

Review

The journal of
Blind Veterans UK
December 2022

2023

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Forever in our minds will stay

Your Remembrance commemorations around the UK



Rebuilding
lives after
sight loss

Remembered still

A poem by Ernie Rowe, Head of British Forces Broadcasting Services Radio UK, written in the run-up to Remembrance 2019.

Remembered still those souls who tried
To save the world, but many died.
A moment stolen for a tear,
As we recall those unlived years.
The camaraderie that flew those souls
back home to those they knew,

And loved them dear and held them close.
But for our sakes released to foes
The silence that they leave behind
Is space to calm the troubled
minds of those they loved –
And can't rewind.
Again this day we give our thanks
For those returned from serving ranks
And them 'as gave it all away
Forever in our minds will stay.

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Quiz answers - from page 48

- 1. Advent 2. St Stephen 3. Ebenezer 4. Isaac Newton
- 5. Sixpence 6. King George V in 1932 7. An angel gets its wings 8. Jingle Bells 9. The Simpsons 10. Tiny Tim

On the cover

Member Dean Twaite and his grandson, Brandon, lay a wreath for Remembrance at their local Cenotaph in Tredegar, South Wales, watched by onlookers.



A grateful farewell

Your message from your Chief Executive,
Major General (rtd) **Nick Caplin** CB

I'm sad to say that my retirement is fast-approaching and, given we don't publish the *Review* in January, this will be my final column. Writing it has given me much cause for personal reflection



Caption: Nick Caplin

as I look back on my time here and remember so many rich and joyful encounters.

When I first heard I'd been selected for the post eight years ago, I visited the Brighton Centre with my wife, Isobel. I remember it was a Saturday afternoon and, although the centre was quite sleepy, there was keen activity going on in the arts and crafts area as Member Norman Perry was sitting by himself, sanding down a rocking horse he'd made. We struck up conversation and he brought the centre to life for us as he shared his personal experience.

Norman had been completely blind since being on the receiving end of a mortar shell in WWII and yet here he was, independent, full of beans and living a busy life. What an introduction to Blind Veterans UK!



Caption: Nick with Members on Remembrance Sunday in London, 2022

Just as memorable was my first meeting with Member Penny Melville-Brown. Penny kindly got in touch with me as I took up my new post, so I visited her at her home. Although I'd been responsible for disabled service personnel in the Army, this didn't include sight loss so I wanted to learn all I could about the world of the blind veteran. Our meeting had a profound impact on me as I found her to be a remarkable example, not least for her work for the disabled.

Penny has recently had great success on the international stage as a blind

baker and I can personally vouch for her skills in this area!

Another Member, Simon Brown, brought home to me the importance of the 'Accept, Adapt, Achieve' philosophy, which now underpins our holistic support. Simon, who lost his sight in Iraq when he was young, helped show me that to deliver meaningful lifelong support, we need to really understand that each Member will have their own individual sight loss journey and their own individual needs.

The redoubtable Alan Saunders, →

a Royal Marines veteran, provided another early lesson for me: the power of purposeful activity. Despite being badly injured in the Sicily landings during WWII, Alan was a creative and his home was a veritable workshop with many mosaic pieces underway at various stages of completion.

He seemed to be able to take life and sight loss in his stride and possessed great wisdom. It was wonderful a few years later to see our RM members of staff escort him to the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge for his last parade.



Caption: At the Hampton Court Garden Festival in 2017

“It’s clear to me that what I have valued most over the past eight years has been my time with you, the Members”

I was also grateful for the chance to meet Member Alan Holderness at his manufacturing plant in Lancashire. Following in his father’s footsteps, Alan is the managing director of the family business and, during my tour of the factory floor, I could see his keen sense of duty and his determination to improve the lot for others. A remarkable man in every sense.

A sense of duty was also a big driving force for Maria Pikulski-Hughes, who sadly died earlier this year. I first met Maria and her husband, Richard, at their home and remember listening to her talk passionately about the support needed to get blind veterans on their feet. As our first female Vice President and the very best of friends to so many, Maria continues to influence our lives on a daily basis.

It’s clear to me that what I have valued most over the past eight years has been my time with you, the Members, whether at events, at our centres or in your homes. Our Centenary year in 2015 provided a cracking opportunity



Caption: With former President, Ray Hazan OBE, Remembrance 2014

for get-togethers – there were 1,800 of us at our Service of Thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey, while our Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace was also wonderful.

More recently, the unveiling of our ‘Victory Over Blindness’ statue at Manchester Piccadilly, as well as our gold medal-winning garden at the Hampton Court Garden Festival provided unique opportunities to see Members in action: explaining, educating and simply having fun.

I will never forget the auction at the

Bridgewater Hall Fundraising Dinner. Another former VP sadly lost this year, Paul Palmer, had skilfully fashioned a chair out of a tree which had such great weight and beauty. After dinner, Member Jamie Weller was interviewed Parkinson-style by Barry Coupe to show what life beyond sight loss really means. It was a magical evening.

So many Members have inspired me with their approach to life post sight loss. I’d love to mention them all, but Liz, our Review Editor, might not thank me! So, I will settle for just one more: Ray Hazan OBE. →

When I joined the charity, Ray was our President and a fount of wisdom. Blown up by the IRA in the 1970s, he is completely blind and missing a hand. He is the gentlest of characters and hugely respected by all who have met him.

Ray has taught me so much about sight loss, and so much about life. It was Ray who encouraged us to embrace 'Victory over Blindness' as our guiding purpose. I remember when, at an annual 'Soldiering On Awards' event a few years ago, he was presented with



Caption: With the Countess of Wessex in Manchester, 2018

a special award. There must have been around 400 people in the room, every single person on their feet.

For me, Ray was a constant reminder of the vital support we must offer our younger war blind, who have long years of life ahead of them.

I close by thanking everyone who has helped me – our staff who are magnificent in every way; our Trustees who have given so much of their time and wisdom, and the three Musketeers – our President, Colin Williamson, and Vice Presidents, Billy Baxter and Chris Cardwell – who eat, live and breathe the charity and will do anything they can to promote our cause and the brilliance of our Members.

Sir Arthur Pearson and Lord Fraser shared plenty of wisdom in their respective books, but I rather like the following snippet from Member Betty Tring, which I see as a modern-day translation of the great masters: "Don't say you can't. If you kick away the 't', you will find that you can."

Thank you all for your friendship, support and inspiration. Isobel joins me in wishing you all a most peaceful Christmas and a prosperous and happy New Year. 🍷

Slàinte Mhath!

Proudly marching on

Your message from your Chairman, **Barry Coupe**

Remembrance this year was particularly poignant, being that it marked the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War.

I was very grateful to be able to attend the march in London with the Blind Veterans UK contingent, as a guide to Member and fellow Trustee, Alan Holderness. Alan served in the Falklands and I felt very honoured to march by his side. I know it was a very emotional day for him, as I'm sure it was for all our Falklands veterans.

The 'Falklands 40' was the overarching theme of the Festival of Remembrance, which Alan and I both attended the night before on behalf of the charity at the Royal Albert Hall. As I'm sure you know, this annual event is hosted by the Royal British Legion to honour those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, and to celebrate our Armed Forces. My wife, Shan, and I usually watch it on television and are always captivated by the stories but, I have to say, seeing it live was quite something else.

During the event, I was moved to the core when a woman read out a letter that her father had written her while serving in the Falklands. It turned out to be the last letter she ever received from him as he was tragically killed in battle a few days after writing to her. Her voice was trembling as she read - I'm not sure how she held it together. What a stark reminder of the cruelty of war. →



Caption: Barry Coupe

Hearing experiences like this one is such a great reminder of why we march and, as I listened, I felt all the more proud to be part of the Blind Veterans UK family.

Marching as Alan's guide took me back 30 years to the time I used to guide my father. He was blinded in the Second World War and received such incredible support from this charity. As I marched with Alan, precious memories of my father came flooding back and spurred me on.

I'm sure Remembrance this year was also a particularly poignant occasion for our outgoing CEO, Nick Caplin. I will certainly be sorry to see Nick go, as I know will many others. He has been a wonderful leading example to me, particularly in the way he conducts



Caption: Alan and Barry marching with the London contingent

“Nick has been a wonderful leading example to me, particularly in the way he conducts himself”

himself with such grace and humility whoever he is talking to. I believe this will be his lasting legacy.

The process of finding our new CEO is well underway and we will keep you updated on how things progress.

In the meantime, I'm very excited about the year ahead. Our new centre in Rustington is still on track to open in the summer – on budget, I might add – and is shaping up nicely. Also, our ground-breaking work supporting the war-blinded in Ukraine, which will largely be online training for their health and care professionals, is progressing well.

To close, I would like to thank our Trustee, Sir Mark Poffley, who is stepping down at the end of the year. Sir Mark became a Trustee in 2017, shortly before leaving the Army as a Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff. His contribution to the charity has been invaluable and on behalf of all of us, I wish him the very best for the future. 🇬🇧

A Christmas message by our President, Colin Williamson

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your patience and understanding as we continue on our journey of transition here at Blind Veterans UK. Everything we are doing is to ensure the charity can continue to deliver a gold standard service to Members for years to come.

As we slowly emerge from the pandemic, our thoughts turn to Christmas and the prospect of happier times spent with family and friends over this festive period.

Christmas is such a special time. To me, it brings a message of hope; the old year is finally behind me and a new one is about to begin. I can look forward to a fresh start.

When I think back to the most memorable Christmases, I realise that it wasn't the presents or the spread of food that made it special, but the

laughter of family and friends I was with. Some may be long gone now, but it's at this time that my fond memories of them return to brighten my days.

Christmas is all about giving and sharing; not just cards and gifts, but kindness, love and compassion, as well as gratitude for all we have.

Let's all take time out this Christmas to make a special effort to be kind to all, and to continue to strive in this way all year round. After all, I think it was Mark Twain who said, "Kindness is the language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see."

May I wish you all a very happy, healthy and magical Christmas, and may you never grow too old to look up at the sky on Christmas Eve and listen for those bells... 🇬🇧

Colin Williamson

News

First ever Veterans' Survey launched

The Government has launched the first ever exercise to collect feedback from the veterans' community across the UK, co-ordinated by the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

This important survey was launched on 10 November and will be live until the end of January. It gives you and your family a chance to provide direct feedback to the Government on your experiences, describing what life is really like for vision impaired veterans.



Caption: Veterans' survey out now

Your responses to the survey will help guide future Government action.

- You can complete the survey at www.ons.gov.uk/VeteransSurvey or order a large print copy by calling the ONS on 0800 085 7376. Alternatively, simply contact your CSW who will be happy to help.

Badge boxes looking for a home

Help spread the word about our amazing charity by placing a box of 'Victory Over Blindness' badges in your



Caption: Order your pin badges

local shop, café, church or pub. Boxes contain 50 'Lads' pin badges.

- To order, contact 0300 111 22 33 or supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk

CEO Nick Caplin to retire in January

After eight years at the helm, our CEO Nick Caplin will sadly be retiring in January. The process for recruiting our new CEO is well underway and we hope will be concluded later this year.

The Trustees have agreed that, if necessary, an interim-CEO could be appointed to lead the charity during this period of transition and up to the point where the new CEO starts. A decision on whether this will be necessary will be taken once the recruitment process has completed. We will keep you updated.

- Turn to page 28 for a farewell tribute to Nick Caplin.

Member Mike featured on *The One Show*

Actor Tom Glynn-Carney has interviewed 102-year-old SAS hero, Mike Sadler, on *The One Show* – after



Caption: Member Mike Sadler during his time in the SAS

playing him in the BBC mini-series, *SAS Rogue Heroes*.

The only surviving member of the original SAS unit, Mike tells Tom during the interview that at one point he was captured by the Nazis in the North African desert, saying, "We just managed to escape but then we were stuck." After walking for four days across the desert to safety, he was in a bad way but says, "I enjoyed the desert. I loved the wide open spaces."

- Watch *The One Show* interview (episode 28/10/2022) and *SAS Rogue Heroes* on BBC iPlayer. →



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Happy Christmas



Our new online shop Launched in time for Christmas!

Hosted on eBay, our online shop offers a range of branded merchandise including Christmas cards, pin badges and much, much more.



Rebuilding
lives after
sight loss

Help support our
charity by visiting
blindveterans.org.uk/shop

Blind Person's Allowance

In the November Review, we shared information about a benefit for those with severe sight impairment, Blind Person's Allowance. We've received feedback that this information may have been misleading so, to clarify, it is a tax-free allowance which is added to your yearly Personal Allowance – the amount of money you can earn before you start paying Income Tax.

■ To find out more, please visit
gov.uk/blind-persons-allowance

Choir's song for Danny

A choir made up of Members from Essex is mourning the loss of founding member Danny Williams, who sadly passed away in October, aged 82.

The choir, Vision in Song, was born after Danny told Community Team Lead, Jennie Hammond, of his strong desire to sing. Jennie says: "I first visited Danny in 2015 when he was trying to come to terms with his sight loss. He was a flamboyant character and he loved Frank Sinatra. Wherever he was, he would burst into song!"

"The choir he belonged to could no longer accommodate him or provide



Caption: Danny Williams inspired the founding of Vision in Song

any large print words or music, so he had no alternative but to give it up, even though he felt depressed without it. And so began the quest to try to pull together a replacement singing group."

The choir was launched in 2018 and even performed at local events. Danny was a committed member to the end, telling Jennie it brought him great joy. She says, "The best thing was that it really helped him get to know other Members. A group of them even went to our Brighton Centre for a holiday. They performed in both centres and loved it. He will be sorely missed."

Volunteer, Sue Thornburn, said, "He was a cheerful Liverpoolian who was always singing." Meanwhile, fellow choir member, Jed Splain, said, "Danny loved the choir. May he rest in peace." 🎵

My Stanford Hall visit

Our Director of Operations, **Nicky Shaw**, reports on a recent visit to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre

“The DMRC Stanford Hall is a state-of-the-art Ministry of Defence clinical rehabilitation facility providing expert care for injured and sick Armed Forces personnel. I know some of you began your rehabilitation journey there before being referred to us.

I visited the site with Kathy Boardman, our Head of Operations, Llandudno Centre, in September. Coming out of the pandemic, it felt like an appropriate time to review how we work together. We were given a tour of the site, which is impressive, from the prosthetics to the family accommodation. Thanks to private investment, all the facilities are of the highest standard and service



Caption: Nicky and Kathy with staff from the DMRC in Loughborough

personnel are swiftly given everything they need to start their rehabilitation.

Since the visit, our organisations have been making plans to work more closely. Many Members who stayed there have told us they would have benefitted from our support earlier on in their sight loss journey, so we're keen to put this in place. We also want to strengthen our skills through on-site staff shadowing. And we were really impressed by the horticulture rehabilitation projects and want to create something similar here.

In addition to this, we have been asked to support with sight accessibility at the site, so we plan to return with some of you to undertake an assessment.

The DMRC will always be a valued referral partner for us. Investing in this relationship represents our continued commitment to those blinded in service, now and into the future.” 🇬🇧

■ **If you stayed at DMRC Stanford Hall and would like to share your experience, please email charlotte.sherlock@blindveterans.org.uk**



Caption: Margaret Wilson and Brian and Margaret Eldridge with guardsmen

A poignant day

In the first full commemorations since the pandemic, more people than ever gathered in London and around the UK on Remembrance Sunday, writes **Mark Wheeler**

On 14 November, more than 40 Members marched at the Cenotaph in London, while others attended events at our centres or laid wreaths on our behalf at events across the country.

This was the first year to see a return to something that felt a bit more like

normality, post pandemic. However, the occasion held a special significance in that it was the first parade following the passing of Her Majesty The Queen and also the 40th anniversary year of the Falklands War. Falklands veterans marched in great numbers in London, recognisable by their →

knitted scarves matching the colours of their campaign medal.

Several Members who fought in the Falklands also led our contingent, including Terry Bullingham. Terry lost his sight on board HMS Antrim when four Argentine Skyhawk fighter-bombers passed over the ship, dropping a pattern of eight 1,000 lb bombs.

In an interview for the BBC, he said, "I'll be thinking of those who didn't make it back, especially those men we lost on HMS Glamorgan two days before the end of the war. I knew some of



Caption: Terry Bullingham, right, and guide Tim Smart

them very well and they will be in my thoughts."

Another Falklands veteran, Alan Holderness, who's also a Trustee for our charity, spoke of the emotion of the day, saying, "It's been a tiring and emotional day. It's very poignant with it being the Falklands 40th."

Remembering Member Maria Pikulski-Hughes who died earlier this year, Alan added, "It's also poignant for me because we weren't marching with Maria. She would have been here keeping us all smiling through and that made it particularly emotional for me."

Maria was also remembered on Armistice Day when a small group of staff and supporters joined Member and Blind Veterans UK standard bearer Brian Eldridge and his wife, Margaret, at the grave of our founder Sir Arthur Pearson. They held a small ceremony to honour Sir Arthur and all those the charity has lost this year.

"There were huge crowds"
Andy Cottrell marched in London for the second time and said:

"I felt so proud to be marching for the first time last year on behalf of the charity and still remember the amazing response our group got from the crowds, but this year was far more overwhelming. There were huge



Caption: Colin Williamson led the contingent

crowds; more people than I've ever seen before, and also more friends to see afterwards.

"One of the lovely things about marching with Blind Veterans UK is being able to meet so many new people - I met so many interesting people on the day."

"It makes me feel humble"
Afghanistan veteran, Ken Facal, said:

"It's always great to march as a group as it makes me feel very proud. I was also in London last year and it was obviously quieter because of Covid, but this year the crowds were back and cheering and clapping us the whole



Caption: Andy Cottrell who became a Member in 2020

way around. It makes me feel very humble as I remember the sacrifices others made for us."

"A tremendous feeling"
Colin Williamson, President of Blind Veterans UK, said:

"It was a privilege to lead the contingent in this year's parade. The marshals were fantastic; the guardsmen were outstanding.

"The best thing about marching at the Cenotaph is that you feel like you're back in the ranks again - the band's playing, you're altogether, side by side, step by step... It's just a tremendous feeling." 🇬🇧



Caption: Bob Potts at our Llandudno Centre for Military Week

A get-together to reminisce

To mark Remembrance, our Llandudno Centre hosted a week full of military-themed activities, culminating in a march along the seafront, writes **Alice Tow**

In the week running up to Remembrance, 28 Members arrived at Llandudno for Military Week – an action-packed week full of military-themed activities.

The purpose of the week is to help Members reflect on their own military

experiences. Our Wellbeing Support Lead, Mark Hollis, says, “It’s always an honour to share this week with a group of our Members to hear their stories and join them as they come together with the community in Llandudno for Remembrance Sunday. It’s the most poignant of all our themed weeks.”

The week got off to a bang (literally!), as the Anglesey Hussars and 1879 Group Zulu re-enactors demonstrated cannons and other weapons used by the British Army during the Napoleonic era.

The Members also stepped back in time to the 1940s with a morning inspecting Second World War vehicles and an afternoon singing war-time favourites. Some even showed the team how to cut a rug! The group was also treated to a visit from the 3rd Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers who brought along an amazing display of equipment used in modern warfare.

On the final day, Remembrance Sunday, they joined thousands of locals in the town of Llandudno for the moving commemorations, including a bracing march along the seafront.

Attendee Major (Rtd) Lewis Evans said, “Military Week is an amalgamation of nearly every corp and unit in the Armed Forces. We all get together and reminisce about old times.

“We laugh, we joke and we enjoy excellent accomodation and the week culminates on Sunday when we march together in the Llandudno Remembrance Parade.” 🇬🇧

“My experience was humbling”

Royal Navy veteran, Bob Potts, said, “It’s so reassuring to return to familiar surroundings and such welcoming people at Llandudno. The support and encouragement the centre team provide gives you the confidence to get involved.

“I’ve enjoyed all the activities the week had to offer but my favourite had to be the visit from the 3rd Battalion Royal Welch who brought a variety of kit and weapons used by troops today. I served 10 years in the Navy and we didn’t really have to carry our kit far. After feeling the weight of the modern kit bag, I called my son who served in the REME and told him I was glad I was a Navy man!

“My experience in Llandudno was humbling. Never have I been to a local parade that has been so well attended. I was really moved by the church service – particularly by the Welsh Hymn, Calon Lan, which the congregation sang with such feeling.”

Remembrance commemorations around the country

Captions: **1.** Members Lindy and Graham in Torquay **2.** Brian Eskriett in Skipton **3.** Ken Fowler being interview by Johnny Rutherford from BBC Spotlight **4.** Members at Stow Maries Remembrance, Maldon, Essex **5.** Aaron, Peter, Ray, Lindy, Graham with Clyde, the guide dog, and Barry in Torquay. **6.** Lesley Hall at Chester Le Street **7.** Brian and Margaret Eldridge at Sir Arthur Pearson's grave **8.** Bob Waller at Preston Cenotaph **9.** Ken Fowler in Plymouth **10.** Tom Watterson laid a wreath in Millisle **11.** Ken Winstanley in Ashton under Lyne **12.** Michael Bolton and Roy Quidley with Volunteer Coordinator, Kathryn Bogdanovic, in Leeds **13.** Colin Adamson in Bolton **14.** Bob Splaine in Atherton **15.** Frank Berry and Jennie Fuller with Cissy, the guide dog **16.** Clive Jones in Shropshire





Brighton trains paused for Remembrance

It was a sombre gathering for Members, writes **Hazel Wills**

The usual hustle and bustle of Brighton Train Station was replaced with silence at 11am on Friday, 11 November, as commuters, staff and veterans stood together side by side to remember those who sacrificed their lives to ensure we all enjoy the freedoms we have today.



Caption: Our Members lined up at Brighton Station

An announcement was made by station staff and everything stopped, even the trains. RAF Police veterans, British Transport Police, station staff and RAF cadets all came together alongside blind veterans to pay their respects.

Following the two minutes of silent reflection, wreaths were laid at the foot of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway War Memorial, which honours employees of the railway who fought in the First and Second World Wars, by the organisations present.

Member Tony Harbour laid a wreath on behalf of Blind Veterans UK. He said afterwards, "The charity is wonderful, The staff helped me so much when I lost my sight and showed me that there is life after sight loss, which I now tell everyone as it's so true.

"You can lose your sight but you've still got life and that's the most important thing. To be here today with friends from the RAF police and so many blind veterans, it's been an honour." 🇬🇧

A week to remember

Military Week at our Brighton Centre was packed with trips, talks and plenty of entertainment leading up to the Remembrance commemorations, writes **Alice Tow**

A group of Members had a wonderful time in the run-up to Remembrance as they got together at our Brighton Centre for Military Week – a week packed with interesting activities to encourage them to learn, reminisce and have fun.

There was plenty of music and dancing, along with a trip to Fort Nelson in

Portsmouth and a fascinating display of old military vehicles from the Invicta Military-Vehicle Preservation Society.



Caption: Members joined in a tea dance

On Armistice Day, the group gathered at a large cemetery plot in Brighton for a short service, while on Remembrance Sunday they attended a beautiful service at the centre. They were also treated to a formal Military Dinner, as well as an after-dinner speech by staff member, Steve Richards, a former sergeant in the Queen's Regiment.

Meanwhile, as part of the Remembrance preparations, a group of Brighton residents joined staff in the Arts and Craft workshop to create a spectacular Remembrance poppy piece. The collaborative artwork took pride of place at the centre. 🇬🇧



Caption: The poppy artwork

A natural leader

Our President **Colin Williamson** bids a sad farewell to CEO Nick Caplin who is retiring in January after eight years at the helm...

I'd like to offer my sincere thanks to our outgoing CEO and friend Nick Caplin, who is retiring in January. I know he will be very much missed.

Born Nicholas John Caplin in Warwick on 4 December 1958, Nick was



Caption: Colin and Nick, Remembrance 2022 in London

educated at Poole Grammar School and went on to attend the University of Surrey where he studied economics and statistics, gaining a BSc.

Nick was commissioned into the Army Air Corps in 1980, initially joining 661 Squadron where he gained his helicopter pilots wings. A natural leader, he went on to hold various ranks and positions within the army, culminating in a promotion to Major-General. He subsequently held the position of Chief Army Instructor at the Royal College of Defence Studies until retiring from the military.

Nick married his wife, Isobel, in Edinburgh in 1983 and they have two children, both of whom they are extremely proud. Alastair is a talented musician, composer and producer, and Camilla works in a village preschool.

Nick became Chief Executive of Blind Veterans UK in 2014 and has successfully steered the charity through some very choppy waters. An

intelligent, articulate, thoughtful and dependable man, he has led us through the pandemic, the relocation of our HQ, the difficult decision to move from our iconic Brighton centre and the current service delivery reviews. No one can argue that he doesn't deserve his retirement!

Seldom seen without his trademark smile, Nick has been an incredibly personable and approachable CEO who wears his heart on his sleeve. As comfortable chatting with Members, staff, volunteers and supporters as anyone else with an affinity for the charity, he has always been passionate about supporting our Members and is an excellent advocate for the charity.

In the boardroom, Nick has been the epitome of a good CEO – confident, focused, receptive and driven. He has displayed all the leadership qualities you would expect from a, strong and effective professional who leads by example.

A keen sailor, he will now have more

“Seldom seen without his trademark smile, Nick has been an incredibly personable and approachable CEO”



Caption: Nick, centre, with Members, Remembrance 2017

time to spend aboard his beloved boat, the 'Bonne Idee', and I'm sure he'll also be spending more time on his other favourite pastimes – walking, reading and music (he is an accomplished organ and piano player).

I should think he'll very much be looking forward to evenings by the fire with a glass of good Scottish whiskey in hand, or a glass of red wine, chatting about music and current affairs with his son, Alastair.

Thank you for your service, Nick. I hope that you enjoy this next exciting phase. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have served alongside you and I wish you all the best in the next chapter of your life. 🍷

“Peter never forgot the help he received”

Member **Peter Carr** sadly passed away earlier this year, aged 82. His wife, Julie, with help from daughters, Michelle and Tanya, explains why he chose to leave a gift in his Will to Blind Veterans UK

“In 1958, Peter joined the Royal Air Force as a photographer and it was while he was stationed in Cornwall that we met. We were married in 1963. Soon after this, we went to Malta



Caption: Peter and Julie, centre, with their family

where he was posted. Unfortunately, it was here that he contracted toxoplasmosis, an eye disease which causes loss of vision.

He was sent back to the UK for further treatment in an RAF hospital and was sadly discharged from his service on medical grounds in 1967, aged just 28. It was a terrible shock and a very difficult time. Luckily, though, we made the decision to move to Brighton and he was taken under the wing of Blind Veterans UK, or St Dunstan's as it was then.

Peter's philosophy was to live life to the full and not let his sight loss get in his way. He really enjoyed the many activity weeks organised by the charity where he got to try everything from horse riding to driving to white water rafting. During a stay at Llandudno, he once even soared down the longest zip wire in the country!



Caption: Peter indoor skydiving

We're all so grateful that Peter was able to go on to live an independent and fulfilling life. He loved spending time with family, going dancing and playing bowls and pétanque.

Thanks to the charity, he was also able to forge a new career in computer programming. After hearing about a training programme for the vision impaired in America, Blind Veterans UK helped him join and also offered database training at their Brighton Centre. If that wasn't enough, when he was 59, Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, announced that Peter and eight others would be appointed among the first vision-impaired magistrates in England.

Without this charity, he would never have been given the chance to live as independently as he did. His life would have been completely different without it.

Having a sense of community was crucial to Peter, and he felt it vitally important to honour and support other veterans and never forget their sacrifices. He strongly believed in Remembrance as an homage to those who gave their lives fighting for our country. He used to describe it as “uplifting” and “an honour” to be able to pay his respects and represent a charity that continued to support him.

Peter never forgot the important help and support he received from Blind Veterans UK for over 50 years. This is why he remembered the charity with a generous donation in his Will. He knew his gift would help to give other sight impaired veterans the same opportunities that he had.” 🇬🇧

Have you been inspired by Peter's story?

Find out how to leave a gift in your Will, write or amend your Will for free, or share your own loved one's story with our friendly team:

T: 020 7616 7923

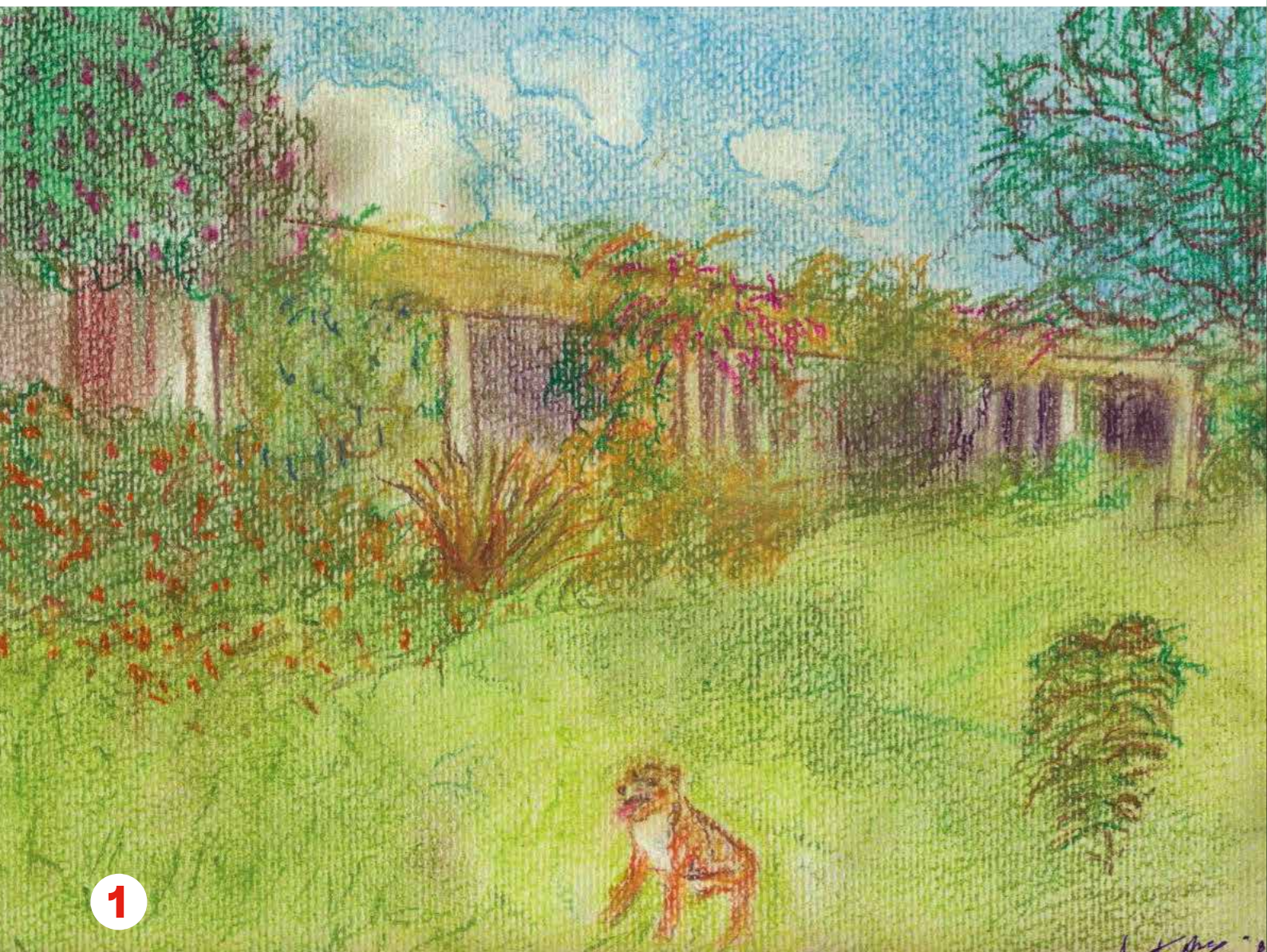
E: giftsinwills@blindveterans.org.uk

W: blindveterans.org.uk/leaveagift

Artistic Flair

We are pleased to present more artwork by our Members for the National Creative Project

Captions: 1. Jannet McCormick - Allerton Tower 2. Brian Heather - Dolphin
3. Rita Scarratt - Old Fishing Boat 4. Eddie Tann - 'Before'
5. Peter O'Malley - Fire Dog 6. Peter King - Colour Organic



1



2



3



5



4



6



Caption: Beautiful patterns made from paper craft quilling

National Creative Project Programme

This month's creative activities and hobby circles you can take part in - all from the comfort of your own home

CRAFT

Festive Quilled Cards

If you're looking for a new hobby, why not try quilling? Quilling is the craft of creating a design from coiled strips of paper. Although, traditionally, it can be quite fiddly, we've adapted the technique to make it easier for those with sight loss, so you can work on a larger scale, coiling the strips of paper

around chop sticks, or even your fingers. This project includes all the materials and instructions you need to create beautiful handmade festive cards and gift tags.

GARDENING

Hyacinths

Have a blooming good festive season with our Hyacinth growing project.

We'll send you all you need to grow these fragrant favourites including three bulbs, compost, and a ceramic bowl. All that's needed is a bit of TLC for a colourful display.

CRAFT

Poppy Mosaic

Make your own decorative mosaic in the shape of a poppy to mark Remembrance. This is an easy, fun and colourful design, with a wooden base measuring roughly 10 inches x 7 inches, or 25cm x 18cm, and no need for any tile cutting as all pieces are ready to use.

St Paul's Cathedral - wooden model project

We'll send you everything you need to build a fantastic model of St Paul's Cathedral, plus our VI friendly instructions. This is a fun and challenging kit with 199 pre-cut wooden pieces which you can sand, slot together and glue. Some pieces are also pre-coloured to capture the details of this iconic building.

The completed model is 11 inches, or 29cm, high; 15 inches, or 38cm, long; and 8 inches, or 20cm, wide.

■ **For more information about these projects and to request an activity pack, please call our bookings team on 01273 391455.**

Please note, the last day to register for these activities is Monday, 12 December, while our last posting out day will be Thursday, 15 December. All packs are now subject to availability.

We hope you have enjoyed taking part in our National Creative Project over the year. We'll be back in February with a new programme for you to get involved in. Our activities are available to all our Members, whatever your experience or creative ability.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful festive season and a very happy New Year! 🎉

Lou Kirk-Partridge and the National Creative Project team



Caption: Blue and pink hyacinths

Family news

Merry Christmas
and a Happy New
Year to all those of
you who care for
our Members!

Thank you for your invaluable
support over the past year.

Wishing you a wonderful festive season
and the best possible start to 2023.

From all of us at Blind Veterans UK



Rebuilding
lives after
sight loss

Registered charity in England and Wales (216227)
and Scotland (SC039411)

Birthdays

Cristine King who celebrates her
103rd birthday on 21 December

Doris Wilkinson who celebrates her
101st birthday on 26 December

Frederick Tredwell who celebrates
his 101st birthday on 18 December

James Williams who celebrates his
100th birthday on 25 December

Mryddyn Davies who celebrates his
100th birthday on 12 December

Nora Booth who celebrates her 101st
birthday on 29 December

Phyllis Maguire who celebrates her
101st birthday on 15 December

Rita Watson who celebrates her
102nd birthday on 23 December

Stephen Lynn who celebrates his
103rd birthday on 15 December

Victor Redstone who celebrates his
100th birthday on 23 December

Walter Nixon who celebrates his
100th birthday on 7 December

Wilfrid Lindley who celebrates his
102nd birthday on 12 December

Condolences

**It is with deep regret that we record
the deaths of the following, and we
offer our heartfelt condolences.**

Margaret Wright who died on 1
August 2022. She was the wife of
Tom Wright

Margaret Head who died on 1
September 2022. She was the wife of
Alan Head

Mary Meadows who died on 5th
September 2022. She was the wife of
Billy Meadows

Beryl Preece who died on 1 October
2022. She was the wife of Ted Preece

*All birthday information was correct at
the time of going to press*

In Memory

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following Members and we offer our heartfelt condolences to their widows, widowers, families and friends

Samuel Adams of Romford, Essex died on 2 November 2022 aged 93. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

John Arnold of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 17 October 2022 aged 90. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

Hylton Bertram Bacon of Sheffield died on 20 October 2022 aged 94. He served as an A.C. 2 in the Royal Air Force.

John Geoffrey Banks of Wigan, Lancashire died on 1 October 2022 aged 85. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals.

Ronald Banyard of Colchester, Essex died on 24 October 2022 aged 95. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Gerald Francis Bending of Brixham, Devon died on 2 November 2022 aged 98. He served as a Warrant Officer in the Royal Air Force.

John Royston Brakes of Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 20 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Private in the West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own).

Thomas Broomhall of Birmingham died on 1 October 2022 aged 90. He served as an Acting Lance Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Leo Bunting of Birmingham died on 26 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Private in the Royal Pioneer Corps.

John Frederick Cleaver of Weymouth, Dorset died on 16 October 2022 aged 89. He served as an S.A.C. in the Royal Air Force.

Wilfred Coles of Sandhurst, Berkshire died on 23 August 2022 aged 94. He served as an A.C. 1 in the Royal Air Force.

Arthur Lambton Colquhoun of Sunderland died on 19 October 2022 aged 95. He served as an A.C. 1 in the Royal Air Force.

Robert Cory of Weston-Super-Mare, Avon died on 2 November 2022 aged 97. He served as a Private in the Devonshire Regiment.

Donald Sydney Cox of Chichester, West Sussex died on 24 October 2022 aged 91. He served as an A.C. 2 in the Royal Air Force.

Francis Gerald Cross of Preston, Lancashire died on 1 November 2022 aged 100. He served as an Electrician in the Merchant Navy.

Michael Daniels of Southampton, Hampshire died on 20 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

John Hector Duffield of Warminster, Wiltshire died on 16 October 2022 aged 97. He served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy.

Derek Barry William Eglon of Yeovil, Somerset died on 1 November 2022 aged 88. He served as a Chief Technician in the Royal Air Force.

George Brinley Evans of Neath, West Glamorgan died on 14 October 2022 aged 97. He served as a Driver in the Royal Army Service Corps.

David Baird Fanstone of Brighton, East Sussex died on 28 October 2022 aged 85. He served as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Reserve.

Fred Freeston of Sheffield died on 1 October 2022 aged 92. He served as an L.A.C. in the Royal Air Force.

Walter William Hodgkiss of Tipton, West Midlands died on 1 October 2022 aged 98. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.



Gerald Hughes of Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan died on 29 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Trooper in the Royal Armoured Corps Life Guards.

Peter Gordon Holley of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire died on 3 October 2022 aged 85. He served as an Engineer in the Royal Navy.

Adrian Hyde of Coventry died on 14 October 2022 aged 58. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Fusiliers.

Anthony Ronald Ibbotson of South Chailey, East Sussex died on 1 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

John Iloff of King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 15 October 2022 aged 85. He served as a Private in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

Agnes Mary Kelly of Southport, Merseyside died on 26 August 2022 aged 101. She served as a Private in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Raymond Kirk of King's Lynn, Norfolk died on 17 October 2022 aged 90. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Engineers.

Michael Lally of St Helens, Merseyside died on 23 October 2022 aged 91. He served as a Private in the Royal Artillery.

Anna Lamb of Kirkcaldy, Fife died on 21 October 2022 aged 78. She served as a Senior Aircraftswoman in the Women's Royal Air Force.

George Lancaster of Reading, Berkshire died on 1 November 2022 aged 92. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Army Service Corps.

Joan Lawrence of Holywell, Clwyd died on 16 October 2022 aged 101. She served as a Corporal in the Women's Royal Air Force.

Frances May Ling of Felixstowe, Suffolk died on 24 October 2022 aged 91. She served as a Leading Wren in the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Alfred William Llewellyn of Bexleyheath, Kent died on 20 October 2022 aged 96. He served as a Private in the Royal Engineers.

Edward Marriott of Colchester died on 1 June 2022 aged 94. He served as a Petty Officer Stoker Mechanic in the Royal Navy.

Eric Marsh of Skelmersdale, Lancashire died on 1 October 2022 aged 97. He served as an L.A.C. in the Royal Air Force.

Irene Constance McCullough of Bromley, Greater London died on 11 October 2022 aged 101. She served as a Lance Corporal in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Bernard Merritt of Worthing, West Sussex died on 31 October 2022 aged 91. He served as an L.A.C. in the Royal Air Force.

David Frederick Owens of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 1 October 2022 aged 91. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

James William Parry of Wrexham, Clwyd died on 1 October 2022 aged 86. He served as a Private in the Royal Artillery.

Stanley Pope of Manchester died on 15 October 2022 aged 95. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Frank Alison Potter of Carlisle, Cumbria died on 1 October 2022 aged 99. He served as a Driver in the Royal Army Service Corps.

Margaret Flaws Powell of Uttoxeter, Staffordshire died on 12 October 2022 aged 99. She served as a Lance Corporal in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Thomas Provan of Barnstaple, Devon died on 22 October 2022 aged 80. He served as a Private in the Parachute Regiment.

John Ernest Pullinger of Bridgnorth, Shropshire died on 25 September 2022 aged 97. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers.

Winifred Ann Rice of Bath, Avon died on 20 October 2022 aged 98. She served as a Sister in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.

Joseph Riley of Widnes, Cheshire died on 1 October 2022 aged 93. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

Robert Sheppard of East Boldon, Tyne and Wear died on 5 October 2022 aged 90. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers.

John Brian Sutcliffe of Sheffield died on 19 October 2022 aged 92. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Artillery.

The best ever Christmas present

Member **Noeline Charlesworth**, 70, describes her sight loss journey since joining the charity during lockdown

I started losing my vision when I was 57. I remember it was autumn time and I'd been complaining about the bulbs not being bright enough. Little did I know I had the beginnings of macular degeneration.

It was only in the following Spring that I realised something was wrong but, sadly, as I hadn't been diagnosed sooner, I couldn't get the injections. I was registered severely vision impaired in 2017.

These days, I have no central vision, which means I can't see people's faces anymore. But using my peripheral vision, I can still see colour, shapes and silhouettes so I go by the colours when I do my flower arrangements, whereas for knitting I do it by touch and feel, counting every row.

I joined Blind Veterans UK during the pandemic. I'd been in the Women's Royal Army Corps when I was 19,

then met my husband, John, who was a soldier. Both our sons were born in Germany where he was serving and are now in the forces themselves. This is why it meant so much to be able to lay a wreath in my local area for Remembrance this year. →



Caption: Noeline laid a wreath on Remembrance in Pontypridd

ADOBESTOCK / ALICE_D



Clifford Taylor of Macclesfield, Cheshire died on 16 October 2022 aged 94. He served as a Lance Corporal in the King's Own Royal Regiment.

Geoffrey Wade of Chelmsford, Essex died on 3 October 2022 aged 96. He served as an Acting Lance Corporal in the Royal Signals.

Alec Ward of Derby died on 3 November 2022 aged 94. He served as a Warrant Officer 2nd Class in the Royal Engineers.

Jack Wild of Ferryhill, County Durham died on 1 October 2022 aged 88. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Army Catering Corps.

Walter Williams of Ellesmere Port, Cheshire died on 10 October 2022 aged 97. He served as a Canteen Assistant in the Royal Navy.

Donald Williams of Harwich, Essex died on 27 October 2022 aged 82. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Army Catering Corps.

Andrew Mchallam Woodburn of Newmilns, Ayrshire died on 24 October 2022 aged 93. He served as an L.A.C. in the Royal Air Force.



Caption: Noeline marked Remembrance in her local area

When I think of what the charity has done for me in the short time I've been a Member, I can become quite emotional. Whoever I talk with, whether it's my community support worker, a member of staff or a fellow blind veteran, I'm always given the feeling that we're in it together; we're a family. It's just wonderful.

I've received all kinds of practical support from the charity too – a keyboard, a penfriend, a mobile phone (which brought me into the 21st century!). In fact, during the lockdown, even before I'd met the staff properly, they sent me talking weighing scales



Caption: At the Christmas fare with her stall of items made by Members

as I'd told them I depended on John to weigh everything for me when I'm baking.

Last December, we stayed at the Llandudno Centre for the first time. It was so lovely to meet all the staff and Members there. We've kept in touch with many of them, including a couple we travelled up on the minibus with.

John enjoyed his time there as much as I did. He loved having a bit of time to himself. Knowing that the staff were on hand to help if I was wandering around the house, lost, meant he could really relax for once.



Caption: At the Llandudno Centre with her husband, John, and Members Sheila Botley and John Broad with their Christmas snowmen

In fact, we enjoyed it so much that we've already been back twice since then, most recently in October. This last time I decided to take along some bits and pieces to make some Christmas snowmen in the hope of raising money for Blind Veterans UK at my local Christmas fare.

I turned up with several pairs of white socks and bags of rice and got to work. Thanks to my husband and Members Sheila Botley and John Broad, we ended up making far more than expected. We even had to replenish our stock of socks and rice, not once but twice!

What was completely unexpected, though, was that other Members donated their crafts too. In the end, our snowmen, along with homemade hats from Muriel, knitted scarves from Maureen and beautiful wooden pens from Ken, have raised almost £300!

This Christmas, we're hoping to travel down to Devon to stay with our eldest son, just like we used to before I lost my sight. Becoming a Member of this charity has made me so much more positive about life.

And that's the best Christmas present I could ever ask for. 🎁

Rudolph the ROVI's 12 days of Christmas

Handy tips to help you through the festive season... and beyond

On the first day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

If you need help with multi-tasking as you cook the Christmas dinner, why not ask Alexa to set multiple timers for you?

Try saying, for example, "Alexa, set a potato timer for 20 minutes," or "Alexa, set a turkey timer for three hours."

This is especially useful if you struggle to see your clock or watch.

On the second day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

As you settle in to watch the King's Speech or your favourite Christmas TV shows, don't forget you can change the settings on your TV to include Audio Description.

This helps paint an audio picture of the onscreen content, making sure you don't miss out on any important details.

On the third day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

There's nothing more annoying than mixing up similar-shaped bottles, especially if this means washing your hair with conditioner instead of shampoo before your big Christmas do!



Caption: Get help with the cooking

NERUDOL/ADOBE STOCK



PASKO MAKSIM/ADOBE STOCK

Caption: Not feeling it? Alexa can help get you in the Christmas mood

One way to avoid this is to wrap an elastic band around one. This will make it much easier to tell them apart.

On the fourth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

It's not Christmas until you've heard Mariah Carey belting it out from every supermarket aisle across the country, but if Bing Crosby is more your thing, remember you can listen to a wide range of music for free through your Alexa device, even without paying for a music subscription service.

So, just pour yourself a glass of your chosen tippie, put your feet up and say,

"Alexa, play White Christmas by Bing Crosby." And relax.

On the fifth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

One of the best things about Christmas is watching all those old classic films again, like 'It's a Wonderful Life' and 'Scrooge'... so this is not the time to lose the remote control!

If you find yourself having to search through half the contents of the house every time you want to put the telly on, try sticking a strip of bright orange or yellow tape on the remote so it stands out and is easier to find. →

On the sixth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

If you're visiting a friend or relative over the festive season, did you know you can get personalised local transport information from Alexa?

You simply input all the details in the app then try saying, for example: "Alexa, how do I get to Margaret's?"

Alexa will tell you what station and route you need to take, as well as the time of the next service and how long your journey will be.



Caption: Find the best route

On the seventh day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

So the New Year is here and you've made your resolutions... and yet you're still struggling to motivate yourself to get up off the sofa.

Try the five-second rule. Take a moment, count back from five to one and then heave yourself up and get going on whatever it is you want to do. Taking a few seconds to reset can really give you that push you need.

On the eighth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

Did you know that global radio stations now stream their live broadcasts, archived shows and podcasts over the internet?

This means you can access so many different radio stations and shows through Alexa.

For example, say 'Alexa, play ABC radio in Sydney' or 'Alexa, play BBC Radio 5 Live', or any other station you can think of, and you can hear live broadcasts from around the world.

On the ninth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

Sadly, not everyone spreads good tidings at Christmas – scammers are always looking to take advantage, even at this time of year.



JOHANNA MÜHLBAUER / ADOBE STOCK

Caption: Relax with spa music

Be vigilant and remember the golden rule: if you're unsure if a call is genuine, hang up and call the company back on their official number.

On the tenth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

If you can't quite remember whether you've taken your medication or not, why not ask Alexa to remind you?

For example, just say:

- 'Alexa, set a timer for my blood pressure pills at 9am every day'
- 'Alexa, remind me to check my blood sugar levels at midday'

Just what you need to give you that nudge every day.

On the eleventh day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

The dark days of winter can be a real challenge for those with a vision impairment, so there's never been a better time to assess the lighting in your home to make sure it's the best it can possibly be. Treating yourself to an extra desk lamp or two to use alongside the overhead light could be a great investment for when you sit down to read, do the crossword or make time for crafts.

On the twelfth day of Christmas my ROVI said to me:

Never mind all those cheesy Christmas adverts, everyone knows this time of year can be stressful. Fortunately, there's no end to the number of handy features on Alexa to give your wellbeing a boost.

For example, the Meditation of the Day for Calm app takes you through a range of breathing exercises to help de-stress and improve your focus. Just say, "Alexa, open guided meditation."

You can also listen to calming sounds to help switch off. Just say "Alexa, play spa music," and you'll hear soothing tunes to help wash all your troubles away. Enjoy. 🎧

■ **Need help with Alexa? Call MeSH on 01273 391 447.**

Quiz time

This month, we test your knowledge on Christmas...

1. What is the name of the period leading up to Christmas?
2. December 26th marks which saint's day?
3. What is Scrooge's first name?
4. Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
5. What is traditionally hidden inside a Christmas pudding?
6. Which British monarch delivered the first ever Christmas message?
7. According to 1946's Christmas classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, what happens every time a bell rings?
8. Which famous Christmas song includes the lyrics: *Dashing through the snow, in a one-horse open sleigh?*
9. Which TV family has a pet dog called Santa's Little Helper?
10. Which character declares "Merry Christmas, one and all!" in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*?



AGENTURFOTOGRAFIN / ADOBE STOCK



Contact details

Contact address Blind Veterans UK,
3 Queen Square, London,
W1N 3AR, **0300 111 22 33**

Member Support Hub (MeSH):
01273 391 447

New Members: Anyone who may be eligible to join Blind Veterans UK, can phone our Membership Department on freephone **0800 389 7979**.

A different format?

If you would like your copy of *Review* in a different format, then please contact your **Community Support Worker** or **ROVI** for more information.

The Brighton Centre 01273 307 811

The Llandudno Centre 01492 868 700

Review Editor: 020 7616 8367 or
revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk

Feedback: To give us feedback on any of our services, please email us at supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk or call **0300 111 22 33**.

Donations: To make a donation, simply call **0300 111 22 33** or visit blindveterans.org.uk/donate.

To listen to *Review* on Alexa, the command is: "**Alexa, ask TuneIn to play Blind Veterans UK Review.**" If you have any problems getting it to work, please contact the MeSH helpline on **01273 391 447**.