.*



*Corporal Alan Locke of 'B' Patrol, whose body was a mass of scars, and whose piratical eye-patch concealed a missing right eye.*



*Hector Simpson, nick-named 'J.C.' due to his Christ-like beard, had a laconic Scots drawl which belied a sharp, active wit.*

*Dave Porter, DMC of 'P' Patrol was an explosives expert who was killed in action in November 1944.*



*Porter is pictured on campaign in Italy with (left to right): Arthur 'Dave' Davies, who was often the 'driver' on patrol; Lieutenant Bray and Mike Mitchell.*



*P.P.A. jeeps roll into St. Mark's Square. Venice, on the last day of World War Two. In the front jeep, Harold Varley (Caneri's gunner, of Blitz Patrol) drives Guillermo 'Gigi' Guardone (left) and Jean Caneri. Guardone's story is prosaic. An Italian partisan hoping to join up with Eighth Army, he encountered Popski's army in the mountain village of Esanatoglia, and joined up immediately. He was to prove invaluable on patrol. He retired some years ago as a general in the Italian Army. Captain Jean Caneri was a Free French Officer who had struck up a friendship with Yunnie and Popski while all three served in the Libyan Arab Force. As the third founder member of P.P.A. Caneri was Yunnie's constant companion throughout the campaign. In the rear jeep, wireless operator Fred Yeoman (left) sits beside Paddy McAllister of 'B' Patrol, who recovered from serious injury at Cassino to see the end of the war.*





*Popski (left) is driven by Ron Cokes through St. Mark's Square on VE-Day. The jeeps were apparently the first wheeled vehicles to be seen in the city.*



*Popski pictured again with Driver Cokes in Vienna. Here, Popski's loss of his left hand, an injury sustained at Ravenna (the last Italian action Yunnie was to see), is clearly visible. This is Popski's older patrol jeep, with two Browning .50 MGs installed, as opposed to the usual deployment of one .50 MG and one .30 MG. A medical pack is being transported at the front of the vehicle.*