

September 2012

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



**We Remember -
67th Anniversary of VJ Day**

From the Chairman.

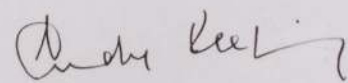
Your message from Major General Andrew Keeling, CB, CBE, RM.

As many of you will know July sadly marked the end of the remarkable life of a truly heroic member of our charity, Billy Griffiths MBE. I have no doubt that a fulsome tribute to Billy will appear elsewhere in this Review, but having attended his funeral at St Anne-on-Sea with my fellow Trustee Major General David Jolliffe and Chief Executive Robert Leader, I cannot let this opportunity pass without expressing my huge gratitude for the honour and good fortune to have known Billy and to have been inspired by his courage and example. Aged 21 he lost both hands and both eyes to an exploding mine while a prisoner of the Japanese in Java, and remained a prisoner for a further three years before returning, barely alive, to his home in England. With a lot of help from us and many others he gradually got his life together again and lived a full, active and admirable life for nearly 70 more years.

St Dunstan's, and now Blind Veterans UK, has lost a star – but we are all the richer for having known him.

I also want to pay my respects to Alice, Billy's wife for many years. She would be the first to admit that she has had her difficult moments, and I suspect her family would agree, but in my humble opinion she deserves massive admiration and thanks for all she has provided and achieved for Billy.

As I write this the Olympics are in full swing. The incredible Bradley Wiggins has just won gold for the time trial, and Helen Glover and Helen Stanning, a serving Army Captain, have won gold for rowing. I wonder how the medal table will look by the time you read this? The whole London 2012 event certainly seems to have been a bit of a shot in the arm for many people in this country. I hope you have all enjoyed the spectacle and the excitement as well as the skill, determination and effort of the many competing athletes. Having always enjoyed sport myself I find much of it fascinating and very encouraging.



On the cover: Sydney Tavender, a former FEPOW, who placed the wreath at the National Memorial Arboretum for Blind Veterans UK on 15th August to mark the 67th anniversary of VJ Day.



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Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Key: B for Brighton centre - L for Llandudno centre - S for Sheffield centre

September	October
Holiday Week S	3rd - 7th History Week S 8th - 12th
Photography Week S	10th - 14th Widows Week B 14th - 20th
History Week L	16th - 22nd Computer Club L 17th - 18th
Writer's Forum B	15th Amateur Radio Club L 19th - 27th
Golf	15th - 16th Bowling Weeks B 28th - 10th
November	December
Cenotaph	10th - 11th Crafty Christmas
	Magic S 10th - 14th

Noticeboard

Thank you for displaying Blind Veterans UK posters

Simon Brown, Membership Officer, would like to thank everyone who displayed a Blind Veterans UK poster. A4 posters are now available. Contact Simon Brown on: 020 7616 7929 simon.brown@blindveterans.org.uk

Vintage Carnival in the grounds of the Brighton centre

The Vintage Carnival will be held in the grounds of the Brighton centre on Saturday 8th September, from 11am – 5.30pm. It will be opened at 11.30am by the newly appointed Chief Executive of Brighton and Hove Albion FC, Paul Barber, followed by a performance from the team's cheerleaders, Gully's Girls! There will be two performances by Kas, the new Forces sweetheart, and the Dave Masters Big Band will play big band numbers by Glen Miller, Count Basie and Duke Ellington. You can enjoy a fantastic variety of dance, music and old fashioned fairground games and the sports and recreation department has organised sporting events.

Visitors can also take in the Artwave exhibition inside the building and buy mosaics, statues, paintings and beautifully crafted wooden rocking horses. There will be a beer tent, which also serves cocktails, and a traditional English tea marquee with home baked cakes. Stalls will sell a range of goodies for all the family. There will be a raffle, a display of vintage vehicles, as well as a fully staffed fire engine from the nearby fire station! Entry to this event is free.

Visit to Sahara Force India at Silverstone

Graham Raphael of Motorsport Endeavour would like to invite eight Blind Veterans UK members to tour Sahara Force India at Silverstone to hear about its racing cars. You need to arrive in Silverstone at 11am on Tuesday 11th September. The address is Force India, Dadford Road, Silverstone NN12 8TJ. This is not a driving day, or track day, but a chance to tour Sahara Force India's premises to get a feel for its cars. If you would like to go please contact Steve Mills, Sports & Recreation Instructor, Brighton on: 01273 391481 or email: steve.mills@blindveterans.org.uk

Appeal for talking books for the Brighton centre.

The staff on the nursing floors at the Brighton centre have started a talking book library for members to use. They would greatly appreciate any talking books on CD that you no longer listen to. Please send them to Sue Morrell, RGN, Blind Veterans UK, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 7BS.

Tandem Bike

A tandem bike has been donated to the Sports department, which they need to find a new home for. The bike has been fully serviced and is in good condition. If you are interested, or would like more information, then please contact Kayla Hammond in the Sports department on 01273 391467.

Appeal to get in touch

John Thompson, an ex Aircraft's apprentice who served in the RAF from 1938 to 1966, leaving as a Chief Technician, would like anyone he served with to contact him. He served in the UK, Italy, Egypt and North Africa. His telephone number is: 01352 740776.

Blind Veterans UK London Carol Concert

The Carol Concert will take place at St Marylebone Parish Church on Tuesday 4th December 2012 at 7pm. Tickets for the concert and the post concert reception cost £50, and tickets for the concert only £20. You can order online at www.blindveterans.org.uk/carolconcert or by phone on: 020 7616 7966.

Blind Veterans UK Llandudno Christmas Concert

The Llandudno Christmas Concert will take place on Saturday 8th December at Holy Trinity Church, Mostyn St, Llandudno at 3pm. Contact Penny Growcoot on 01492 868722 or penny.growcoot@blindveterans.org.uk

Blind Veterans UK Brighton Christmas Concert

The Brighton Christmas concert will take place on 6th December at St George's Church, Kempton from 7pm to 9pm. Tickets £12 and £8 for concessions. Please contact Maddy Carr on 01273 391455 or maddy.carr@blindveterans.org.uk

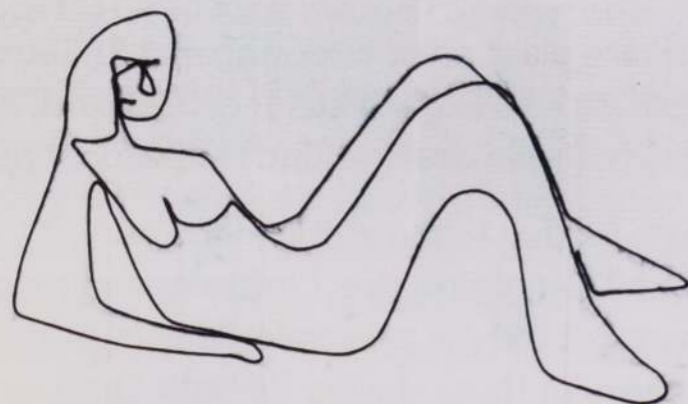
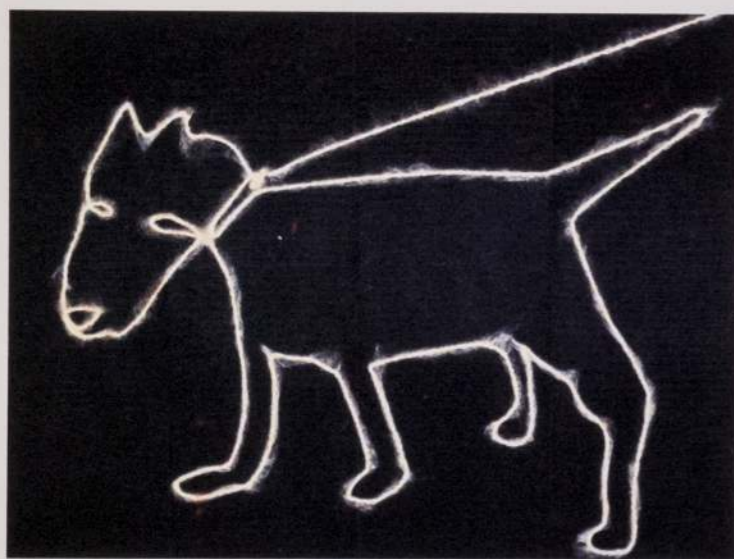
Christmas and New Year Surcharge Further to the article in the August Review regarding stays at Brighton and Llandudno over Christmas and New Year, to clarify, there will be a surcharge of £40 per person for Christmas stays and £40 per person for New Year stays. For those staying for both Christmas and New Year, there will be a surcharge of £70 per person.

The Big Draw 2012 at the Brighton centre throughout October

The Big Draw sweeps the UK each year with a drawing bonanza, involving 350,000 people in exhilarating and often extraordinary creative activities. Children, parents, grandparents, football supporters, conservationists, designers, artists, and scientists meet in venues from castles to shopping centres, national galleries to village halls, libraries to hospitals to draw with charcoal, paint, mud and even skateboards or robots!

Well, the Brighton centre will not be left out of this drawing extravaganza! We will be installing a 'draw wall' in the corridor in the annex. There will be all sorts of ways to express your creativity and get involved!

We hope that everyone who comes into the building has a go, draw a line, stick a line, wrap a line, drag a line to create a team work master piece! For more information contact Kath Jones-Romain on: 01273 391466.



Picture: Woolly dog and figure by Phil Rawson.

Letters to the Editor

As we welcome your letters please do send them in to us. They could be in response to an article in the Review, or something you feel to be of interest to your fellow members. You can send letters by post to Blind Veterans UK Review, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Please mark them Letter to the Editor. Or if you prefer please send an email to the Review at email: revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk

Dear Editor

Since the Charity changed from St Dunstan's to Blind Veterans UK there has been a certain amount of internal correspondence to us and we are addressed as 'Dear Member'. Sir Arthur Pearson gave the title St Dunstaner to the War Blinded Veterans and for many years now we have continued to use this, but the numbers of War Blinded Veterans left are so few and they feel somewhat insulted to be referred to as 'Dear Member'.

May we therefore ask that as the post to ourselves is very personal and not broadcast outside, may we still be referred to in correspondence as 'Dear St Dunstaner'? I am making this request on behalf of several St Dunstaners who are like myself totally blind from war service and we would appreciate this change back to our original form of address.

Yours sincerely

Clifford Gower
St Dunstaner

Dear Mr Gower

I am sorry to read that you feel you have been addressed in such an inappropriate manner. I appreciate that you and some of your fellow veterans would prefer to be referred to as Dear St Dunstaner, rather than Dear Member, as you are proud to be associated with this great charity.

As you state the title St Dunstaner was originally given to those brave young men who were blinded on the bloody battlefields of World War I. The term is, and always will be, a very important part of our heritage. However when we changed our name to Blind Veterans UK on 21st February this year we also adopted the term of member. I appreciate you and others will always consider yourselves to be St Dunstaners, but in keeping with our family ethos, it would be more appropriate for you to be addressed by your individual name on all future correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Jones

Director of Fundraising and Communications

Harry Beevers 10 questions on the subject of... languages

1. Which French term refers to a light alcoholic drink taken before a meal?
2. Which word for a long and bitter feud comes from the Italian for revenge?
3. In climate, the name of which Asian wind which is often accompanied by heavy rainfall is thought to derive from the Arabic word meaning season?
4. What French term describes a name adopted by a writer to disguise his or her real name?
5. Which word from the Romany language for nose is used for an informer or police spy?
6. In World War 1, in which country was the name of sauerkraut changed to liberty cabbage, hamburger to liberty sandwich and German measles to liberty measles?
7. The 1961 the Elvis Presley hit "Wooden Heart" was partly sung in which European language apart from English?
8. Which country has the largest number of Spanish speakers, approximately 95 million?
9. The opera 'Carmen' is usually sung in which language?
10. What is the English translation of the Arabic word Taliban: student, true believer or guerrilla?

William 'Bill' Griffiths MBE 26.06.1920 - 20.07.2012

We mark the 67th Anniversary of VJ Day, which took place on 15th August, with an article by Bill Griffiths, a former FEPOW, who died on 20th July 2012. Bill came to Blind Veterans UK, then St Dunstan's, in 1946. Bill and his wife Alice became Ambassadors travelling the North of England speaking on the work of the charity. One person who listened to their talk wrote:

We all enjoyed his talk immensely and were very much impressed by his magnificent spirit in the face of his cruel disabilities. We were also very appreciative of Mrs Griffiths' courage and devotion in helping him to surmount his troubles so splendidly. I think most people who were there will think twice about letting their own so much smaller troubles get them down in future. It was a truly inspiring meeting.

In 2005 Bill wrote the following article for the BBC People's War website. The article was transcribed by Alice.

I was stationed with the RAF at Kalong Airport, Singapore in February 1942. The Japanese Air Force bombed the airport rendering it unserviceable. Singapore fell to the Japanese on February 14th, 1942. We left Singapore on February 13th, on the troop ship Empire Star. We were bombed, many were killed and the ship caught fire. We landed in Surabaya, Java three days later, hoping to establish a base, but roads and rails were bombed and we became stranded in the village of Tasic Malay. Two hundred RAF men were stranded in the mountains of Garoet, I and three others drove to Garoet in an effort to save them, but we were soon surrounded by Japanese soldiers and became Prisoners of War.

Within a few days we were ordered to remove camouflaged booby traps. We had to do this or be bayoneted by the Japanese soldiers, who stood well out of the way. In the process of this task, I was blown up, lost my eyes, both my hands and shattered my leg. Fortunately a convoy of POWs being moved by the Japanese risked their lives and stopped to pick me up and take me to an emergency hospital on March 16th 1942. Then I found myself in Bandoeng at a school that had been hastily made into a hospital by the Australian Surgeon Colonel Dunlop, later Sir Edward Dunlop. He saved my life on the operating table, and shortly afterwards a Japanese soldier tried to push his bayonet through me, but this famous Australian Surgeon Sir Edward Dunlop stood

between me and the bayonet, saying the bayonet would have to go through him before it went through me. I believe this soldier just stamped off. Sir Edward is affectionately known as 'Weary', and he remained a lifelong friend until his death in 1995. I was his guest in Melbourne on numerous occasions, and he was ours in Blackpool. For many weeks I had pain in my arms, in the early days I was given a little morphine, which only lasted a week or so, so I had to stick it out. At the same time the POW doctors worked on my leg, thankfully they saved it, but it took a long time before I could walk. Everyone, including the doctors as POWs, had their own health problems, including dysentery, malaria, beri beri, fever and ulcers. I also endured some of these, but my fellow prisoners and POW doctors did all they could to keep me occupied. One doctor set me up with a pestle and mortar crushing herbs and leaves in an effort to make medicines. Another had me take secret messages to other parts of camp. I always did my exercises and tried to keep fit. I talked to many professional people, and if I had been in a better physical and mental condition, I would have been well educated.

My fellow prisoners helped me to survive; they looked after my daily requirements. The Japanese did not help at all. They just carried on with brutality. One colleague made me a gadget that held a spoon enabling me to scoop up the rice. That was all we got to eat, sometimes mixed with a mysterious substance. Another made me a tin gauntlet that held a stick for me to walk about when safe from Japanese guards. Like my POW friends I was underweight. At the end of the war I weighed five and a half stone.

On August 15th 1945 the Japanese surrendered. We could not leave the camp because the Indonesians began to fight to regain their territory from the Dutch. Anyone white was assumed to be Dutch and was shot. Consequently we didn't arrive home until November at the Liverpool docks, where the dock workers were on strike! Taken to Gosford hospital, home to Blackburn, then to St Dunstan's.

The FEPOW Prayer

And we that are left grow old with the years
Remembering the heartache, the pain and the tears
Hoping and praying that never again
Man will sink to such sorrow and shame.
The price that was paid we will always remember
Every day, every month, not just in November.

Bill Griffiths, my friend, by David Castleton

In the introduction to Bill's account of his treatment as a prisoner of the Japanese the inclusion of the tribute from someone who attended one of the many speeches Bill and Alice gave in their work for my PR department at St Dunstan's, now Blind Veterans UK, is very apt. Alice and Billy, as she always called him, showed so much courage in everyday living and in the work they undertook in raising awareness and funds for the charity in towns and cities all over the country – with Alice driving all those miles.

Their engagements were often concerts for Alice was a professional singer and persuaded Bill that he could sing. Bill learned and found he had a prizewinning baritone voice. He and Alice would sing duets underlining what their marriage meant to them. They told me they once raised great applause and amusement when Bill sang 'Bless this House' in one of HM Prisons!

Of course Bill had to learn much more when he came to St Dunstan's in 1946. He learned to typewrite using probes on his gauntlets on an adapted typewriter. Other adaptations designed by Norman French, our Research Engineer, helped Bill in daily life. After training Bill went back to Blackburn to start his own road haulage business in the family tradition. His typewriter and specially adapted telephone enabled him to run his business until the nationalisation of road transport brought in regulations that put him out of business.

Bill kept up his interest in sport competing regularly in St Dunstan's events, putting the shot, sling ball, swimming, walking racing and sprinting among others. Despite his modesty in saying he would never win prizes, in 1969 Bill was named Disabled Sportsman of the Year by the Sports Writer Association of Great Britain. This was one of the honours Bill earned.

In 1972 to his great surprise he was the subject of ITV's 'This is Your Life' with reunions with Sir Edward Dunlop and Mickey de Jonge, the doctor and nurse who had saved his life in those terrible days as a FEPOW. Sir Edward's part has already been described in Bill's article; Nurse de Jonge treated and comforted him in the first days after he reached hospital and before the Japanese captured staff and patients.

In 1977 he was made MBE 'For services to the community'. An honour so thoroughly earned by the steadfast man I have been privileged to know and call my friend.

Bill's book *Blind to Misfortune* is published by Pen & Sword.



Picture: Bill in the office of his haulage company W Griffiths.



Picture: Embracing change. Alice and Bill with Welfare Officer John Elson.

My journey from Egypt, August 1942 to December 1942, by Thomas R Croxton.

It is 70 years ago this month that I spent 28 days onboard a lifeboat after the ship I was on, the SS Laconia, was sunk on 12th September 1942. From November 1938 to August 1942 I served overseas in Iraq, Palestine, Greece, Crete and twice in Egypt.

On August 14th 1942 I sailed from Port Suez aboard the SS Stratheden. On the journey to Durban, South Africa, 96 of us RAF personnel had the task of guarding 1500 Italian POWs. At Durban we were informed that SS Stratheden was to proceed direct to the USA and we were disembarked. After five days in a transit camp we boarded SS Laconia, the 20,000 tonne British Cunard liner. Our accommodation was in the deck house on the stern of the ship. In the end we were not used as guards as this was done by Polish Army personnel. We had an uneventful journey south and around the Cape calling at Cape Town.

On the evening of 12th September we were 250 miles NW of Ascension Island. I was playing cards in our accommodation. Just after 8pm we heard and felt a huge explosion. Realising our worst fears; I donned my greatcoat and lifejacket and picked up my filled water bottle. We had been hit by a torpedo from a German submarine U-156. My next task was to make for the stairs leading to the upper deck. During this time the ship was hit once more, all the lights went out and the ship quickly listed to starboard. I eventually made my way to my lifeboat station in the port side.

After a few minutes and seeing no seamen to lower the boats, I heard shouts for assistance from the starboard station. I made my way over and assisted in lowering the first boat. It pulled away less than half full. I then assisted in lowering the second boat and determined not to wait while the boat also pulled away I slid down a davit rope into the boat. We pulled away but soon realised the boat was filling with water. Someone discovered that the bottom bung had not been fitted, and so we removed our shoes in an attempt to bail out the water. After some fruitless minutes we abandoned the boat and clung to the sides. Shortly after I heard the sounds of another boat and decided to strike out in the direction of the sounds. I was relieved to reach the boat and was pulled in. I was violently sick for some time, but remember seeing Laconia's stern raise from the water and the ship plunge into the ocean.

Next day I found I was in a boat of mixed British and Italians with Dr Purslow, the ship's doctor. Later in the day the Italians were transferred to another boat, exchanging places with British survivors. We initially had two ladies onboard, but they were transferred to U-156 where they would be better cared for. I never saw them again. When the U Boat Captain, Hartenstein, realised he had sunk a ship carrying 1900 Italians he launched a rescue operation, calling in two German and one Italian U-boat to help. Hundreds of survivors were picked up, including civilian women and children, with many crammed on the U boats, on the upper deck. On the 14th we four other lifeboats set off on a course NNE to reach land 600 miles away. On 15th we found ourselves alone. Later that day U-156 towing three lifeboats found us. We were told French warships were coming from Dakar to pick us up. We agreed to join the tow.

We were to head towards the African coastline to rendezvous with the Vichy French. On 16th September, at 11.25am, we were spotted by an American B-24 Liberator bomber operating out of Ascension Island. The survivors waved and the U-boats signalled for help. A Red Cross flag was draped over the conning tower. The pilot, Lieutenant James D Harden, turned away and radioed back to base for instructions. The officer on duty that day, Captain Robert C Richardson III, replied with the order to attack. When we saw an aircraft approaching as we were being towed by the U-boat our spirits rose and our thoughts were of being rescued. When the aircraft returned we had no fears as we had recognised it as an American Liberator. As it approached we saw the bomb doors open and we shouted to a seaman positioned at the bow to cut the tow rope. This had been arranged in case we had trouble while being towed. Those of us on the oars pulled astern to distance ourselves from the submarine. He attacked three times and bombed the submarine and smashed the first two lifeboats in tow. We had a slight leak.

The U-boat was damaged and the Laconia survivors onboard had to get off and go back into the water. The U-boat survived. As the aircraft left we took up the oars again, we only had three oars and the sea was choppy. We picked up six more survivors, although we were overloaded as the lifeboats were built for 50 and we already had 62. We made slow progress. Two of the six were ladies, one Doris Hawkins, a missionary nurse. An Italian sub came along and asked if we had any Italians onboard. We told him we didn't and he went off and we just lay there all night. The next morning the sub was still near but he didn't take any notice of us. We made our own way as we had a makeshift sail using a boat

cover. The Italian sub just let us go. He picked up a lot of people, including 24 British and put them into the other boat, a steel lifeboat and left them to make their own way. They didn't hit Africa, but four survivors out of 52 were picked up by a convoy off Freetown on the 42nd day.

We set off NNE. Our daily rations were two fluid ounces of water, two biscuits with pemmican, two Horlick's tablets. Our future problems were dehydration and constant exposure to the tropical sun. After about 10 days people began to die. On the 21st day we were 18 survivors and we were out of water. Fortunately we hit a severe rainstorm, which lasted about three hours. We lowered the sail, spread it out and caught about 10 gallons. We drank all we could. For the next seven days we doubled our water ration and were only to have one more death before reaching land. During the last ten days of our voyage I shared sailing duties with naval senior rating Harold Gibson, Greer and Seeley. As we neared the coast we had to rouse the others and set them to use the oars to help keep the boat straight while beaching. Harold Gibson was on the tiller and three of us went over the side to hold the boat straight. We beached on 10th October – we spent 28 days onboard the lifeboat and by the time we landed there were only 17 survivors, one died a few days later in Liberia. The next day I walked up the Liberian coast with Harold Gibson, Greer and Seeley and two guides to Grand Bassa where we arranged help from the Dutch and a Syrian trader. Harold Gibson and I stayed with a Dutchman and helped look after Doris



Picture: Ron Croxton in Crete.

Hawkins and three others. After 12 days we were picked up by an armed trawler and then transferred to a destroyer which took us to Freetown. After five days in hospital I developed malaria and so missed the first boat home. I was then kept in hospital for a month before sailing home and disembarking at Greenock on 7th December 1942. I was given a greatcoat to cover my summer shirt, a temporary identity paper and put on a train to London to await debriefing at the Air Ministry. I was rekitted at Uxbridge and sent on leave after three days.

Here we bring you an extract from Doris Hawkins's book:

'It is impossible to imagine why I should have been chosen to survive when so many did not. I have been reluctant to write the story of our experiences, but in answer to many requests I have done so; and if it strengthens someone's faith, if it is an inspiration to any, if it brings home to others, hitherto untouched, all that those who go down to the sea in ships' face for our sakes, hour by hour, day by day, year in and year out – it will not have been written in vain. After a few nights a place was made where Mary and I could lie side by side, and we tried to keep each other warm by lying very close together. But the wind seemed to blow through us, and sometimes we were soaked as a wave broke over the boat. It was dark in that latitude from 6.30pm to 6am. The days passed in a dreadful monotony. Mary and I used to sit during those first days 'up forward' behind the sail, where there was a little shade in the mornings, for we were in equatorial waters, and the sun was almost unbearable by 10am. We all talked of our homes and families and friends – of what we would do when we were rescued and when we reached home. We discussed the things we were going to eat and drink, or complain about our food! Strange as it may seem, I never failed to appreciate the beauty of the ever changing sea and sky, and I often thought that given better conditions one could enjoy a similar voyage. It would, we decided, be necessary to be suitably clad, to have adequate food and drink, suitable protection from the elements when necessary and a means of navigation and locomotion. It would of course be pleasant to be among one's friends.'

Doris Hawkins wrote of Ron Croxton: 'We were impressed by the quiet, unassuming way in which the RAF Corporal helped us in those trying days in the boat; it was he who lent his overcoat to cover Mary at night, when the blanket was taken to make the jib. Only those who have lived through such an experience can know how big the little things seem, and how one word or one action, or one person's optimism, can change the atmosphere for everyone.'

@blindveterans UK, Sheffield #socialnetworking, by Gaye Staff, IT Instructor, Sheffield.

IT Instructor Gaye Staff reports on the inaugural social networking course held in Sheffield recently. And no, the title isn't a misprint, please read on.

Raw enthusiasm was the main ingredient on Monday 2nd July when members Steve Shepherd, Billy Black, Mark Sutton, Chris Lee and Clive Jones squeezed themselves into the IT room. Through the week Gaye gently (and sometimes not so gently!) led our intrepid team through the complexities of social networking and the mysteries of:

- **Facebook:** the website that connects you with your family, friends and colleagues wherever they are. Founder 28 year old Mark Zuckerberg has made \$19 billion from this free service, so he must be doing something right.
- **Twitter:** another free social networking service that has changed the way many people communicate. Twitter allows users to send "tweets" of 140 characters or less. Many people report their "status" to friends, some post interesting links to other things on the internet, whilst others use it to find out what's going on in their area or at their favourite club. There are countless ways to utilise this real-time quick messaging application.
- **Audioboo:** a website that allows users to record voice messages (or music or sounds) and post these on your own or social networking websites. As the company says 'Because Sound is Social'.

The vast majority of the billion Facebook and Twitter users will think nothing about mouse clicking and picture uploading, but for someone with limited or no sight, it's a real challenge. Our team certainly rose to it! By Friday the air was thick with talk of tweeting, hash tagging and writing on walls (and we're not talking graffiti here). Thanks to Chris Lee, everyone had a demonstration of an iPhone and iPad. Chris enjoyed the session so much that he has volunteered to attend the next Social Networking course and repeat it (this time he will include Podcasts). As usual at Sheffield, there was a real sense of camaraderie and team-work (special thanks to the Support team) and everyone left about an inch taller. The week ended with a very constructive session on how to further improve the next course.

Here are some comments from the week:

"The social networking course was most enjoyable, it was hard work, but it was made easier by the Instructor being knowledgeable in the subject and with the different formats that the members were using. Congratulations to all on the pilot scheme and a big thank you to Gaye and the members of staff at Sheffield." **Clive Jones**

"Introducing many networking sites, whatever sight loss you have, it's a taster to websites you feel comfortable with, as there are many. I know from being isolated it has opened websites that I will use. It was helpful I had a week before learning how to navigate around the web. As a group it helped." **Mark Sutton**

"Just thought I would drop a line to say thanks for an excellent week on the Social Networking course, due to it being a pilot scheme we did have a few teething problems, which we needed to have so future courses run smoothly. But I really do recommend all our members think about doing the course." **Chris Lee**

By the time you read this article the second social networking course will have been done and dusted! If you are interested in joining one of these courses then please contact the IT Training Support line on 01273 391432 and leave a message or email rehabit@blindveterans.org.uk and speak to an IT Instructor.



Picture: From left to right: Chris Lee, Gaye Staff, Billy Black, Clive Jones, Steve Shepherd and Mark Sutton.

The Listening, Advice and Counselling service, by Barry Porter, Director of Welfare Services.

A new service, the Listening, Advice and Counselling service, is available to all Blind Veterans UK members, their families or carers. It has been established to provide anyone within the Blind Veterans UK family access to free, confidential advice and support, independent of the charity. The Listening, Advice and Counselling service is provided throughout the UK, including Northern Ireland, by an independent counselling company, Wellbeing Solutions Management. All of their counsellors are accredited with professional bodies. There is no charge for this service, which can be provided from a counsellor's office or at your home.

What can the Listening, Advice and Counselling service help with? As a welfare organisation, we recognise that some people will face worries and difficulties as a result of their loss of sight. For some families, it takes time adjusting to coming to terms with sight loss. Sometimes life becomes more demanding or challenging due to relationship difficulties or financial worries. The service can help members, family and carers talk through these issues which might include concerns with loneliness, sadness or anxiety.

The Listening, Advice and Counselling service can help with any of these aspects of life that may affect any of us at any stage. Because the service is independent of Blind Veterans UK, the content of discussion between a counsellor and a member, or family, is confidential and is not revealed to Blind Veterans UK.

To use the service, there are three routes to choose from:

1. You can phone the Listening, Advice and Counselling service on 0800 328 1437 and say that you are connected with Blind Veterans UK and they will arrange an appointment.
2. You can tell your Welfare Officer (all members have an allocated Welfare Officer) you would like to use the service. You do not need to tell the Welfare Officer what you want to talk about if you would rather keep it confidential.
3. You can approach other Blind Veterans UK staff, such as Nursing or Care staff or Rehabilitation and Training staff at a centre and say that you would like to use the service. They in turn will contact your Welfare Officer who will initiate

a referral to the Listening, Advice and Counselling service.

Blind Veterans UK is able to provide access to this service free as a result of a generous grant from a Trust and there are no costs to the Charity whatsoever.

Worries and difficulties are common place in all of our lives. Sometimes it is helpful to have someone to share those with. This new service provides that opportunity in your own home or at a safe, local and comfortable place suitable to your individual circumstances.

Amanda Scales walks 10 miles for Blind Veterans UK.

On 15th July Amanda Scales, Area Welfare Officer, put her best foot forward and took part in the 47th annual charity walk across Dartmoor organised by the Plymouth and Plym Valley Lions Clubs to raise money for Blind Veterans UK and the Samaritans. For the 10 mile walk Amanda was part of the Crazy 8 team. Irene Howarth, wife of Blind Veterans UK member Tony, was another member of the team. Well done Amanda, Irene and the Crazy 8 team.



Picture: From left to right: Alan Walsh, Lisa Walsh, Irene Howarth, Neil Johns and Ann Mekin - and of course Amanda Scales.

The Llandudno centre celebrates its first year, by Catherine Goodier.

It is a widely acknowledged fact that strong leadership filters through and leads to a happy and productive workplace. That is certainly the case at the Llandudno centre, as under the leadership of Centre Manager Mark Lovatt, a former Squadron Leader who left the RAF in 2011 after 27 years of Service, staff there have flourished in its first year. They look forward to work, and since the centre opened on 19th September 2011, members have flocked through its doors for training, or to enjoy a holiday.

They are eager to stay in the historic building that's nestled in lush green grounds in the glorious hills of Llandudno. It's a place where members come to learn the skills they will need to live as normal a life as possible with their vision impairment. They meet their fellow members and are able to share their experiences. They may swap war stories, and as I witnessed during the trainee dinner; it is often the first time they open up about their fears as they face a different kind of life and come to terms with blindness. Of course the training has an impact on husbands, wives and family as they too have to adjust. But you know that, as each of you will have made your own very personal journey. Like our Sheffield and Brighton centres the staff are there to support, teach, listen - and as I write this at the Llandudno centre - share a laugh. It's a happy place full of bonhomie and hope.

It's a popular destination for holidays, a place to recharge and enjoy the coastal resort and all the surrounding mountains and countryside have to offer. There are the activity breaks with Paula Sartain and Nikki Green, Sports and Recreation Instructors. These have included a music week, a walk to the top of Mount Snowdon, a kayaking weekend and a fishing trip. Of course some people have found that once there they simply prefer to walk in the grounds, relax in the day room, enjoy the good food and sit and talk with their fellow members.

During my two days there I had the honour to be invited by Billy Baxter, Rehabilitation and Training Support Worker, to attend the trainee dinner. What I experienced was an evening of poignancy, honesty, and laughter that moved me. The evening started in the day room where Billy and Steve Boswell, Rehabilitation and Training Manager, welcomed new members Olive Clark, Norman Patterson, Malcolm White, Frank Walker and Andrew Ramsey who were there to complete the introduction week. It started on a light note as Billy blew

a regimental bugle to get our attention. We followed him into the restaurant for dinner, which he presided over. Billy invited everyone to speak, to say what the week had meant to them. Norman Patterson, who during WWII served with the RAF in the UK and Africa, was the first to speak. He recited a poem he had written after his best friend Alf, a rear gunner, was killed on his first operation. Norman also wrote the poem to evoke thoughts of all those who died in the war.

Died in France by Norman Patterson.

He had the ploughman's strength in the grasp of his hand
He could see a crow three miles away
And the trout beneath the stone
He could hear the green wheat growing
And the Souwester making rain
And the wheel upon the hill as it left the level road
He could make a gate and dig a pit
And plough as straight as stone could pull - And he is dead

Olive Clark was next to speak, she said the week had given her back her life as she had lost her confidence, but she felt encouraged to reclaim her life. She cited the kitchen skills training as particularly important. She loved the bowling with Paula Sartain and said visiting Llandudno was like stepping back to her military days with the Women's Royal Army Corps. Malcolm White, a former career soldier with the Royal Corps of Transport, showed great enthusiasm as he said that he would be back for further IT training and to make use of the centre's excellent facilities. Arthur Sullivan, who was there with his son Paul, planned to come back and spend time in the Art and Craft workshop. Everyone praised the staff and the excellent training, and each person had learnt a new skill to take home, and grown in confidence. The importance of peer support was demonstrated when Norman spoke of the hallucinations he experienced for the first time at the centre. Billy Baxter put his mind at ease as he explained Charles Bonnet Syndrome and told him of his own experiences.

To find out about the centre from someone who knows it well, I spoke with Keith Roberts, who moved into Maes Berllan in the centre's grounds in August 2011. He said. "I thought about moving into the Royal Hospital Chelsea, but my daughters didn't want me to leave Llandudno and neither did I. The bungalow is great and the centre has become part of my life as I'm up there nearly every

day and it's like an extension of my family. I go to the gym each day for 30 minutes physio, instead of the local hospital and Paula Sartain and Nikki Green have worked wonders. As Paula was a Remedial Instructor at Headley Court and both her and Nikki have a degree in Sports Science they really know their stuff. I even had my 80th birthday party there as my daughters arranged a surprise birthday party with Mark. There were about 50 people I knew and the members at the centre were invited too. It was a lovely evening. When people are here for training or a holiday I always ask what they think of the place and everybody says how wonderful they think it is. The only criticism someone made, and it really wasn't a criticism, was to say there's too much food! The atmosphere is great at all the centres and I think the staff are remarkable in all three centres."

I found out about the inaugural kayaking weekend from Darren Blanks, 25, who served with the King's Royal Hussars in the UK and Iraq. "It was great, especially as I met some more lads, as the more I meet the better. I've kayaked before but never on the sea, so the second day was tough as we tackled the waves, which made it really challenging. It was hard work but good at the same time. Nikki Green who led the kayaking was great. I was one of the first people to do activities when the Llandudno centre opened and we went rock climbing. It was great to see her again as she certainly loves a challenge and her job. I'll definitely be back there for more kayaking and other activity breaks."



Picture: About to head to sea. Left to right: Nikki Green, Charlie Eastwood, Steve Sparkes, Mark Brewin and Darren Blanks.

Joyce Lucas, who was a Sister with St John's Ambulance during the war, serving during the Blitz, said: "I've been to the Llandudno centre three times as I absolutely love it there. After my husband died I went on coach trips, but after staying at Llandudno I wouldn't take a coach trip again. If I could live there permanently I would put my flat up for sale and move in tomorrow. The staff are wonderful, as they are at all the centres. During my last stay I walked through the grounds and sat on a bench. A man sat beside me, I didn't know who he was, but we started talking and I told him that if the former mortuary building was ever converted into flats I wanted to move in. He said 'Too right I agree and I run this place'. I don't know if he was Mark Lovatt but we had a good chat. I met Billy Baxter and I would talk to him every day. I love it there and I feel privileged to be part of this charity."

Norman Baillie spoke of the fishing trip. "It was the staff who made the fishing trip so great. Steve Mills, a Sports Instructor at the Brighton centre was there and he partnered me during the trip. In fact Steve caught the fish, but he would say it was team work! I can't praise the staff enough at all the centres as Blind Veterans UK is my saviour."



Picture: The one that didn't get away - Norman Baillie and Steve Mills.

Centre Manager, Mark Lovatt, said: "It was really strange leaving the military, although this does feel like another posting, but for the first time in almost 30 years I've put down permanent roots. It's been such a busy year that I haven't had much time to reflect. We took on a brand new team, there are about 90 of us, and only Cath Klaces had worked for Blind Veterans UK before. It's been a really steep learning curve but a very exciting one that's required a lot of commitment, but we've all really enjoyed it."

"I think the highs are that people recognised us as a Blind Veterans UK centre very quickly. Where we have an impact on the life of a member, or members that just makes you think we've done something good today. We realised very early that we needed to focus everything we do on our members, but to do that really successfully we needed to show really great team work and something that defines us is our can do attitude. We try where possible to answer questions with a yes and then work out afterwards what the detail is and how we do things, and that's been really important. We constantly review our work and look for how we can improve at delivering our service. When I first started, Robert Leader talked about empowerment and that's a principle and a value I've always believed in. I believe when people are empowered collectively they will do the best possible job."

And that shows as Pauline Evans, Care Manager, said: "I've worked in the private care sector for more than 20 years, but working here is so different as the focus is on the member, rather than profit. Their wellbeing is at the centre of everything we do and that means we are able to carry out our care holistically, which is a dream. I have a team of 34 care staff and as I was on the interview board when they first applied I have seen them blossom. That's down to Mark's influence as he sets them free to make their own decisions. In my team I see the impact as morale is high and they are a happy and engaged workforce."

Gaynor Hiscock, a carer at the centre, said: "I've really embraced life as part of the team as I can combine all the things I love doing. I've been a carer for more than 30 years but I was brought up with a passion for the outdoors as my parents had an outdoor hobby for every season. Working here is like a fairy tale as I get to combine my work as a carer with my passion for the outdoors. I've been up Mount Snowdon with members and it was fantastic. As I'm also a qualified swimming coach I have taken them swimming too. I have more sedentary hobbies and love to knit. With Gail Thomas and Lisa Marie Jones, who are also in the care team, we set up Knitter Knatter to raise money to buy things members can enjoy at the centre. In no time at all we raised enough money to buy a jukebox for the day room."

Andy Warburton, Head Chef with TNS Catering Management, the centre's caterers, said: "I've been lucky to get involved in activities, going up Mount Snowdon and on the fishing trip. We had a BBQ at the end of the day when Matt Lee, an IT Instructor here and I cooked the freshly caught fish. It was great."



Picture: The group with the jukebox, including Olive Clark, Malcolm White, Frank Walker and Pauline Evans.



Picture: Gaynor Hiscock with some of the items knitted during Knitter Knatter.



Picture: Olive Clark and Paula Sartain.

Six members hit Moscow for a rally, by Colin Williamson, Cadet Challenge Project Officer.

I was fortunate to be part of a group of six Blind Veterans UK members to compete in the Moscow Rally in July. The group included former Royal Marines Steve Sparkes and Alan (Reggie) Perrin and former soldiers Russell Hart, Gary Lomas and Billy Black. We were guests of Graham Raphael, Chairman of Motorsport Endeavour, a charity that supports disabled drivers here in the UK. Graham is a fantastic supporter of our charity and regularly puts on driving events for our members.

The party set off from Heathrow Airport on Thursday 7th June and after a pleasant four hour flight arrived at Domodedovo Airport, 26 miles south of Moscow centre. After a short hiccup over our transport we finally set off in a terrific downpour to our hotel on the north east outskirts of the city centre. Moscow is three hours ahead of the UK so by the time we arrived and unpacked it was time to get our heads down ready for the briefing by Graham the next morning. Graham had invited along Alan Thompson, who is the Russia based Director of the Russo/British Chamber of Commerce and who was to play a pivotal role in our Moscow experience.

After the briefing we had some free time to explore our surroundings; the Best Western Vega hotel, which was our base for the visit. It was one of four hotels in a complex specifically built to accommodate visitors to the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games and each hotel consisted of 900 rooms spread over 27 floors.

That night we were guests of the British Ambassador to Moscow, Tim Burrows, at his residence overlooking the Kremlin, at a reception to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Everyone had on their finest and we were all proud to wear our Blind Veterans UK member's badge which aroused a lot of attention. We spent most of the evening explaining to various guests, both foreign and British nationals, what Blind Veterans UK is all about and how we support our blind and vision impaired ex-Service men and women. It was an unforgettable evening and one that will live in the memory for years to come. On our way back to our hotel we were chaperoned by Alexander, a former Lieutenant Colonel in the Russian Fleet air arm who is the Defence Attaché at the Kremlin. Alexander, (or Sasha as he is known) took time to stop off at every

Metro station en-route to show us the bronze statues that adorned the various metro station concourses.

Saturday saw us up early (despite the previous night's celebrations!) and we ventured into Moscow city centre via the impressive Moscow Metro system. We emerged out of the station at Red Square into glorious sunshine and the most amazing scenery. We explored the square, bought souvenirs from the stall holders, and watched the very impressive changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Alexander Garden at the Moscow Kremlin. The Tomb is a memorial to all those who died in The Great Patriotic War of 1941-45 (as the war on the Eastern Front of World War II is commonly referred to in Russia). The guards are soldiers of the Kremlin Regiment, a special unit responsible for security of the Moscow Kremlin. We then walked around to Saint Basil's Cathedral on Red Square which was built on the orders of Ivan the Terrible to commemorate the capture of Kazan and Astrakhan. It is one of the most striking and beautiful buildings I have ever seen; truly awe inspiring.

On Sunday Graham and Alan had arranged a coach tour of Moscow where we were joined by members of MAKI, the Moscow Association of Disabled Drivers, who we were to compete against in the car rally the next day. Despite the abysmal weather, it was pouring down; we all enjoyed the tour, excellently translated into English by Ena, one of the organisers of the rally and one of the founders of MAKI. We passed many historic buildings including the former KGB headquarters, the Communist Party HQ, the world famous Bolshoi Ballet and Opera House and the new British Embassy on the riverside. After the tour, we visited a superb museum that catered for blind and vision impaired people and we were invited to handle the various insects and spiders in the 'natural world' exhibit hall. After the museum we were then driven to the 1980 Olympic Velodrome, which doubles as the HQ of MAKI where we were provided with a splendid meal courtesy of our friends at MAKI.

We had to be up at 6am on Monday morning to transfer to the start of the rally which was to be at the Velodrome. Our 'on road' drivers were to be Alan Thompson, Graham Raphael and the British Assistant Defence Attaché to Moscow, Major Catriona (Katy) Caie. We then split into three teams, sorted out the order we were to start in, prepped our vehicles and started the first part of the rally which was to be a slalom course around cones set up on the car park of the Velodrome. Billy Black was the quickest around the course, setting off at breakneck speed and managing to collect quite a collection of traffic cones under the vehicle much to the alarm of a police officer who was forced to take

evasive action to avoid ending up underneath Billy's car!

The 'road' stage of the rally then took place, which unfortunately didn't incorporate an 'off road' section, which would have enabled us to get in a spot of driving. But all in all, it was a great day and we covered roughly 140 miles around an area north of Moscow city centre driving along country roads and through small rural villages. Billy Black and I were forced at one point to change one of the rear wheels of our car after it had suffered a blow out when doing a high speed 'U' turn on a minor road; exciting stuff!

The trip was an unforgettable experience and one that I will remember for a long time to come. We met some marvellous people, made some great friends, saw some wonderful sights and hopefully raised the profile of our incredible charity whilst doing so. Thanks must go to Graham Raphael from Motorsport Endeavour for all of his hard work in arranging the trip and my fellow Blind Veterans UK members for their great company and camaraderie during the visit.



Picture: From left to right, Steve Sparkes, Russell Hart, Graham Raphael, Billy Black, Gary Lomas, Colin Williamson, Alan 'Reggie' Perrin.

Cadet Challenge in Portsmouth by Colin Williamson, Cadet Challenge Project Officer.

We started our challenge on 1st April at 0900 hrs, just outside the gates of the historic dockyard in Portsmouth where we met up with member Gerry Jackson. We had 12 Cadets from Caterham Sea Cadets (TS Zephyr) who were aged between 10 to 15 years and four members of staff who also completed the challenge with the Cadets. We also had two members of staff in support in our unit mini bus who were later joined by Gerry.

Our challenge was to cover the 13.5 mile half marathon distance which was done by six laps running between The HMS Victory and the Royal Navy Memorial at the far end of Southsea. In total we took 7 hours and 20 minutes to complete the challenge in glorious sunshine. We completed three laps and had our lunch at the memorial. We then set off on the second half. At the end of the 5th lap, Gerry gave us the honour of laying a wreath at the RN memorial with two of our Cadets as his escort. I said a few poignant words and we then headed off on the final lap. Once we had completed the challenge CI Jim Greenfield, along with two of our Cadets laid a second wreath at the memorial to the Field Gun teams which lies within the shadow of the Victory.

This was a great experience for Cadets and staff alike. It was great to meet Gerry, and for me to walk with him and to hear some of his experiences was fantastic. I believe we all got so much out of this challenge and it will be something that the Caterham Sea Cadets will never forget.



Picture: The Cadets with Gerry Jackson.

Olympic Torchbearers Billy Baxter and Mike Scholes

Billy Baxter, Rehabilitation and Training Support Worker at the Llandudno centre, recounts an epic day. "Saturday 7th July is an historic day that will be embedded in my memory and my heart forever. I was lucky enough to be one of the Blind Veterans UK members selected to carry the Olympic Torch. I carried it through the streets of the Suffolk town of Bury St Edmunds. Karen my wife and I travelled down together the day before and it was doubly exciting as our daughter Gillian lives there with our four granddaughters. I hadn't seen my youngest granddaughter, little Maisie, and I was really excited to meet her. My other granddaughters were really excited as they knew that granddad was coming down to carry the Olympic Torch in their fine city. There were 17 Torchbearers in total and the atmosphere from the Olympic convoy was like a rolling carnival. The weather was absolutely perfect. The rest of the British Isles was saturated, but Bury St Edmunds basked in perfect sunshine. As I did my leg the massive crowd roared in support and I could hear Gaynor Hiscock, a carer at the Llandudno centre cheering me on, as she was there with her son. I was so proud to be carrying the Torch for Blind Veterans UK and I thought of you all as I carried it, as you were there with me. I did my leg and just as the Torch was about to be deactivated after the 'kiss' my daughter broke through the crowd with Maisie and shouted, 'Dad it's Gillian!' I knelt down and kissed Maisie and said 'look what granddad's got for you, he's got the Olympic Torch, you're an Olympic baby!' It was wonderful and I felt so proud and so privileged and it was all the more special with my family and all my granddaughters there."



Picture: Billy Baxter and the 'kiss' before he set off with Torch.



Picture: Mike Scholes and 'the kiss'. Courtesy of the Mid Sussex Times.

Mike Scholes, a former Royal Navy pilot and founder of his own ballooning company, was the Olympic Torchbearer through Westergate, West Sussex on 16th July. The 300 yard distance was no challenge for multi marathon man Mike, who regularly runs marathons and half marathons on behalf of Blind Veterans UK. He also completed the inaugural 100k in 2011 in just 22 hours. Before losing his sight Mike achieved five British hot air balloon duration records and is one of only nine British pilots to fly a hot air balloon above 31,000ft, which he did in a builder's bag instead of a basket to save weight. He twice won the GB long jump long distance balloon competition flying 231 and 187 miles non-stop.



Picture: Arthur Head of Orpington, Kent, caught up with his grandson Barry MacDonald after he carried the Torch through the streets of Rye.

Proud grandfather Arthur said: "Barry was nominated for all the great charity work he does with the youth in Bromley. He's a fantastic young man and we are all so proud of him."

Six steps to creating your will by Mandy Markwick, Wills and Trust Officer and Rosalind Parry, Gifts in Wills Officer.

Many of us overlook the importance of writing, or keeping, an up to date will. We often put it off, saying 'I'll do it soon' or 'It's too complicated'. The truth is, most wills are very simple and, with the help and advice of a trained professional, can be completed quickly. To help you, we have produced a six step guide to creating your will.

1. Work out your assets

Before arranging to have a will written, it is worth drawing up a list of your assets, together with your debts. This should give you a clearer idea of what your final estate will look like. You could set it out like the list below:

Assets: House, cash savings, bank/building society/savings account, shares, bonds, life policies, pension funds, household contents, jewellery, possessions.

Debts: Mortgage, loans, other debts.

2. Plan who you'll remember

When writing a will, it is important to make sure your family and friends are taken care of first. After providing for family and friends, you may wish to leave a gift in your will to a charity such as Blind Veterans UK. Gifts in wills make up half of Blind Veterans UK's fundraised income and so are vital to our future. All gifts left to charity are free of inheritance tax and you will be helping to support the future of your chosen cause.

Ray Hazan OBE, President of Blind Veterans UK, said 'I have left Blind Veterans UK a gift in my will because it allows me to make a bigger impact than I could ever afford in my lifetime. Gifts in wills are vital to our work and, without them, we wouldn't be able to offer blind veterans support for life'.

3. Choose the type of gift

There are several different types of legacies and choosing how to make your gift is an important decision. Consider each option carefully and select the one that's right for you. A share in your estate, often called a Residuary Legacy This is a gift of the remainder or a percentage of your estate, after all other legacies have been made and debts cleared. Residuary legacies do not lose value over time and are an effective way to divide an estate between a number of people and causes that are important to you.

A cash gift, often called a Pecuniary legacy: This is a gift of a fixed sum of money. The value of pecuniary legacies will decrease over time, as the cost of living increases.

Specific gift: A particular named item left as a gift in your will is known as a specific legacy, for example, a piece of jewellery.

4. Choosing your Executor(s)

You will then need to choose your Executor(s) – the people who deal with distributing your money and property after your death. Being an Executor can involve a lot of work and responsibility, so consider carefully whether the people you want to appoint would be suitable and check with them that they are willing to act on your behalf.

An Executor could be a professional such as a bank, solicitor or accountant. A lay person(s) such as a family member or beneficiary, who has the option of engaging a professional to assist him or her in the administration of the estate. You may wish to ask a charity to act as your Executor and Blind Veterans UK can offer this service.

5. Decide who will draw up your will

There are a number of options when it comes to making your will, but we would recommend consulting a professional. It may seem cheaper and easier to write a will yourself, but a professional will ensure that all the legal formalities are correctly followed and that your will is valid. A valid will gives you peace of mind that your exact wishes will be carried out the way you intended. The options you may wish to consider are a solicitor, a will writer, a bank.

6. Keep it up to date

Keeping your will up to date is just as important as making it. You should consider updating your will every time a 'life event' happens. When you marry, when you have a child or grandchild, when there is a death in the family, if you go to live abroad.

If you would like to discuss making, or changing your will, please call Mandy Markwick, Wills and Trusts Officer, on 01273 391445. Or write to Mandy at Blind Veterans UK, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton BN2 7BS. For information about leaving a gift in your will to Blind Veterans UK please contact Rosalind Parry, Gifts in Wills Officer, on 020 7616 7953, or email legacies@blindveterans.org. **uk** or write to her at Blind Veterans UK, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Anything you discuss will be treated as strictly private and confidential.

Blind Veterans UK Christmas collection for 2012.

As the year progresses, the Christmas season approaches once again and we are pleased to make our new selection of Christmas cards available to order. All of our Christmas cards carry our charity logo and the greeting 'Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year'.

Each pack contains ten cards and envelopes and all prices include VAT. Postage and packaging costs £2.50 on orders worth up to £30, or free on orders worth over £30. To ensure delivery by Christmas, please order by Monday 10th December.

Gift Wrap Pack

This pack contains six sheets and 12 matching gift tags of different designs including snowmen against a blue background, red and green Christmas stockings, green holly leaves, gold bells and the word Noel. Ref: BVE034X. Price: £4.00.



Christmas Cottage.

The Christmas card shows a beautiful snow covered house lit up inside in the night sky with a Christmas tree outside the house. Ref: BVE028X. Size: 159x159mm. Price: £3.95.

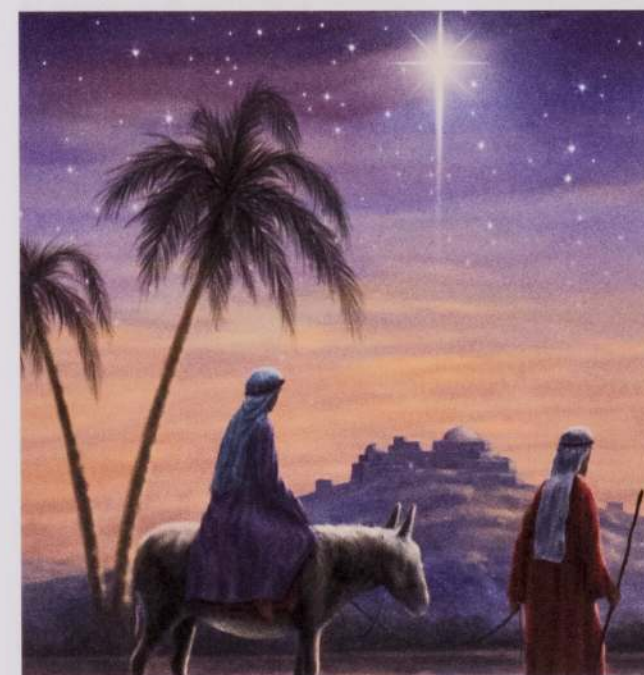
Christmas Church

Christmas Church card, snow covered rooftop, with a snowman and a beautifully decorated Christmas tree in the foreground. Ref: BVE030X, Size: 159x159mm, Price: £3.95



Mary and Joseph

Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem under a starry moonlight sky. Ref: BVE024X, Size: 121x171mm, Price: £3.50.



Peace on Earth

A beautiful white dove is in-flight with a piece of mistletoe in its beak. It is flying through a starry night sky against the backdrop of Bethlehem. Ref: BVE025X, Size: 159x159mm, Price: £3.75.



Christmas Foliage. Mistletoe, holly, acorns and other wintery plants on an ivory background with a red border. Ref: BVE033X, Size: 137x137mm, Price: £3.50

Christmas Time

A red breasted robin sits peacefully on a holly branch, dusted lightly in snow.
Ref: BVE031X, Size: 137x137mm, Price: £3.75.



The adoration of the Shepherds

Mary and Joseph look over baby Jesus along with the shepherds.
Ref: BVE026X, Size: 159x159mm, Price: £3.75



Village Scene

A snowy path leading up to a beautifully lit up village with the village church in the background. Ref: BVE027X, Size: 137x137mm, Price: £3.95.



Snowy Village

A traditional snowy village scene, cottages and the village church nestle into the snow. Ref: BVE029X, Size: 121x228mm, Price: £3.75



Santa with Reindeer

Santa holding a sack full of presents with his reindeer. Ref: BVE032X, Size: 121x171mm, Price: £3.50.

Sleeping cat tea towel

A tea towel designed by Simon Drew. A cat sleeps on a green and yellow striped cushion with tulips in the background. 100% Cotton. Ref: BVE008E, Price: £4.95



Tall duck tea towel

A tea towel designed by Simon Drew. A duck stands tall with the caption Tall, duck and handsome. 100% cotton. Ref: BVE007E. Price: £4.95.

To place your orders please telephone: 0845 450 8446, or order from the website at: www.blindveterans.org.uk/shop

Colin Williamson's Beer of the Month Young's London Gold.

A perfect summer beer. This beer pours a nice golden colour (unsurprisingly) with a clean white head. As it's bottle conditioned, care has to be taken when pouring as there will be sediment at the bottom. The aroma is malty, a slight hoppiness and apples. There are some traces of bread or grains too.

The taste is definitely bitterish with a nice malty undertone and with a hint of honey lurking about. It's a nicely balanced beer with a good mouthfeel and at 4.8% makes a decent session ale. Young's is a well established brewery who are incidentally the largest UK owned family brewery

and beer has been brewed on the Wandsworth site since the 1550s. Young's brewers joined up with another famous UK brewery, Charles Wells, and moved from Wandsworth to Bedford in 2006.



Answers to 10 questions on... the subject of ... languages from page 9.

1. Aperitif.
2. Vendetta.
3. Monsoon.
4. Nom de plume.
5. Nark.
6. USA.
7. German.
8. Mexico.
9. French, the composer was the Frenchman Bizet.
10. Student

Family News.

Congratulations to:

Colin and Brenda Williamson on the birth of their grandson Leon Fee, who was born to Claire Williamson & Kriss Fee on 26th July 2012, weighing 7lb 13oz.

Chris Bennett and Shiryl on the birth of Bailey Karl Gerry Bennett on 2nd August

Birthdays:

Happy 103rd birthday to Leslie Smith of Chichester, West Sussex on 6th August and to Vivien Mary Jerome of Cookham, Berkshire on 13th August.

Happy 100th birthday to Stefan Ciesla of Chessington, Surrey on 18th August and to Leonard Hubbard of Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex on 22nd August.

Anniversaries:

Platinum (70th):

Doug and Marjorie Tindall of Bognor Regis, West Sussex on 8th August.
Arthur and Joyce Harris of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 20th August.

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Reg and Babs Bell of Buckingham, Bucks on 9th August.
Michael and Sybil Hansen of Lancaster, Lancs on 16th August.
Henry and Olive Bloor of Stafford, Staffs on 30th August.

Diamond (60th):

Ronald and Joyce Robinson of Middlesbrough, Cleveland on 2nd August.
John and Sheila Gilmour of York on 2nd August.
Geoffrey and Patricia Rudge of Amble, Northumberland on 9th August.
Graham and Sylvia Dower of Exeter, Devon on 9th August.
Fred and Nora Jefferies of Hemel Hempstead, Herts on 9th August.
Raymond and Peggy Leveson of Lytham St Annes, Lancs on 16th August.
David and Jean Lloyd of Welshpool, Powys on 23rd August.
Emlyn and Gwen Davies of Penmaenmawr, Conwy on 25th August.
Tom and Mary Sidaway of Stockton on Tees, Cleveland on 29th August.
Stanley and Alynne Reed of Newcastle upon Tyne on 30th August.
Ted and Betty Neville of North Walsham, Norfolk on 30th August.

Golden (50th):

Graham and Jacqueline Wood of Haywards Heath, West Sussex on 4th August.
John and Sue Lea of Tetbury, Glos on 6th August.
Alan and Jen Brown of Bristol, Avon on 25th August.
Raymond and Rosemary Feakes of Stockton on Tees, Cleveland on 25th August.

Pearl (30th):

Lewis and Rosemary Smith of Hull, East Yorkshire on 9th August.

We regret to announce the death of:

Lily Allingan who died on 11th July 2012, she was the widow of the late John Allingan.

Margaret Finch who died on 5th July 2012, she was the wife of Peter Finch.

Audrey Gaygan who died on 17th July 2012, she was the widow of the late Thomas Gaygan.

Marjorie Healy who died in May 2012, she was the widow of the late Frederick Healy.

Joan 'Jan' Jones who died on 1st July 2012, she was the wife of John 'Jack' Jones.

Marjorie Kavanagh who died on 2nd July 2012, she was the wife of member Henry Kavanagh.

Dorothy Leonard who died on 1st May 2012, she was the widow of the late Harry Leonard.

Winifred 'Win' Miller who died on 19th July 2012, she was the wife of member Charles Miller.

Lilian Rees who died on 20th July 2012, she was the wife of Leonard Rees.

Ellen Richardson who died on 26th February 2012, she was the wife of member Derek Richardson.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to their widows, widowers, family and friends.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK

Arthur Ainsworth of Burnley, Lancs Served in the South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) and the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1946.

Reverend Frank Andrew of Lingfield Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Winifred Armstrong of Oadby, Leicester Served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Rita Beresford of Sheffield Served in the Women's Royal Auxiliary Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

Harold Brown of Sheffield Served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Adam Brownlie of East Kilbride, Glasgow Served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Graham Colley of Droitwich, Worcs Served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Frank Cooke of Wirral, Merseyside Served in the General Service Corps, the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1946 to 1948.

Doreen Cooper of Lymington, Hants Served in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Nursing Service from 1942 to 1946.

Harry Crosbie of Liverpool Served in the South Lancashire Regiment (The Princes of Wales's Volunteers) from 1955 to 1959.

Joseph Crowther of Rotherham, South Yorkshire Served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Signals from 1943 to 1947.

Bernard Daniels of Swaffham, Norfolk Served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1977.

Robin (Fred) Delderfield of Hemel Hempstead, Herts Served in the Royal Navy from 1968 to 1992.

Robert Dunbar of Kentish Town, London Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

Michael Evans of Wirral, Merseyside Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Geoffrey Kerr of Taunton, Somerset Served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1952.

Peter Gibson of Marlborough, Wilts Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1945.

John Goodchild of Ferryhill, County Durham Served in the Royal Anglian Regiment and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1960 to 1966.

Albert Gorton of Burnley, Lancs Served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1949 to 1951.

Roy Harris of Bourne, Lincs served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1957.

David Hazelgrove of Skegness, Lincs Served in the Royal Air Force from 1971 to 1984.

Edward Howarth of Blackburn, Lancs Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Michael Jenkins of Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Signals from 1956 to 1963.

Violet John of Glasgow Served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Edward Jones of Rotherham, South Yorks Served in the Royal Air Force from

1957 to 1959.

Iltyd 'Paul' Jones of Highfields, Stafford Served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1969.

Donald Journeaux of Rushden, Northants Served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

Barbara Kennett of Walton-On-Thames, Surrey Served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1940 to 1949.

Sidney King of Eastbourne, East Sussex Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1951.

Vincent Martin of Alloa, Clackmannanshire Served in the Royal Engineers from 1972 to 1978.

Stuart Mcfarlane of Falkirk Served in the 51st Highland (7 Scots) from 1973 to 1976.

Desmond Morgan of Neath, West Glamorgan Served in the Royal Artillery from 1952 to 1958.

Nigel Noel-Hill of Milton Keynes, Bucks Served in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1949 to 1955.

Reverend Denis Newman of Taunton, Somerset Served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1949 to 1955.

Clifford Oliver of Ammanford, Dyfed Served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1957.

George Pleasance of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

John Roberts of Raynes Park, South West London Served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Charles Robertson of Edinburgh Served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

George Rushmore MBE of Reigate, Surrey Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Robert Sawyer of Swansea Served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1952.

Thomas Scott of Cramlington, Northumberland Served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Alexander Sim of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire Served in the Gordon Highlanders from 1960 to 1972.

Roy Stout of Sheffield Served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

John Tomblin of Burnley, Lancs Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Eric Turner of Sheffield Served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Patrick Venstone of Dunstable, Beds Served in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1953 to 1958.

Edgar Waller of Redhill, Surrey Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1945.

Anne Williams of South Shields, Tyne and Wear Served in the Women's Royal Army Corps from 1951 to 1956.

Reginald White of Seisdon, Wolverhampton Served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Henry Winter of Cardigan, Dyfed Served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1958 to 1960.

Walter Worthington of Sudbury, Suffolk Served in the General Service Corps, the Royal Armoured Corps, and the Army Catering Corps from 1942 to 1947.

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, family and friends.

Arthur 'John' Adlem, General Service Corps, the Dorset Regiment, Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's)

Arthur 'John' Adlem of Hungerford, Berkshire died on 24th July 2012, aged 83. He joined the General Service Corps in 1947. After training he transferred to the Royal Berkshire Regiment and was posted to Egypt, East Africa and Eritrea, where he served as a Medical Orderly in a field hospital. He was discharged as a Private in 1953. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Irene Bell-Brown, Women's Royal Air Force

Irene Bell-Brown of Epsom, Surrey died on 25th June 2012, aged 83. After three years in the Land Army she joined the WRAF in 1950 and became a PT instructor. She Served in the UK, Bad Eilsen in Germany and Sylt near Denmark. She was discharged as a Corporal in 1954. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Colin Cooke, Royal Air Force

Colin Cooke of West Malling, Kent died on 12th July 2012, aged 96. A meteorologist he was commissioned in the RAF as a Met Officer in 1943. He Served at RAF Scampton with Bomber Command and other stations before discharge as a Flying Officer in 1945. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Leonard Cridland, General Service Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps

Leonard Cridland of Solihull, West Midlands died on 1st March 2012, aged 86. He joined the General Service Corps for National Service in 1946 and transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps a month later. He was discharged in 1948. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Denys Derry, Royal Signals

Denys Derry of Wolverhampton died on 6th July 2012, aged 95. He joined the Royal Signals in 1940. He was sent to Northern Europe after the Normandy invasion and was attached to the 51st Highland Division. He was discharged as a Lance Corporal in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

James Ellison, Royal Air Force

James Ellison of Preston, Lancs died on 25th June 2012, aged 83. He volunteered for the RAF in 1946, qualifying as a Driver/Mechanic. He was posted to Egypt and thereafter to Israel and Jordan. He returned to the UK and spent a brief period in Bedford followed by 30 Maintenance Unit at Stafford. He was demobilised as a Corporal in 1954. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Margaret 'Margo' Gardner, Queen Alexander's Imperial Military Nursing Service

Margaret 'Margo' Gardner of Stroud, Glocs died on 14th July 2012, aged 90. She joined the QAIMNS in 1944 and Served in France and Germany before she was posted to India for a year. She returned to Serve at the British Military Hospital in Netley, near Southampton and was discharged as a Lieutenant in 1948. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Henry Glass, Royal Air Force

Henry Glass of Coleford, Glocs died on 15th June 2012, aged 91. He joined the RAF in 1941 and was posted to RAF Drem near Edinburgh. Responsible for aircraft maintenance work he was also involved with the first steel mesh runways. He was discharged as a Leading Aircraftsman in 1944 due to poor eyesight. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Hester 'Frances' George, Women's Royal Naval Service

Hester 'Frances' George of Maidenhead, Berks died on 25th June 2012, aged 91. She joined the WRNS in 1943 with the ambition of flying but was posted to Bletchley Park. She was also based at Woburn Abbey before discharge in 1946. Following Service she remained in the Foreign Office and worked in London. Our sympathy goes to all members of her family.

Russell 'Russ' Goodwin, Irish Guards

Russell 'Russ' Goodwin of March, Cambs died on 1st July 2012, aged 86. He

joined the Irish Guards in 1944. He went to Norway in 1945, did ceremonial duties in London, and was posted to Palestine in 1947. He was discharged in 1948. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

James Greaves, General Service Corps and the Royal Military Police

James Greaves of County Durham died on 7th July 2012, aged 88. For National Service he joined the General Service Corps in 1946, transferring to the Royal Military Police in 1947. He was posted to Colchester with 156 Provost Company. He was discharged in 1948. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

William 'Bill' Griffiths, Royal Air Force

William 'Bill' Griffiths MBE of Blackpool, Lancs died on 20th July 2012, aged 92. He served with the RAF from 1941 to 1946. Captured in Java he became a prisoner of war. He was a 50 year badge holder. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Peter Hardman, King's Regiment and the Royal Pioneer Corps

Peter Hardman of Widnes, Cheshire died on 1st May 2012, aged 80. He was called up for National Service in 1949 and joined the Kings Regiment. He was later transferred to the Pioneer Corps and spent his Service in the UK until discharge in 1951. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Eric Hedderick, Irish Guards

Eric Hedderick of Liverpool died on 6th July 2012, aged 73. He Served in the Irish Guards in 1957 as a Guardsman. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Lawrence 'Laurie' Johnson, Royal Fusiliers

Lawrence 'Laurie' Johnson of Brentwood, Essex died on 8th July 2012, aged 95. He joined the Royal Fusiliers in 1939, Served in North Africa and took part in the invasion of Italy. While there he received gunshot wounds in the right shoulder, head and left leg. He was discharged medically unfit as a Lance Sergeant in 1944. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Hugh Jones, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards

Hugh Jones of Radstock, Somerset died on 21st May aged 92. He joined the Welsh Guards in 1938 and in 1939 he was posted to Gibraltar and later to Arras in France prior to the Dunkirk evacuation. After preparations for D-Day, he

returned to France on D+5 advancing through Belgium and Holland prior to discharge as a Lance Sergeant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Keith Lusted, Royal Artillery

Keith Lusted of Glynde, East Sussex died on 28th June 2012, aged 91. He joined the Royal Artillery (TA) in 1937 and was deployed to France at the outbreak of the war, subsequently being evacuated through Dunkirk. He attended OCTU at Catterick and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery 113th Field Regiment. He was deployed to Iraq, followed by North Africa and later Salerno, taking part in the Italian campaign. He was discharged as a Captain in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Anthony 'Tony' Matthews, Royal Signals and the Royal Engineers

Anthony 'Tony' Matthews of Shipley, West Yorkshire died on 5th July 2012, aged 78. He was called up for National Service in 1955 and trained as a Signaller and joined the Royal Signals. He was posted to Germany with the 7th Armoured Division Signals Regiment; he completed full time Service in 1957 and remained on part time Service with the Royal Engineers until 1960. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

James Moore, Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Artillery

James Moore of Mayfield, East Sussex died on 12th July 2012, aged 95. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1939 and was commissioned. He went to France with the BEF and was evacuated from Dunkirk. The French ship his unit was on was turned away at Dover harbour entrance and diverted to Cherbourg. He and his colleagues eventually obtained passage back to Southampton. He was later posted to East Africa, mainly Somalia, for the rest of the war. Discharged in 1946 he joined the TA with whom he Served until 1950 when he was discharged as a Captain. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Arthur Morton, Royal Army Service Corps

Arthur Morton of Brough, East Yorkshire died on 6th July 2012, aged 100. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1940 and Served in the UK, North Africa and Italy. He was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Robert Perkins, Royal Armoured Corps

Robert Perkins of Torquay, Devon died on 30th July 2012, aged 82. He Served with the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment in BAOR, UK and the New Territories in Hong Kong from 1947 to 1952 as a Trooper. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Cyril 'Bill' Potter, Royal Engineers

Cyril 'Bill' Potter of Accrington, Lancs died on 7th June 2012, aged 91. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1939 and was posted to Basra, Iraq for 3½ years before working on airfields in Persia and Lebanon. He then Served in Egypt prior to returning to the UK and subsequently landed in Normandy on D-Day with 30 Corps. He was loaned to the US forces fighting through to Germany, clearing damaged tanks to make way for the advancing troops. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Gilbert Robertson, Royal Navy

Gilbert Robertson of Gosport, Hants died on 10th July 2012, aged 78. He joined the Royal Navy in 1951 and trained as an electrician. He Served onboard 10 ships including, HMS Helmsdale, HMS Birdhead Bay, HMS Ark Royal, HMS Puma, HMS Duchess, HMS Blake, HMS Cleopatra and HMS Lowestoft. He went to the Far East, Middle East, Antarctic, Mediterranean and South Africa, completing his Service in 1974. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Henry 'Harry' Rodney, Royal Scots Regiment

Henry 'Harry' Rodney of High Wycombe, Bucks died on 3rd July 2012, aged 94. He joined the Royal Scots Regiment in 1940. Deployed to North Africa with the 8th Army (the Desert Rats) he took part in the Italian invasion, moving up the western coast to Rome and Monte Cassino. He then Served in Gibraltar, Egypt and Palestine before discharge as a Corporal in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Joseph Sellers, General Service Corps, Cheshire Regiment, Army Air Corps

Joseph Sellers of Bangor, Gwynedd died on 18th June 2012, aged 87. He volunteered for the Army in 1943 and joined the General Service Corps. He transferred to the Cheshire Regiment and later to the Army Air Corps as a parachutist. He deployed to France on D+3 and moved through Belgium, Holland and finally Germany. He was later sent to Palestine before discharge in 1947 as a Corporal. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

George Simkins, General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery

George Simkins of Capenhurst, Chester died on 14th July 2012, aged 82. He initially joined the General Service Corps in 1948 for National Service before transferring to the Royal Artillery. He was posted to Larkhill and Manorbiers, the school of Heavy Artillery in South Wales. He was discharged in 1949 as a Gunner. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Kenneth 'Ken' Spencer, Royal Navy

Kenneth 'Ken' Spencer of Locks Heath, Southampton died on 26th June 2012, aged 87. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941, qualified as an Electrical Artificer and served in HMS Hogue, HMS Whitsands Bay and HMS Whirlwind, a destroyer. He later joined the submarine service, serving on eight different boats around the world, always in the Far East, notably Australia, China, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Malta. He retired in 1965 as an Electrical Artificer 1st Class. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Donald 'Don' Urquhart, Royal Navy

Donald 'Don' Urquhart of Widnes, Cheshire died on 13th July 2012, aged 89. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and qualified as a gunnery rating. He served in frigates and destroyers, escorting convoys in the Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean before being discharged as an Able Seaman in 1946. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Norman Wallbridge, Royal Air Force

Norman Wallbridge of Hailsham, East Sussex died on 17th July 2012, aged 92. He served in the RAF from 1940 in Canada, the Pacific Ocean, Australia and Africa. He was discharged in 1946 as a Corporal. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

Leonard 'Len' Webb, Royal Artillery

Leonard 'Len' Webb of Cowley, Oxford died on 29th June 2012, aged 94. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and deployed to France with the British Expeditionary Force. After the allied invasion of Northern Europe he went to Germany and his unit was involved with the liberation of Belsen concentration camp. He was discharged in 1946 as a Bombardier. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.

William Young, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

William Young of Immingham, Lincolnshire died on 9th July 2012, aged 77. He did his National Service in the UK from 1956 to 1959, leaving as a Craftsman. Our sympathy goes to all members of his family.