

WELCOME ABOARD!



Menwith Hill Station Company Office - Comm: 011-44-1423-777979, DSN: 262-7979

IMPORTANT LINKS

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/moving> relocation information

<http://www.militaryonesource.com> for relocation information and other good items

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk> visa information

<http://www.defra.gov.uk> bringing animals to the UK

<http://www.northyorks.gov.uk> local schools registration

WELCOME ABOARD

Welcome aboard Company G, Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion. Company G is located at Menwith Hill Station, approximately eight miles from Harrogate, England.

Company G became a letter company of Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion on November 10, 1993. The unit was formerly known as Sub-Unit 1 to Company B at Edzell. Company G is an integral part of the joint field site. Company G is commanded by Captain Eric J. Knecht. The senior enlisted Marine is MSgt Eric L. Bellew.

It should be no surprise that you are coming to Menwith Hill, UK. Here are a few things to consider in order to facilitate your arrival:

1. When making travel arrangements and port calls through your administrative section, ensure they have you arriving at Leeds/Bradford Airport (LBA). This is the closest airport to Menwith Hill.

2. Traveling in uniform is not authorized. You will have plenty of time to change over in to service "A" once you arrive. You should, however, travel in appropriate civilian attire.

3. You will incur some expenses en route, such as excess baggage fees and food. Excess baggage will be reimbursed once you settle your travel claim as long as it does not exceed what is authorized on your orders. If charged for excess baggage, keep your receipt. You should carry at least \$50 as a precaution due to ATM's or merchants potentially not taking American style swipe credit or debit cards.

4. You and your family members are authorized no-fee passports through the TMO office. No-fee passports are only authorized for official travel. You and your family members should apply for tourist passports if you intend to travel while stationed in the UK. You can apply for a tourist passport through the U.S. post office and send it to the company address at the bottom of this letter. This is a time sensitive requirement so immediate action is required. Family Members cannot come into country without a visa!

Your first stop will probably be Amsterdam, Netherlands in the Netherlands. Here you will transfer to your next flight bringing you to Leeds Bradford International Airport, there you will be

required to clear customs. At the customs desk, you will be required to show a copy of your orders, ID, and your passport (no visa for service members). Your dependents, if any, will be required to show their passports. There is currently a visa requirement for family members to enter the UK, which you will get through your TMO office prior to your PCS. At the customs desk you will probably be asked the following questions:

1. How long will you stay?

Answer: Three years (on an accompanied tour) -OR- two years (unaccompanied).

2. Where will you live?

Answer: Menwith Hill Station near Harrogate.

3. What will you be doing?

Answer: Performing assigned military duties.

If applicable, your dependents will be asked the same type of questions. Make sure they have the required visas before arriving in country. When the customs agent is satisfied, your orders and passport will be stamped, (if you have tourist passports, make sure they are stamped) and any dependents will be given a stamp in their passports granting unlimited entry rights, and permission to work in the United Kingdom. After you clear customs and collect your baggage, continue to the common area of the airport where you will be met by your sponsor. If you are unable to locate your sponsor, wait outside the baggage claim area by the Coffee Shop; do not leave the airport.

Once picked up at the airport, you will be brought to your lodging. Single or unaccompanied Sergeants and below will already have a room assignment when they arrive. Staff Sergeants and above, and married Marines, will be temporarily placed in a hotel, until housing has been arranged. It is recommended that you request Dislocation Allowance (DLA) through your current admin section. This will assist in offsetting the cost of your hotel stay until you settle your final travel claim.

(<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/perdiem/trvlregs.html>)

HOUSING

Housing on base is limited; however, there is plenty of private and DoD leased quarters available around the Menwith Hill area. Some of the DoD leased houses are as far as 12 miles away. The base shuttle bus provides free transportation to and from Harrogate; however, public transportation to and from other

areas is very limited. Your sponsor can assist you and your family with transportation until you have fully settled in.

The housing office on base will provide you quick and courteous assistance in finding a house and signing your leasing agreement. The maximum housing allowance is based on your overseas housing allowance (OHA) rate. Unlike your basic allowance for housing (BAH), OHA only pays the actual cost of housing, up to your max (you don't keep the extra as you do with BAH). You will also rate a utility allowance, from which you can keep all unused money.

(<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/perdiem/>)

The following is a run-down of current housing policies:

Single Marines, Corporal and below, will be quartered in the BEQ on base. Single Marines, Staff Sergeant and above, will be quartered on the local economy. Single Sergeants have the option of living in the barracks or living on the economy. Marines in the grade of Corporal and below with dependents will be given priority for on-base housing. Priority for on-base housing will also be given to those Marines with financial or medical hardship. All others will be quartered in DoD leased quarters off base or privately leased housing. Note that married Marines who do not meet the above criteria for on-base housing, but wish to live on-base, may be placed on a waiting list, if desired. Married officers are also eligible for on base housing; however, they will be given the lowest priority. Lower ranking enlisted have the highest priority due to the high cost of living in the United Kingdom.

After your arrival, a meeting will be arranged between you and the housing officer. The housing officer will show you various properties until you find one that best suits your needs. Houses in the UK are smaller than the houses in the United States and have very little, if any, closet space. The housing office can provide you with stoves, refrigerators, washers, dryers, wardrobes, power transformers (UK to US), and lawnmowers for your time at Menwith Hill; therefore, there is no need to bring these items with you when you PCS (they may be left in non-temporary storage). Housing will also provide you with temporary furniture, such as beds, chests of drawers, etc., until your household goods (HHG) arrive. Cooking and eating utensils may be obtained, free of charge, from the Lending Closet. In most cases, your HHG should arrive about a month after your arrival.

In most UK houses the heating systems do not work as efficiently as in the United States. There are no cooling systems installed due to the cool summers. We recommended that you bring electric fans and warm clothing with you. They will prove useful during the two "hot" weeks of summer and the 50 weeks of cool to cold weather. In this area it rains quite often, so it is highly recommended to bring wet weather gear.

Some landlords will not allow pets. You won't know until you arrive. Pets also must be quarantined for **6 months** before or upon arrival in the UK, which can be costly. Pets are allowed in base housing and most DoD housing. There is paperwork that must be completed before the pet can come in the country. For any questions on this matter, contact your sponsor. Currently we have a vet come to Menwith Hill from RAF Feltwell to help with shots, micro-chipping, and check-ups. We hope that this service will continue, but you may be required to seek veterinary assistance on the economy. It is the responsibility of the pet owner to ensure all requirements are met in order to bring a pet to the UK.

(<http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/index.htm>)

POV

If you decide to bring a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV), it will be shipped to Felixstowe/Brandon, United Kingdom and further transported directly to Menwith Hill Station.

Here are some tips to make shipment of your POV as easy as possible:

1. Assuming your vehicle makes it to base with no issues, you must obtain car insurance before you are allowed to pick it up. Check with your current insurance agent about possible coverage, but there is an insurance representative on base that can assist you in acquiring local insurance. To register your vehicle on base, you must present proof of insurance, registration, current stateside driver's license, current 3rd Air Force driver's license (known as a USAFE license which you will be issued here after successfully completing a written test), and a base inspection sheet or MOT certificate.

2. British law states that all vehicles over three years old must have an MOT, which is basically a serviceability check of your vehicle. If your car is newer than three years, it must pass a base inspection, which costs \$5.00. To pass these tests your car must have amber turn signals which operate

independently of the brake lights, and it must have white (clear) parking lights on the front of the vehicle. Also, all vehicles must be fitted with a rear fog-light. This fog-light must operate from an illuminated switch when the light is turned on. Marines should be aware that the conversion can be done either in the US or UK and that it is costly. Low cost UK specification cars can be purchased upon arrival in the UK and are generally better suited for the smaller roads than American cars.

When notified that your POV has cleared customs you should contact the vehicle registration office (VRO). There you will be given the needed forms to pick up your car. You must present proof of insurance at this time. You will be given a temporary pass until such time as your final registration papers come back from the 3rd Air Force. When these arrive, you will be given a registration number for your tags (purchased separately from the Base service station, about \$25.00). You must also purchase a road tax disk which costs around £150.00/year. You can be reimbursed for one disk per year through the company office (buy the 12 month disk, not the 6 month disk). After mounting your tags, you should be given a permanent base pass. Your 3rd Air Force driver's license is obtainable at Menwith Hill.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

The Transportation Office is responsible to ensure that you are receiving satisfactory customer service. You will deal directly with the contractor concerning pick-up/drop-off appointments, shipment status, and damage claims. If you are not getting proper service, you just have to contact the Transportation Office and they will ensure complaints go to the contracting officer's representative (COR) in the United Kingdom for immediate action.

BASE FACILITIES

Menwith Hill has many of the services offered on larger military bases.

Though small in size, the Army/Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) exchange has a fair selection of goods, ranging from clothing to audio visual equipment. Also aboard the base is the Shoppette, where you will find the Class Six store, movie rentals, and other convenience store items.

The exchange also stocks some uniform items; unfortunately **there are very few Marine uniform articles available**. Any uniform items required should be brought with you. Large uniform orders can be coordinated through Cash Sales at Camp Lejeune, or online at <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/uniforms/index.cfm>. The Navy Exchange offers free shipping and an online catalog: <https://mcuniforms.nexweb.org/>

The exchange also offers some alternative payment plans to help offset the cost of some high dollar things. The main program is the Star Card program. This card is accepted at all AAFES locations and can be used to purchase anything sold through AAFES. Information regarding the star card can be found at your local exchange or AAFES website.
(<http://www.aafes.com/>)

Menwith Hill has its own commissary. Like the Exchange, it is small but it has a fair selection of grocery items. Obviously, one of the problems of a small commissary is rapid stock depletion. The commissary's hours of operation vary from day to day to accommodate shift and day workers. It is closed on Sundays and Mondays.

There is a mini Exchange that has a barbershop, outdoor recreation office, and car sales. The barber shop is manned during the week and provides service for both men and women. The current price for a haircut is \$10. There are also several shops in town that will cut to military regulations.

The base bank, Community Bank, can provide for all cash services, ATM transactions (AFFN, Cirrus, Plus), check cashing, money exchange, etc.
([http://www.dodcommunitybank.com/home/customer service/all locations/United Kingdom](http://www.dodcommunitybank.com/home/customer%20service/all%20locations/United%20Kingdom))

There are two Royal Air Force Bases within driving distance which provide full exchange (AAFES) services. These are RAF Lakenheath and RAF Alconbury, both approximately 3-4 hours south of Menwith Hill. If there are any particular items you would like that are not carried here at Menwith Hill, you will probably be able to find them at either of the above bases. Also if you are at either RAF Lakenheath or RAF Alconbury and see something you want, you can have it shipped for free to Menwith Hill. Another option is to shop AAFES online and have the items sent, free of charge, to the Menwith Hill exchange.

The base service station provides for your automotive needs. It has unleaded gasoline only. There is a selection of automotive accessories. There is also a car wash available for a fee. The base auto hobby shop is also available to service your car, replace parts, and has lifts available for rent. There is a certified mechanic who can assist in most automotive repairs and issues.

APO (POST OFFICE)

Menwith Hill is serviced by an APO. Mail is delivered Monday through Friday, except holidays. All normal U.S. postal services are available. Mail to other APOs within the European Theater is free.

Your address will be: (Box number will be provided once you check in.)

(Your Name)
PSC 45, BOX _____
APO, AE 09468

MENWITH HILL COMMUNITY CLUB

The community club consist of a bar area, game room, and dining hall. The game room consists of darts and pool, as well as slot machines. Adjacent to the game room is the dining hall. The prices at the club dining room are reasonable. Alternative dining areas are the Steeplebush II cafeteria located at the bottom of the hill, the bowling alley, the commissary deli, and Burger King.

GYM

Menwith Hill's gym has recently been renovated and offers a cardiovascular room, weight room, stretching room, and a room for parents accompanied by their children to exercise. Other features include a basketball court, racquetball courts, and lockers. There is a long waiting list for assigned lockers, but daily lockers are available with a £1 coin deposit (returned to you when you return the key to the locker). There is a fitness coordinator on hand during working hours for consultation. The gym is the issue point for a wide variety of sports equipment; basketballs, volleyballs, nets, softball equipment, etc. There are two softball fields, a fishing pond, and a running track. There are intramural sports year round.

MEDICAL CARE

All Marines and their dependents can expect to use both the base medical facility and the National Health Service (NHS). NHS provides health care at no cost. Though there is a USAF medical clinic on base, some things will need to be taken care of through the British system. Each Marine will be required to enroll in Tri-Care upon arrival.

To use NHS, one must register with the local health authority. If you live on base, you register for the NHS through the station Medical Facility. If you live off-base, the Medical Facility will give you a list of doctors in your area with whom you may register.

The base clinic has both military doctors and civilian contracted doctors. The clinic is only open during normal duty hours and has no emergency care or surgery available. For this reason, it is very important that your family has completed an overseas screening through your current MTF.

Hospitalization is very different here than in the United States. Normally you will not be placed in a private room. Not all illnesses are treated the same here as in the US. Some cases may be referred to RAF Lakenheath, which has the closest U.S. military medical facility.

DENTAL CARE

Dental care is provided primarily by the base dentists. The dental center has two full-time dentists assigned. Basic dental work can be done for military and family members, such as cleanings, fillings, and caps. Any major work will either be done out in town with Tri-Care or referred to RAF Lakenheath. Due to limited availability of dentists and appointments, Lakenheath only accepts patients for orthodontics if they are orthodontic patients BEFORE the military member receives orders to Menwith Hill.

CHILD CARE

Day care is available for your children if necessary. The Menwith Hill Child Development Center is open Monday through Friday, 0600-1800. The facility can be opened during other hours for special functions. This must be booked in advance.

The center has a wide range of programs year round for children aged 6 weeks through Kindergarten. The cost of day care is determined by one's total family income. This includes all earned income including wages, salaries, tips, long-term disability benefits, voluntary salary deferrals, quarters allowances and subsistence allowances. OHA and BAS are considered income even though they are non-taxable.

There is a drop-in service available for persons not desiring a weekly package. Spaces must be booked in advance so that the required number of caregivers will be on hand.

Part Day pre-school is a lightly structured learning environment designed to prepare school readiness skills in children. This program is for children 3-5 years who are potty trained. Classes meet Mon-Fri. Monthly prices are available from the Center. The center provides breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

At age four, children can attend school in the local area. It is called reception. There are a few options as well as forms to be filled out. Please contact your sponsor for more information.

EDUCATION

There are many educational opportunities here at Menwith Hill. Most supervisors are flexible in allowing time off for members to pursue educational goals within the constraints of the mission. There are two primary institutions of higher learning on base: Central Texas College and University of Maryland University College. These offer year round instruction. The SOCMAR Program is accepted for either of these institutions.

Marines receive tuition assistance for attending off-duty education. At this time, tuition assistance provides 100% of the cost of college courses, except books. More information can be obtained from the Company Education NCO. There is limited tuition assistance for dependents. These include but are not limited to: Pell Grants, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, Perkins Loans, Stafford Loans, and any standard student loans. UMUC also offers numerous scholarships. Eligibility and submission requirements may be obtained from the UMUC office on base. If, by chance, your dependent is eligible for VA funds, these are accepted as well.

National Cryptologic School courses are offered here. These classes are generally assigned after submission for a class by

your supervisor. They run from days to weeks in duration, depending on the actual course taken.

Of course there are always MCIs and professional development courses which you may check out at any time. Further, one can expect to attend the appropriate PME course if you have not done so already.

There is a Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS) on base for your children, grades K-12. Dependent children attend free of charge. Children must be enrolled at least 24 hours before they can start attending classes. The enrollment package is available at the school, or on their website:

<http://www.mhil-ehs.eu.dodea.edu/>. You can also enroll your children in the local British schools at no fee, religious schools at no fee, and private schools for a fee.

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

The Family Support Center (FSC) is the place to go for information about the community. They can provide assistance on a multitude of topics, either through their office or through off-base resources. They offer programs to improve the quality of life for singles, couples, and families. Some specific services offered are: personal financial counseling, information and referral about day care services, schools, baby-sitters, church lists, adult education, and alcohol and drug abuse. They also offer several workshops to include: CPR training, stress management, budget preparation, parent-craft, child raising seminars, and child birth classes. The Family Support Center is here for families and everyone on base.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Services offers numerous programs for children. There is an after school program which provides activities and supervision while parents are at work. This program is available for children between the ages of 5-12. There is a combined youth/teen center for ages 9- 18 where the children can play pool, do crafts, or watch movies. Youth Services also offers summer activities for children where they may visit many exciting attractions in the local area. Youth Services also offers sports programs for school-aged children wherever possible.

LEGAL

The station's legal office can provide you with help and assistance in preparing a will, power of attorney, or legal advice. The legal office also provides tax assistance throughout the year.

FAMILY CARE PLAN

Individual Marines are solely responsible for initiating a family care plan under the following conditions:

1. Marine is or becomes a single parent with custody of children.
2. Dual military couples with dependents - both service members must have a plan.
3. Family circumstances or other personal status changes in which the Marine becomes solely responsible for the complete care (housing, medical, logistical, financial, food, clothing, or transportation) of another family member who may or may not reside in the same household.

Sponsors will be proactive in assisting Marines who need to establish a Family Care Plan in contacting the appropriate services in country. Marines are responsible for immediate availability during rapid response situations to worldwide deployment contingencies. A military single parent cannot be designated as a primary caregiver. Marines may seek assistance from the following organizations located on Menwith Hill Station.

1. Family Support Center (FSC)
2. Legal Assistance Office
3. Child Development Center
4. Other local community services, including childcare referral services, may be consulted when preparing the family care plan.

WELCOME

Congratulations on your assignment to Menwith Hill. The Marines of Company G wish you a safe journey and look forward to working with you.

SEMPER FIDELIS