

July 2013

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: 'Keeping an Eye on our Borders', by Derek O'Rourke. It is one of the winning entries chosen to feature on the 25th Anniversary postcards of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists.

Review



July 2013 | No 1037

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Blind Veterans UK Calendar

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

July

Raft building & paddle round the pier

1st - 6th **B**

Writers' Forum 4th - 6th **B**

Music Week 7th - 13th **L**

The Band of HM's Royal Marines

Concert 10th **B**

August

Amateur Radio Week 2nd - 10th **B**

Race Week 4th - 10th **B**

Recreation Taster Week 11th - 17th **L**

Writers' Forum 17th **B**

Activities Week 19th - 24th **B**

Archery Club (III) 23rd - 31st **B**

September

South Downs Way walk 6th to 10th **B**

75th Anniversary Pamper Week 9th - 14th **B**

Cycling Week 15th - 21st **L** - Writers' Forum 21st **B**

History Week 22nd - 28th **B** - Walking Week 30th - 5th October **L**

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

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From the Chairman.

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

In spite of all the good that goes on in and around this country, it is a sad but unavoidable fact that every now and then we are reminded of the harsh realities of life. Of course the news media routinely covers stories of crimes of all sorts, but the brutal murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in a busy London street in broad daylight came as a ghastly shock to us all. How could people do that to someone they had never previously met? How could they plummet to such depths of depravity? Apart from any other feelings I had about the twisted perpetrators of this appalling and disgusting assault who must have been systematically brainwashed over a lengthy period of time, it made me think about the quality of the community that they had grown up in and lived amongst. Did anyone really care about them? Did anyone notice that they seemed to be going off the rails, that they were becoming isolated, and if so did they do anything about it? It also made me remember, as I often do, how fortunate we are to live in a community that does reach out to those in trouble or in need, that does care, and that does react when those around us are struggling. It is up to all of us to remember the responsibilities we all have to uphold the quality and the strength of our Blind Veterans UK community.

The month of May saw another tremendously successful annual visit by a group of our American cousins, the Blinded Veterans Association. There are more details of the week later in this Review (see page 8) but I would like to thank and congratulate all those involved – staff, members and volunteers. Having people to stay for a week and filling the programme with interesting and fun activities takes a huge amount of time and effort – and patience! Needless to say it was all done without fuss, with characteristic enthusiasm, and to tremendous effect. Well done all concerned.

As I write this, summer seems to be finally arriving. What a relief! I hope you all thoroughly enjoy it while it lasts, and have the opportunity to re-charge your batteries in the very welcome sunshine. Unless of course it has disappeared by the time you read this!

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Christmas accommodation at the Brighton and Llandudno centres.

It's almost that time of year again, when we need to start thinking about accommodation bookings for the Christmas period. Both the Brighton and Llandudno centres are open for Christmas and New Year bookings, giving our members the choice of a festive stay at two different centres. This year we are offering a one or two week holiday at Brighton and the choice of either a week at Christmas and or a week at New Year at our Llandudno centre. The holiday weeks will take place from 20th to 22nd December and from 27th to 29th December at the Llandudno centre.

As per previous years, Christmas bookings must follow a different process from regular bookings. Bookings for this period can only be taken and accepted via your Welfare Officer. Bookings for individuals are assessed on a level of social and care needs. All bookings will be confirmed by the middle of November to allow for alternative arrangements to be made if applications are unsuccessful. We will start to take bookings from Welfare Officers on 1st September, with applications closing on 1st October.

Members who apply for accommodation during the festive season have the choice to stay for one or two weeks at Brighton, depending upon availability and transport. Arrivals, which are dependent upon transport availability and regions, will begin from 20th to 22nd December. Departures will take place from 3rd to 4th January. These dates are just approximations and are subject to slight change as per transport schedules.

As in previous years, a surcharge will be applied to those who come into Brighton and Llandudno over the Christmas and New Year period, which reflects the significant cost of the extra food, drink and activities which we provide. The surcharge for 2012/13 will be £40 for the Christmas and New Year period. We look forward to seeing many of you for Christmas and New Year.

Harry Beevers's 10 questions on the subject of Rome and the Romans.

1. Julius Caesar was warned to beware the Ides of March, the day of his assassination. On what date did the Ides of March fall?
2. Which Roman Emperor was accused by his contemporaries of starting the great fire of Rome in 64 AD?
3. Hadrian's Wall is situated in the north of England, in which country of the UK was the Wall of Antonius?
4. Played by Kirk Douglas in a 1960 film, who led an army of slaves in a war against the Romans from 73-71 BC?
5. Who was described as the noblest Roman of them all?
6. DCLI are the initials of the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry but for what did the Roman numeral DCLI stand?
7. If 100 Romans were decimated how many were left?
8. Who entered Colchester on an elephant to celebrate his conquest becoming the first Emperor to set foot on British soil; Julius Caesar or Claudius?
9. In which English city, known to the Romans as Lindum, is the Newport Arch, said to be the only Roman archway in this country still used by traffic?
10. London or Londinium was made capital of Britannia Superior about 200 AD. Which city known as Eboracum was made capital of Britannia Inferior?

25th Anniversary of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists.

This year the Royal College of Ophthalmologists celebrates its 25th anniversary. To celebrate they asked staff in Blind Veterans UK's Art & Craft Department to ask members to design artwork to be used on the college's mail. A competition was launched at the centres and in the March edition of the Review. Some very impressive artwork was received, which was sent off to the college where it was judged by Professor Harminder Singh Dua, FRCOphth, MD, PhD, President of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists.

The front page of this month's Review features one of the winning designs, chosen by Professor Dua. It is by Derek O'Rourke from West Lothian. (See interview on pages 20 to 23.)

Another winning design, this time by John Hodgson from Truro, is shown featured below.



Picture: Staying Afloat by John Hodgson.

Professor Dua is also a consultant civilian adviser to the Royal Air Force, and is known for research using stem cells to regrow the cornea. He works with the Centre for Defence Medicine to develop research on techniques that can be used in war theatres.

Professor Harminder Dua was elected President of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists in May 2011. He is Chair and Professor of Ophthalmology, at the University of Nottingham and is the Head of the Division of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. His special area of interest is the cornea and ocular surface disease and refractive surgery. He is also Editor in Chief of the British Journal of Ophthalmology and President of EuCornea, the European society of Cornea and Ocular surface disease specialists.

Professor Dua is celebrated for his discovery of the Dua Layer, a previously undetected component of the eye, that he identified for the first time.

Speaking of his work he said: "Having identified this new and distinct layer, deep in the tissue of the cornea, we can now exploit its presence to make operations much safer and simpler for patients. From a clinical perspective, there are many diseases that affect the back of the cornea, which clinicians across the world are already beginning to relate to the presence, absence or tear in this layer. It is an unusual find because it is part of the anatomy and most anatomy has been sorted out long, long ago. There's a lot we didn't understand, which all falls into place because of this discovery."

Specialists previously believed the cornea to be made of five layers.

They proved the existence of the new one by simulating corneal transplants and grafts on human eyes donated for research to eye banks.

During the surgery, tiny bubbles of air were injected into the cornea to gently separate the various layers.

The team then subjected them to electron microscopy, giving a view of the layers at many thousand times their actual size.

Project Gemini III. British and American veterans peer to peer support programme, by Colin Williamson, Cadet Challenge Project Officer.

On 13th May 2013, President Obama welcomed Prime Minister David Cameron to the White House, where the two leaders discussed issues ranging from economic development to the unfolding conflict in Syria. President Obama said: "The great alliance between the United States and the United Kingdom is rooted in shared interests and shared values, and it's indispensable to global security and prosperity. But as we've seen again recently, it's also a partnership of the heart."

Speaking from the White House of the alliance Prime Minister David Cameron, said. "The relationship between Britain and the United States is a partnership without parallel. Day in, day out, across the world, our diplomats and intelligence agencies work together, our soldiers Serve together, and our businesses trade with each other."

As veterans we have Served with members of America's Armed Forces, and now, through Project Gemini, the transatlantic peer to peer support programme, British and American veterans share a great alliance where we learn from one another. On Saturday 18th May 2013 we welcomed six members of the Blinded Veterans Association of America (BVA) to our Brighton centre, for the third Project Gemini. We were privileged to host the BVA's executive director, Al Avina, along with long standing friend of Blind Veterans UK, Dr Tom Zampieri and BVA members Don Overton, Captain Ivan Castro, James Nealey and Sean Johnson. The Blind Veterans UK members were Scott Wall, Chris Nowell, Karl (Charlie) Parkinson and Ken Facal. Staff members were Colin Williamson, Simon Brown, Louise Timms, Inderpal Kallah and Esther Freeman.

Mirroring the strong alliance between the UK and USA Dr Tom Zampieri, Director Government Relations, Blinded Veterans Association, said: "Project Gemini has accomplished improving communications between our Pentagon, Department of Veterans Affairs, vision research organisations, professional organisations, and military eye care specialists here and in the UK. In a very short time we have brought together eye trauma military specialists, vision researchers, and rehabilitation staff and senior leaders to improve care and coordination of services, which is an outstanding accomplishment.

"Project Gemini and the BVA Operation Peer Support Programme that occurs during our national convention each August will continue to be a great shining example of two veteran organisations being able to assist our membership and future veterans and raise the levels of awareness about what we are doing with this effort."

After collecting the group from Heathrow on the 18th we headed to Port Hall, which was our base for the week. After dumping their kit (no time to unpack!) the party was taken for a traditional Sunday lunch at the Smugglers Rest in nearby Peacehaven, where we enjoyed a superb meal from the Carvery, washed down with a few pints of English ale. It was a tired bunch who departed from the pub and were whisked back to Port Hall to unpack and have a rest before getting introduced to each other in the evening and generally relaxing.

Monday was an early start as we were heading into London for the day and Southern Rail generously supplied us with free rail tickets for the entire group and a reserved carriage with our very own refreshments trolley which was greatly appreciated. Our first activity for the day was the now obligatory Duck Tour, which takes place on board a canary yellow Second World War amphibious vehicle, which takes you around the capital's landmarks by road, before finishing with a ride on the Thames.

After lunch we had a date with Baroness Kingsmill in the House of Lords for afternoon tea. The Baroness very kindly took us on a short tour of this impressive building and explained something of the history surrounding this magnificent edifice. A traditional afternoon tea was then served in the elegant dining room and then we were invited to sit in and listen to a debate in the chambers. I'm sure I can speak for everyone when I say how much we enjoyed the visit and many thanks indeed to Baroness Kingsmill for her generosity and hospitality. After tea we wandered over to the Union Jack Club in Waterloo for a presentation by Matt Taylor, the marketing manager, regarding its history. This was followed by a meal of good old bangers and mash and bread and butter pudding!

Tuesday was spent at our Brighton centre where we took our guests on a tour of our fantastic facility and then it was off to the sports hall for an archery competition between the two organisations to celebrate the building's 75th anniversary. I'm pleased to report that the winners were the Blind Veterans UK team! In the early evening we took the undercliff walk to the Marina where we

had a game of ten pin bowling followed by dinner.

Wednesday took us to Lewes to take part in a Treasure Trail, which was tremendous fun and in the evening our group spent the night in the bar at the Brighton centre getting to meet some of the older members and residents. Our guests were treated to Britain's favourite dish, good old fish and chips with mushy peas and curry sauce! Thursday morning was spent at beautiful Arundel Castle and in the afternoon we made the short journey to Amberley Heritage Museum for a wander around the site and a trip on board a vintage double decker bus. For anyone who has never visited the museum, it is very interesting and a great way to spend an afternoon. In the evening we were at Brighton Dog Track where some members of the group were invited to present trophies to the owners of the winning dogs and the others lost various amounts of money!

On Friday we were given a 'behind the scenes' tour of the Brighton Sea Life centre which was very well received and a big thank you to Max at the Sea Life centre for making it so much fun. After lunch we headed off to the magnificent Brighton Pavilion for an audio tour of this wonderful building. If you're ever in Brighton please take some time out to visit this extravagant palace, it is a remarkable place.

On Friday evening we had the infamous BBQ and live band at the Brighton centre, where we were entertained by the fabulous Mike and the Meerkats, who went down really well and had everyone up on their feet! The BBQ was outstanding, many thanks to Paul and his staff at PBK and the only thing that was missing was the old lady with her walking stick from last year's finale night who gave the drummer a good thrashing for playing too loudly! Our American guests presented us with some marvellous gifts and memorabilia to hang on our 'Project Gemini' section on the wall in the main floor corridor and they in turn were presented with a few tokens of our appreciation for helping to make it a marvellous week of friendship and camaraderie. Many thanks to President Ray Hazan OBE and Chief Executive Robert Leader for their part in the proceedings, it was much appreciated. It was great to have Trustees Tim and Marylyn Bacon and, Rear Admiral Stephen and Erica Meyer at the BBQ. It was a treat when Robert accepted a pendant from James Nealey and said that he understood James thought himself tall, but he had been told to call him Shorty, which he did - James is an impressive 6' 5"! Standing at 6'7" Robert was the taller of the two, which was a first for James.

Saturday was spent in Brighton where a few members of the group risked injury and possible law suits by driving the dodgem cars on the pier. The afternoon was a mad dash to get that last minute souvenir shopping done and pack for the journey home the following day. In the evening we went along to a lovely old pub restaurant called the 'Cock' at Ringmer where we had a superb meal and Simon Brown presented everyone with some novelty gifts and a great time was had by all.

All in all, another amazing week with our American friends and another fantastic event for Project Gemini. We can learn so much from one another and I believe that both organisations really benefit from our alliance. Long may it continue. Thanks to everyone for making it such a brilliant week. The transport drivers, all of the staff who we came into contact with at our Brighton centre, the PR team at Harcourt Street, Robbie and Ray Hazan, Barbara Sweeney, Nathan Clements, Catherine Goodier, Marika Kato, Bill Lyth, Louise Timms, Simon Brown, Inderpal Kallah, Esther Freeman, the members of Blind Veterans UK and the Blinded Veterans Association who participated in the event and everyone who assisted at Lewes. You all played your part in making it another memorable occasion. Thank you.



Picture: L to R Sean Johnson, Captain Ivan Castro, Colin Williamson, Dr Tom Zampieri, Chris Nowell, James Nealey, BVA Executive Director Al Avina, Karl 'Charlie' Parkinson, Simon Brown, Ken Facal, Don Overton and Scott Wall.

George Fallowfield, by W A 'Ted' Heasman.

I am a member of Blind Veterans UK, having been accepted in July 2012. From 1943 to 1946 I Served in the Royal Navy in South East Asia and the home waters of the UK. Before the war I was a window cleaner and that's what I returned to. I spent my working life in the small coastal town of Southwick in West Sussex, mid-way between Brighton and Worthing. George Fallowfield, who was a WWI member of Blind Veterans UK, and his wife were customers of mine. They lived with their daughter in Southview Road.

George was one of the earliest members of Blind Veterans UK. As a result of injuries sustained in WWI he had dual sensory impairment and was totally blind and deaf. The only way to communicate with George was to touch the palm of his hand and spell out the words. That was something I learnt to do, albeit very slowly. It was amazing to watch as his wife stroked his hand and he would laugh at what she had told him.

When I cleaned their windows I would go to the back door and see Mrs Fallowfield, who would usually tell me that George was in his workshop in the garden. I would go in and he would turn round and hold out his hand for me to 'speak' with him. I would touch his hand with a wet cloth and he would say: "Hello Ted". I would stand and watch him work and he would chatter away. He had a strange voice, as he had not been able to hear anyone speak for more than 30 years. He usually wanted to know what was happening around town. As he would ask questions that needed a yes or no answer, I was able to answer quite easily.

George was an amazing model maker and I remember he once made a clinker built boat. I know he wrote a letter to Winston Churchill to ask if he might have a few of his cigar boxes, which were duly sent by Mr Churchill. He took the boxes to pieces and used the wood to make a model. One of his models was displayed at an exhibition in London. The models were made from detailed instructions in Braille that had been prepared for him by Blind Veterans UK.

To accurately measure his work he used rulers with nicks in the side and he would take the information from the plan to produce his models. I remember one occasion when he wanted to paint the bottom of the boat to the water line with a straight line. He achieved this by carefully measuring and inserting a row of razor blades along the hull, which he then painted below. When the

paint was dry he took the razor blades out and he had a perfect straight line. To me it was quite amazing to see him do this. George died on 1st September 1979. The following piece of poetry, by George Porter, who lived near George, and who was also one of my customers, describes George very well.

George Fallowfield, by George Porter, October 1988.

We all need to learn to be humble,
To take on a task and never grumble,
And looking back through 20 years I see
What George Fallowfield did for me.

Father O'Brien had persuasive charm,
And to be asked a favour caused no alarm.
He asked me to take an old soldier to Mass -
Deaf through shell-shock and blind from gas.

And thus I began to enter his world.
Through touch a strange communion unfurled
His sensitive hands had come to no harm
And I spelt out my words on his open palm.

Vibrations he knew as we drove in my car
The route he would gauge if we went very far
And always he'd speak in a rasping tone,
Remembered words, though deaf as a stone.

He showed me his workroom and Braille machine,
The templates he made and the tools so clean,
All the models he made were accomplished by feel,
Using notched rulers and engraved steel.

To lead a man of some six feet tall
With half-mast trousers, no socks at all,
Is a humbling thing; for no trace of pride
Remains with a gaunt, blind man at your side.

George Fallowfield was a man truly great,
Admired at Blind Veterans UK for beating his fate.
And cheerfully proving to others like him,
That the spirit survives though the hurt be so grim.



Picture: Taken at the Blind and Deaf Reunion at Lord Fraser's House in 1968. The photograph features from left to right, Wally Thomas, Teddy Mills, George Fallowfield, Lord Fraser of Lonsdale, who was the second Chairman of Blind Veterans UK, and Billy Bell.

The Talking Review features an interview with George Fallowfield by David Castleton, from the November 1977 Review.

George is featured in David Castleton's book, *In the Mind's Eye*, which will be published by Pen & Sword in October 2013. David Castleton worked at Blind Veterans UK for 35 years and for the last 20 years (or more) he has given up his time each month to record the Talking Review with Valerie Tomalin.

Replacement watch batteries, by Billy Baxter, R&T Support Worker, at the Llandudno centre.

Please be aware that if you have been issued with a watch by us we are unable to replace the batteries or straps when they expire.

We would suggest that you return the watch to the RNIB or Cobalt, as they provide a battery replacement service for their watches at a very reasonable cost. If you take them to a local jeweller it may be more expensive, and if they damage the watch it will void any guarantee.

You should have been provided with some instructions for your watch and these will state whether your watch came from RNIB or Cobalt. You can contact them on the following numbers:

For Cobalt telephone: 01493 700172.

If you bought your watch from the RNIB the following process applies:

Contact the RNIB on 0303 123 9999 and they will send you a reference number and freepost label. Make sure you keep the reference number. When it arrives fix the RNIB label to your watch package and put it in the post. The watch (and invoice) will then be returned to you once the battery has been changed.

If you are not sure whether your watch came from the RNIB or Cobalt, and Blind Veterans UK provided you with it, you can ring the ROVI on Duty phone number on: 01273 391447 to find out.

In Search of Hidden Treasure, by David Dent, IT Instructor.

Wading through a sea of green bracken in the summer sunshine, I sweated up the hill to a low ridge overlooking the Hankley Common camp in the hot sandy bowl below. I was on a mission that would take me over the ridge and into the woods beyond, driven to follow an invisible trail in search of hidden treasure: a Geocache!

Geocaching is a treasure-hunting sport in which players consult lists of directions, latitude and longitude co-ordinates and cryptic clues, to find items secreted in all sorts of locations. As a hobby it can trace its origins back to 'Letterboxing'; a pastime that began in Dartmoor in the 1850s. Letters were placed in boxes hidden on the moor for visitors to pick up and post. Now, 160 years later, we have devices such as mobile phones that pinpoint our exact position using the Global Positioning System. All over the world there are small treasures, hidden in thousands of plastic containers or old ammo boxes, tucked out of sight of the casual passerby, to which we can be guided by GPS. A typical cache will contain a log book — in which you record your visit — and maybe a few trinkets of no monetary value: the golden rule is that if you take something from the cache, you must replace it with an equivalent treasure of your own. Sometimes a cache merely contains a puzzle or clue that will lead you to the final cache destination and it becomes an intellectual challenge as well as a navigational one!

Bryan Kilburn, Senior ROVI at our Brighton Centre, is an avid Geocacher, who has found hundreds of caches, many of which have sorely tested his ingenuity and powers of deduction. He uses a standard iPhone running the official Geocaching app that can be downloaded to the device; the VoiceOver accessibility program allows Bryan to program in his location and to hear the directions to the hidden cache, counting down the number of metres to be travelled and indicating the direction to follow.

Using electronic navigation to find treasure sounds far too easy, but GPS devices are only accurate to within a few metres and the final 'find' is usually accomplished by careful scrutiny of the written clue, and, more often than not, getting down on hands and knees and feeling for the cache.

As a Geocacher with low vision Bryan admits he faces additional challenges in finding the hidden cache but in his opinion Geocaching is a hobby that is best enjoyed in a mixed group of people: navigating the group to a cache and solving the puzzles en route can be just as satisfying as retrieving the cache itself. As Bryan points out, however, there are times when having reduced sight can encourage a 'different way of looking'. This was evident in the cache Bryan recently found hidden in a hollowed-out fake rock — the rest of us thought it looked like 'just a pebble' and ignored it, but to Bryan it felt out of place and, when he nudged it with his foot, too lightweight: sure enough, it was made out of resin, not rock, and contained the cache.

Many people with disabilities participate in the sport of Geocaching and a service called 'Handicaching' has been set up: Geocaches are rated using a simple system so that people with disabilities can tell if the cache is easy to get to, how high up it is and what obstructions might be in the way.

There is definitely a competitive, point-scoring element to Geocaching but for most of us the fun comes from walking 'with a purpose'. The real joy, as Bryan puts it, comes from "finding out about new places, more often than not practically on your own doorstep!" One of the things that Geocaching teaches us is how little we truly know about our surroundings: searching for a cache is a wonderful way to discover more.

Hankley Common was a case in point for me: I had walked and cycled around the central part of the common many times and thought I knew it well.

Descending through the trees that fringed the far side of the ridge and coaxed by the distance-countdown on my GPS device, I was met with an incongruous sight: rising up among the spindly trees, some 40 miles from the nearest coast, sits a one hundred metre stretch of sea wall! Three metres high, this massive, reinforced concrete structure rests improbably in a Surrey wood. It was built by Canadian engineers in 1943 to test the demolition techniques necessary in order to breach the Atlantic wall during the D-Day landings. A nearby plaque commemorates its role in the preparations for Operation Overlord. Hidden in a crack in the wall was a plastic film canister containing a log book — the Geocache! For me, however, the unexpected discovery of a piece of military history was by far the greater treasure!

Would you be interested in staying at the Brighton centre and spending a few days Geocaching? You don't need to have your own GPS devices as we can provide them. If so, please get in touch with David Dent, IT Instructor, on 01273 307811.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Atlantic_Wall_Training,_Hankley_Common,_Undamaged_Wall.JPG

Summary: The website shows an image of a reconstruction of the Atlantic Wall defences at Hankley Common in the UK in 1943 for the purpose of training prior to D-day.



Picture: The Geocaching equipment. Photo by David Dent.

British Blind Sport (BBS) UK Indoor Archery Championships at Lilleshall 6th to 7th April 2013, by Paul Palmer.

The British Blind Sport (BBS) UK Indoor Archery Championships took place at Lilleshall over the weekend of 6th - 7th April. Lilleshall is situated in Shropshire near Newport and is a centre of excellence for a number of sports, including Paralympics archery, whose team were there at the same time. The centre has its own very good accommodation and dining hall which serves excellent meals.

The meeting was well attended by 20 archers from all over the UK, of which eight were from our Archery Club. The weekend was split into two shoots with the main shoot of a combined FITA on the Saturday and a Worcester, on the Sunday morning. The FITA, which took place on Saturday, was also split into a 25m shoot and an 18m shoot in the afternoon. The distance doesn't seem that far but the targets are reduced in size from the normal 120cm target to a 60cm and then a 40cm, it's probably better that most of us can't see the targets! Our archers did well gaining three first places, two seconds and one third, an excellent result for a long weekend.

Saturday evening was spent in the bar as we took part in a pub quiz, which was enjoyed by all, with a fair amount of good natured heckling of the announcer and winners. Sunday morning saw us back in the hall for the Worcester shoot. The Worcester is shot from 20 yards and has two 60cm black targets, one above the other, with white rings to identify the differing scoring circles. The archer shoots the first 21/2 dozen at the top target followed by the same at the bottom with any adjustment to equipment being done by the archer – not that easy, believe me. Any archer or spotter could shoot blindfolded, with some of the spotters even having a sly practice the previous evening. Who said archery isn't competitive!

Everyone is now looking forward to the remaining two Archery weeks, on 24th May to 2nd June and 24th to 30th August at the Brighton centre and the UK Outdoor Championships, which will once again take place at Lilleshall, in September.

1st Place

Peter Price
David Poyner

2nd Place

Albert Nelson
Patrick Sidnell

3rd Place

Paul Palmer

Derek O'Rourke, a sublime talent, by Catherine Goodier.

Derek O'Rourke's claim to fame was that he once shared a hydrotherapy pool with Dame Judi Dench, one of Britain's finest actresses, who has won a multitude of awards for her performances on stage and screen. During hydro physio following knee surgery he recognised her very distinctive voice and they had a chat, but he jokes that he's the only man to share a pool with a scantily clad Dame Judi who couldn't see a thing! Today Derek's own star is very much in the ascendancy, as his website can receive up to 1,800 hits a day from people in Europe, America, Canada and Asia who are keen to see his art.

Derek, who lives in West Lothian in a house with The Scottish War Blinded, joined Blind Veterans UK in 2005. When his eyesight started to fail he was determined to learn as many new skills as possible while he still had some usable sight. He learnt to play the Bodhran, an Irish drum, and performs with Jane Espie 'The Phantom Piper' who plays the bagpipes. During their stays at the Brighton centre they can be heard playing in the inner garden. However, Derek's real pleasure comes from the many and varied paintings he creates. Here Derek talks about his journey, and the fun he has with a blank canvas, some paint and an imagination set free.

"When my sight started to deteriorate as a result of angiod streaks my first thought was that I would become a vegetable, one that's kept in the dark. That's when I decided to try things I'd always wanted to do and a new life began. I chose not to sit in the dark and feel sorry for myself. Neither did I want others to feel sorry for me. I had always wanted to paint, not decorating, no, I wanted to create proper paintings on canvas, but the nearest I ever got to becoming an artist was in the pub! In 2010 I went to the Brighton centre and did the art course there and it transformed my life.

"I had never used a paint brush or a pencil in my life and it was at Brighton that Dave Bryant taught me how to create my first landscape. Thanks to Dave's excellent tuition it was an instant success and my children and grandchildren couldn't believe that I was capable of such work. I even shocked myself! Blind Veterans UK has since provided me with a great magnifier and I use it to look through as I paint. At the moment I still have a clear spot at the top of my right eye that gives me just enough sight to see what I'm doing. Although, if I could see properly I don't think I would paint, as I'd be far too critical."

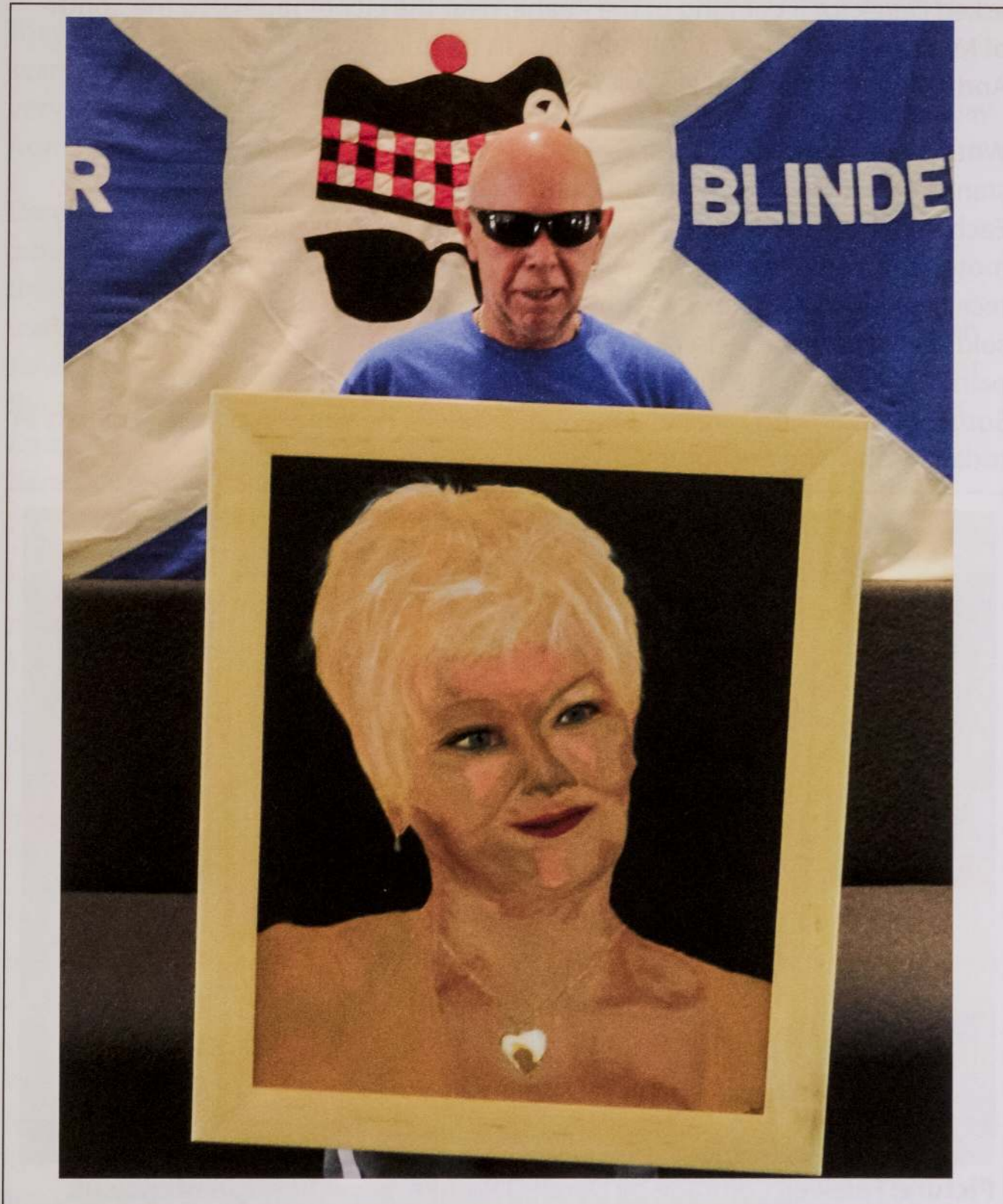
Derek receives regular commissions from people who are keen for him to reproduce a favourite photograph, or work of art. He doesn't ask for money, merely for a fresh canvas for his next painting. Derek is always keen to point out that he can't guarantee how a painting will turn out as it has to resonate with him on an emotional level. Landscapes don't interest him. It's people and emotions as the painting needs to have feeling. So far everyone is thrilled with their paintings and the commissions keep coming. Dunfermline Mosque asked Derek for a painting of the Kaaba, near the city of Tabala, to the South of Mecca. It sold for £1,000 at auction. His paintings of the University of St Andrews, Cathedral and Flag were sold at an auction at the University.

When Derek finishes a painting, which can take days or several months, he stands back to look at them, although he can't of course see them properly. Each time he asks himself: 'How did I do that?' He likens it to driving along a motorway for 100 miles, when you finally reach your destination you don't recall the journey. Derek has completed four paintings of First World War soldiers to mark the 1914 centenary of the outbreak of the war. To give the painting meaning the themes are: Reflection, Forgiveness, Confliction and Sorrow. The moving Farewell Comrade is below. He has also painted soldiers in today's Army who are fighting in the 9/11 war in Afghanistan.



Picture: Farewell Comrade by Derek O'Rourke. www.blindpainter.co.uk

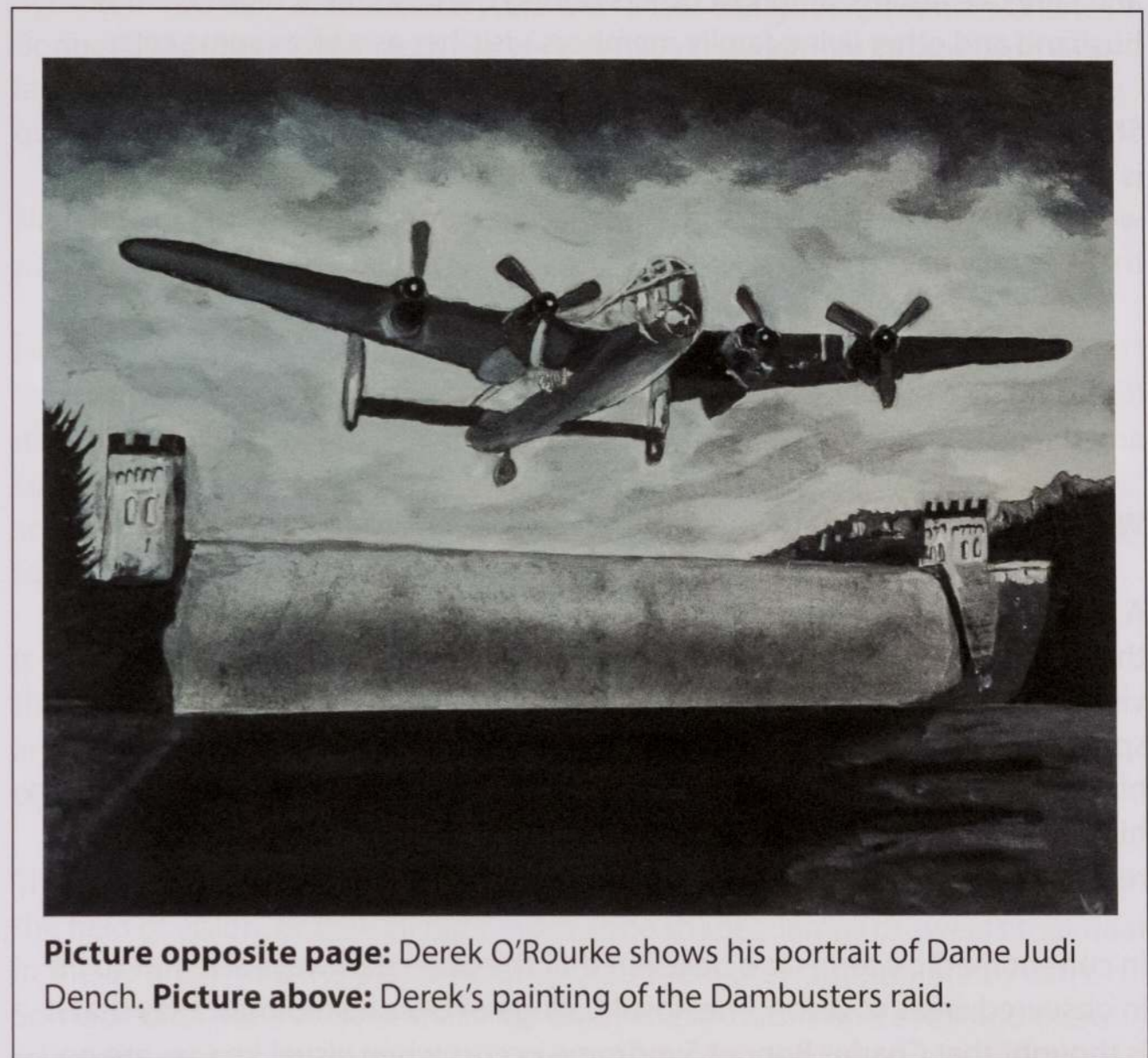
When Derek heard that Dame Judi was losing her eyesight as a result of macular degeneration he wrote to her to express his sympathy. He also asked for a photograph and for her permission to paint her portrait from the photograph to raise funds for Blind Veterans UK. He received a letter with a photograph by return when she recalled their conversation in the pool and hoped his knee continued to work well following surgery. To finish she wished him great success with his painting and raising money for Blind Veterans UK.



Derek's painting of Dame Judi Dench will go to auction on the global website eBay from 1st August 2013. Derek said that he struggles to do features as he can't stand back to look at them as he paints, but it's an excellent likeness. If you would like to bid from 1st August please go to: www.ebay.co.uk and enter Derek O'Rourke Dame Judi Dench.

Derek, who Served in the Royal Navy, is also a member of Scottish War Blinded and attends their Art Department each day.

The final painting, which is set out below, is in honour of the recent 70th Anniversary of the Dambusters Raid.



Picture opposite page: Derek O'Rourke shows his portrait of Dame Judi Dench. **Picture above:** Derek's painting of the Dambusters raid.

Derek, who signs himself DMO'R, has a Facebook site at: www.facebook.com/DMORpainter and his website is at www.blindpainter.co.uk

The Disturbing Visions of Charles Bonnet Syndrome, by Hilary Brown, Welfare Officer.

Blind Veterans UK Welfare Officer, Hilary Brown, examines the strange phantom visions that can make people with a vision impairment doubt their minds.

I developed an interest in Charles Bonnet Syndrome when a member of Blind Veterans UK with very severe symptoms described them to me as she was so distressed by the effect they were having on her. She sees visions of gargoyles and fairy tale figures, amongst others during the day and at night her late husband and other living family members 'visit' her as well as some cats.

She told me that she had experienced these symptoms for some time but as is quite often the case she was reluctant to tell anyone as she thought they would think, as she put it, that she was 'losing her marbles'. She did indeed fear that she may have a mental illness.

I have since carried out a study of the incidence of Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) with the members that I visit. I have looked particularly at the symptoms and the eye condition.

What is Charles Bonnet Syndrome?

A Swiss naturalist, Charles Bonnet, originally observed this condition in the 1760s. His 89 year old grandfather, Charles Lullin, began to experience visions. Bonnet noted that his grandfather, who suffered from cataracts, spoke of seeing people, birds, carriages and buildings while those around him saw nothing. It is suspected that Charles Bonnet developed the condition himself in later life. However, it was only in the 20th Century that Bonnet was recognised as being the first to identify this syndrome.

In current medical terms it is believed that the brain pathways attempt to fill in obscured areas of vision. The Royal College of Ophthalmologists say that it is thought that Charles Bonnet Syndrome occurs when visual images are no longer channelled into the brain, which goes on to replace real images with its own stored images.

Or as one member was told by our consultant Ophthalmologist, it occurs when the brain becomes 'bored' so it creates these visual hallucinations. When describing Charles Bonnet Syndrome to members, I liken the condition to phantom limb syndrome, where people with missing limbs experience sensations as though the body parts are still present. For example, an amputated leg where a patient still feels their toes.

Symptoms

The images are detailed and vivid but the person experiencing them knows that they are not real. They can vary from mild symptoms to the more severe. Symptoms do vary and not everyone with a loss of sight experiences Charles Bonnet Syndrome. The visions are very detailed, sometimes bizarre, and can last from a few seconds to several hours. They seem to come and go of their own accord.

Near misses have been reported by the British Medical Journal, in which patients were almost confined to mental health institutions.

However, once asked about it, people generally say it is a great relief to be told of this condition and that they are not the only people who experience it. When some people tell me they see these visions their partners can be surprised as they are not aware this occurs. For instance, one member sees snakes descending from the ceiling but did not tell his wife as he did not want to worry her.

It also happens the other way around, in that some individuals tell me that their vision impaired partner sees visions – cats seem to be a common one – and that they frequently tell the cat to get out of the way when there is not one in the house.

The mild symptoms vary from such visions as seeing lights that move across the field of vision, or balls of light, horseshoe shapes, lamps or sweets that float in the air and when the person tries to grab them they disappointedly can't. Some people have told me that they enjoy these visions and even find them relaxing.

The more moderate levels of vision are not too dramatic, but are more detailed than lights. Some of these present as common place objects, for example, surfaces covered in non-existent patterns, such as brickwork, mesh or tiles. One member I visit sees coloured plates on her ceiling, another lions' heads on her cushions, another geometric images and 'Eastern like', pierced screens of stone.

Then there are more complex visions which I have classed as high level. Again these are very detailed and 'real', usually involving people, gargoyles, or bright abstract shapes. The image can be life size or very small, scurrying across the floor.

Since Charles Bonnet's original recordings, there have been numerous cases diagnosed. It has long been regarded as a rare disease, but recent evidence suggests that it is much more widespread than previously believed. Charles Bonnet Syndrome is generally under-diagnosed by the medical profession, but is a rather common cause of complex visual hallucination.

The Royal College of Ophthalmic Surgeons feel that those with a sight loss have at least a 20% chance of developing visual hallucinations. They state that they think around 100,000 patients have Charles Bonnet Syndrome as a side effect of their macular disease. Some studies show its prevalence in patients with age related macular degeneration varies from 10% to 20%.

In the group of members that I visit I have found a much higher incidence, possibly 65%. This difference again could be due to medical under-diagnosis and recording, or the type of eye condition that our members experience.

Medical research tells us that most of those who experience Charles Bonnet Syndrome are people in the early stages of sight loss, and the hallucinations usually begin while their vision is still present but has diminished. The most common cause is macular degeneration. Other eye diseases such as glaucoma and cataracts can cause symptoms and in a few rare cases it has been diagnosed in people with no detectable vision problems.

In my research I have found that those who still have a fair amount of useful sight see less bizarre objects such as vases, shelves, books and lines. Whereas those with a more severe sight loss seem to see the more vivid images.

There are members who tell me that they have seen images in the past but these have stopped after a couple of years, whereas some tell me they see images that seem to get more bizarre as their sight deteriorates. Medical research informs us that removal of a cataract or recovery of vision can lead to improvement. Some may find relief if the eye condition progresses to total blindness, although for some people the visions will stop over time.

Others are able to banish their phantoms by changing the environment in some way – such as closing their eyes, turning the lights on or off, increasing the lighting; if it happens when you are sitting down then try standing up. Trying to keep the brain active can be helpful. Most visions seem to occur when you are relaxing. These recommendations do not banish the visions for everyone.

It helps if the vision impaired person can try and feel in control of their environment. Some people have tried befriending the apparitions, talking to them, but of course getting no answer. Sometimes talking over feelings with a counsellor or psychiatrist can help provide people with ways of coping with the visions.

At the moment there is no known cure for Charles Bonnet Syndrome. However, just knowing that it is poor vision and not mental illness that causes these problems often helps people come to terms with them. Generally these experiences will disappear after about a year or 18 months but this will not be the case for everyone.

Conclusion

Firm reassurance that Charles Bonnet Syndrome is not related to mental illness is in itself a major relief to a person already dealing with failing vision, and maybe other medical problems. Some sufferers consider them as 'one of those things you have to put up with'.

I have found that once a member has had the symptoms of Charles Bonnet Syndrome explained to them they feel immeasurable relief and can often tolerate the condition better.

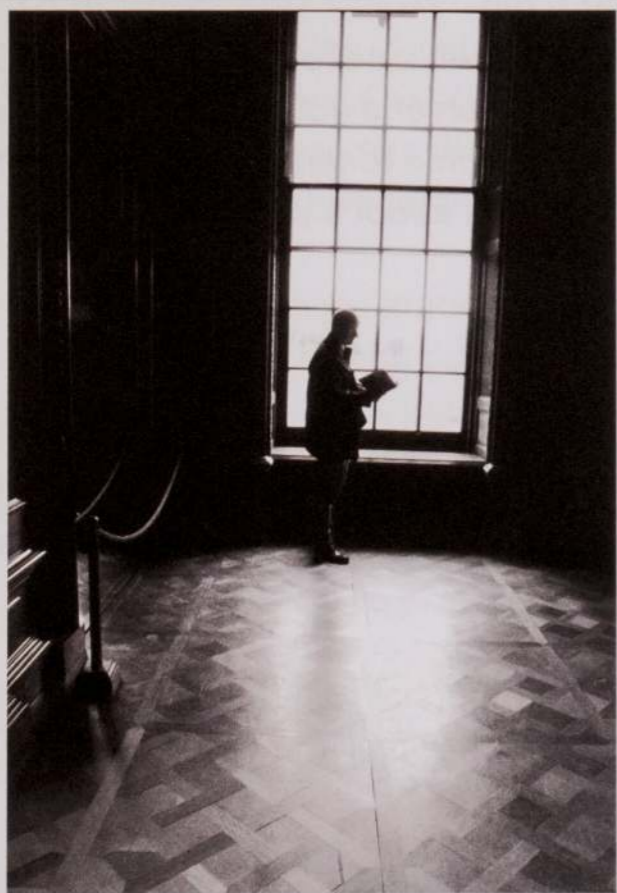
The Macular Disease Society runs a telephone helpline, which is available to all macular patients and their families. Please telephone 0845 241 2041. Lines are open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Photography week at the Sheffield centre, by Keith Harness.

The latest photography week at the Sheffield centre took place in March 2013. As we have come to expect some wonderful photographs were taken that week and we each learned some important new photographic skills.

The week was led by Esther Freeman, Art and Craft manager, at the Brighton centre, and visits were made to Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, the home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. As the house's architecture and collection have evolved over five centuries, the house, the collection and the grounds leant themselves to some wonderful photographic opportunities. We also visited the Parish Church of Our Lady and All Saints in Chesterfield, to capture images of the famous twisted spire.

At the centre, ROVIs Kate Taylor and Paula Goodfellow demonstrated different opticular glasses to show how visual aids could help us when adjusting the camera settings and to look at the images on the LCD. It was extremely useful.



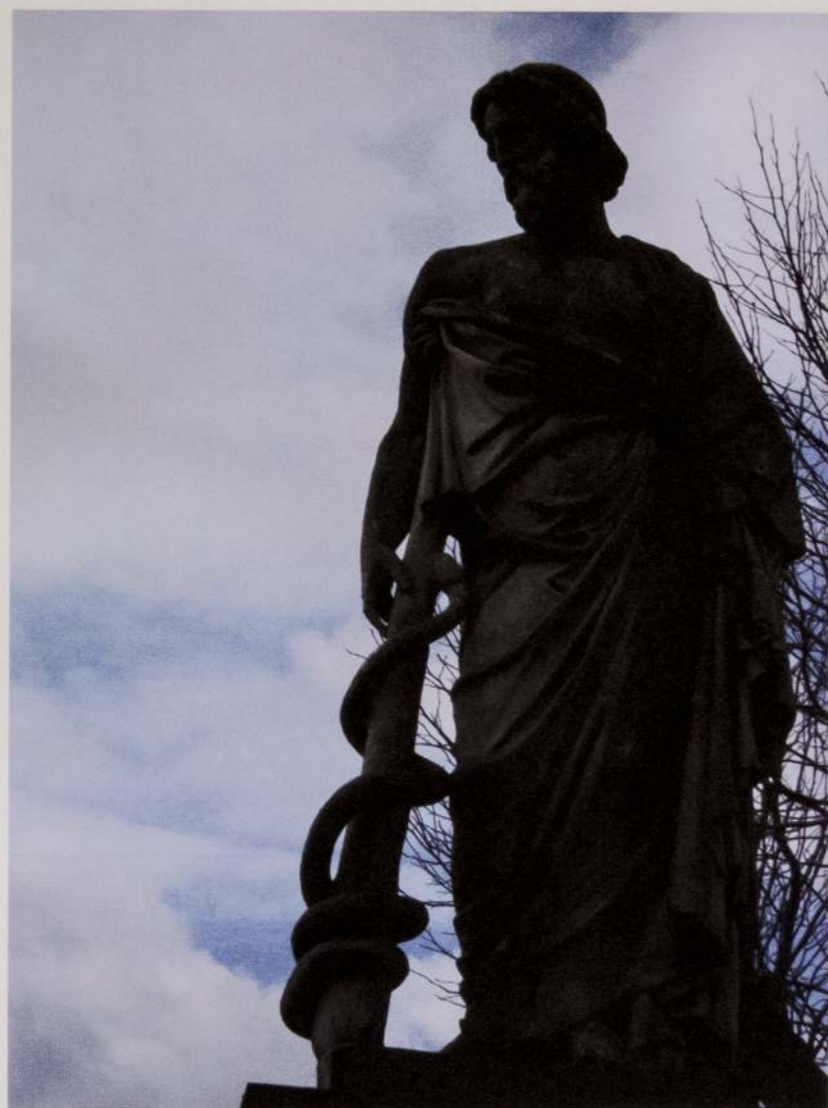
Picture: Taken at Chatsworth House by Keith Harness.



Picture above: Dominoes. **Below:** guide dog. Both by Ted Lincoln.

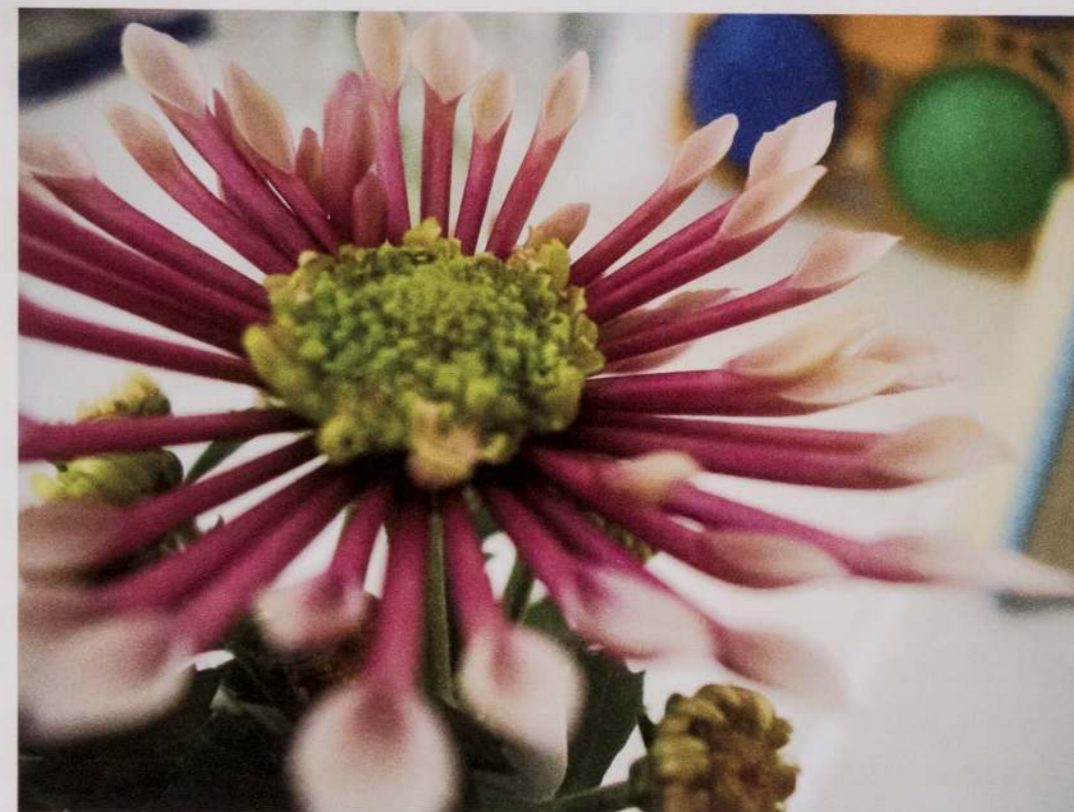
During the photography week the conservatory at the Sheffield centre was converted into a photographic studio. Ted Lincoln from Devizes in Wiltshire photographed the dominoes and the resting guide dog, which are shown above and below. Ted's interest in photography began when he was just 17 years old and he enjoys photographing the flowers in his garden. He said that using an automatic camera means he can continue to take photos, despite his vision impairment. He then uses Guide software on his computer to edit the images, a skill he also learnt at the Sheffield centre.



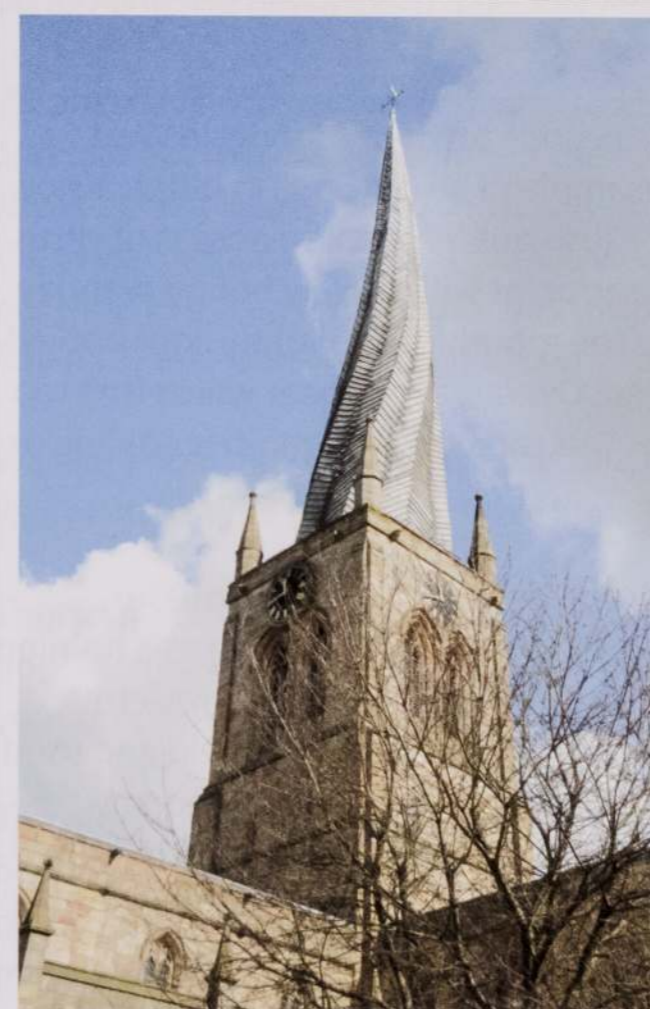


Picture by Olga Eagle taken in the grounds of Chatsworth House.

During the week Olga Eagle, from Doncaster in South Yorkshire, discovered a hidden talent for photography. Olga said: "I signed up to the photography week as I thought it would be interesting, and it was. In the past I'd taken photos of the children, but I hadn't done anything like this before. I learnt so much about the camera - and that included how to use the zoom! I've kept the photography up and I recently took photographs of peacocks, as they fascinated me. I managed to show the detail of their feathers using the skills I had learnt in Sheffield. I'd definitely go back to do another photography week. It's also great to have learnt another skill. Since joining Blind Veterans UK in 2006 I've learnt to use the computer, something I never thought I would be able to do, but within days I was sending emails and writing letters. The photography course has given me a hobby and I'd recommend the week to everyone as it's brilliant."



Picture: Flower photograph by Pauline Dutton.



Eddie Taylor, of Prestatyn took the photograph of the twisted spire of the Parish Church of Our Lady and All Saints in Chesterfield. He said: "I've taken photography on and off through my life. When I was blown up in Cyprus it made it a bit more difficult, but you make do with what you have. I've just moved from film to digital cameras, as the auto on the Nikon is great. I first became interested in wildlife photography and used to sketch as well. Esther Freeman was very helpful during the photography week. My wife Patricia combined it with a shopping trip in Sheffield! We had a good week and I'd like to go back to do the advanced photography week."

Answers to 10 questions on the subject of Rome and the Romans from page 7.

1. 15th March.
2. Nero.
3. Scotland.
4. Spartacus.
5. Marcus Brutus.
6. 651, D 500, C 100, L 50 and I 1.
7. 90.
8. Claudius; Julius Caesar did land at Deal in Kent in 55 B.C. but he was never Emperor.
9. Lincoln.
10. York.

Colin Williamson's Beer of the Month

Arundel Sussex Gold.

Brewed by Arundel Brewery based in the historic town of Arundel in West Sussex, this award winning ale is a fine example of an old English bitter. A slow pour reveals a fine white head on top of a lush golden ale. The nose is of citrus fruits and hops and the taste does not disappoint with a lively hoppy orangey feel to it alongside a touch of sweetness. The mouthfeel is slightly light bodied and the finish is of citrus but well balanced. Overall, a nice beer which isn't too strong, coming in at a fairly modest 4.2%. You can purchase this beer online or in the county of Sussex.

Arundel Brewery can be found on the Ford Airfield Estate in West Sussex, which during the Second World War was used by the Fleet Air Arm as a training base, but suffered extensive damage and loss of life due to a raid by German Junkers 87s in August 1940. As a result, the RAF took over the airfield and used the base as a home for various 'intruder' squadrons which roamed enemy occupied territory attacking high value targets. Later on in the campaign the airfield was home to fighter bomber squadrons and was heavily involved in the build up to the D-Day landings.

Snowdonia Experience Week, by Nikki Green, Sports and Recreation Instructor, Llandudno.

Geronimo! That was most definitely the word of the week when five members and two dogs set off on a week to conquer fears, gain confidence and achieve goals they never dreamed possible.

The week kicked off with a session at the local climbing wall where our members tackled the crazy climbs, and it's true what they say about a Scouser up a drain pipe!

The week carried on how it started with spirits high, as the group headed out on a horse riding trek, the weather was perfect looking out over the Snowdonia ranges and across the Menai Straits. This was followed by a 140ft abseil off a cliff which some of our members enjoyed so much they scrambled back up to the top for a second go. The day was not over though, with a trip to the local ski slope in the evening, where most of us spent our time on our backs then stood up looking like newly born foals in a field.

Wednesday however we were greeted by the great Welsh weather of wind and rain but this did not dampen the spirits and we headed out for some surf kayaking at a local beach, which was like kamikaze on water. Mark Heaume got the prize for man overboard but we were all closely behind spending most of our time in the water. The day was wrapped up with a pool session with Karl 'Charlie' Parkinson and David Greenwood mastering the Eskimo roll.

We were now into the second part of the week but the energy of our members was at an all time high, they were literally buzzing.

Thursday started with a walk around Swallow Falls where we played swap the dog! Members David Greenwood and Ian Cloke demonstrated how to know your dog by getting confused with which one they had.

The afternoon was filled with a session in the tree tops, when we reached heights of 40ft off the ground, pushing us to our limits and taking us to the top of our fears. It was filled with laughter and plenty of jelly legs appearing on the middle of obstacles with a leap of faith at the end to get down.

That afternoon we were joined by Barry Porter, Director of Welfare Services, who teamed up with Charlie (who took control) working together to complete the course.

Friday started with karaoke in the bus, with Charlie Parkinson belting out the all time favourite 'I've Had the Time of my Life'. The best was saved till last with a ride on the longest zip line in the northern hemisphere. This was the moment they had all been waiting for. The weather was perfect with a bit of side wind. Paul Egan was first up but got more than he bargained for getting an extra ride by coming back up the zip line and having to wait to get hoisted in. Mark and David were over the moon with the feeling of freedom and exhilaration of the ride. It really did finish off the week with our members going away with a boost of self achievement and accomplishment.

The week was a tremendous success and really did promote independent living with sight loss.



Picture: Mark Heaume, front, kayaking during the Snowdonia Experience Week with Nikki Green behind.

Family News.

Congratulations to:

Birthdays:

Violet Wood who celebrated her 102nd birthday on 29th June.

Dorothy Aldridge who celebrated her 101st birthday on 7th June.

Births:

John and Ena Bannon, on the birth of their first great-great grandson, Frankie George, who was born on 10th November 2012.

Joan and Doug Simonite, on the birth of their first great-granddaughter on 13th March 2013, who was born to Zoë and Tom Simonite in San Francisco.

Anniversaries:

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Andrew and Agnes McParland of Kirkintilloch, Glasgow on 3rd June.

Derek and Avril Hall of Minehead, Somerset on 12th June.

John and Joyce Mott of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey on 12th June.

George and Elizabeth Worden of Seaham, County Durham on 26th June.

Reginald and Mollie Thurham of Worthing, West Sussex on 26th June.

Diamond (60th):

Bert and Dorothy Crooks of Conwy, Gwynedd on 1st June.

William and Ivy Martin of Wigan, Lancashire on 1st June.

Dorothy and Roy Sutcliffe of Preston, Lancashire on 20th June.

Bert and June Hallett of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire on 20th June.

Ronald and Sylvia Gerrard of Birmingham, West Midlands on 26th June.

Ralph and Rose Lewis of Fleetwood, Lancashire on 29th June.

Golden (50th):

James and Mary Hood of Edinburgh on 25th June.

Reg & Marjie Duncan of Liverpool, Merseyside on 29th June.

Ron and Peg Hawkins of Fordingbridge, Hampshire on 29th June.

Ruby (40th):

Christopher and Susan Cardwell of Halesworth, Suffolk on 18th June.

Silver (25th):

Thomas and Mary Orton of Tamworth, Staffordshire on 25th June.

We regret to announce the death of:

Ada 'Mandy' Allott who died on 16th May 2013. She was the wife of Ernest Allott.

Muriel Ashworth who died on 13th March 2013. She was the wife of Norman Ashworth.

Violet Bailey who died on 29th May 2013. She was the wife of Sydney Bailey.

Gladys Carroll who died on 4th February 2013. She was the widow of the late Matthew Carroll.

Richard Franklin who died on 17th May 2013. He was the widower of the late Anne Franklin.

Maureen Holmes who died on 4th June 2013. She was the widow of the late Robert Holmes.

Marjorie Humphrey who died on 29th May 2013. She was the widow of the late Joseph Humphrey.

Doris Jessey who died on 1st February 2013. She was the widow of the late Herbert Jessey.

Marcia Lappin who died on 20th March 2013. She was the wife of John Lappin.

Freda Litt who died on 29th May 2013. She was the daughter of the late Alfred Litt.

Audry Marcelle who died on 29th May 2013. She was the wife of John Marcelle.

Christine Roberts who died on 2nd February 2013. She was the widow of the late Charles Roberts.

Honora Styles who died on 22nd May 2013. She was the widow of the late Haydn Styles.

Rosina 'Rosie' Underwood who died on 4th June 2013. She was the widow of the late David Underwood.

Edna Ward who died on 21st May 2013. She was the widow of the late Frederick Ward.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

Andrew Bannerman of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire Served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1959 to 1977.

Reverend Douglas Bell-Richards of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Joseph 'Ray' Bellamy of Spalding, Lincolnshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

John Brakes of Barnsley, South Yorkshire Served in the West Yorkshire Regiment from 1954 to 1961.

Alan Cade of Alfreton, Derbyshire Served in the General Service Corps and the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment from 1948 to 1954.

Nicholas Clarke of Golcar, Huddersfield Served in the Royal Navy in 1980.

Dennis Cope of Stafford Served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1949 to 1951.

Philip Doughty of Poulton-Le-Fylde, Lancashire Served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1947.

John Dredge of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh Served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps, King's Dragoon Guards from 1947 to 1953.

Eilir Evans of Neath, West Glamorgan Served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1958 to 1963.

Eugene Fitzsimmons of Liverpool Served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1949.

Sidney Flemming of Sherborne, Dorset Served in the Royal Marines from 1943 to 1947.

Ivan Fletcher from Wombourne, Wolverhampton Served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Leicestershire Regiment from 1947 to 1953.

Kenneth Galer of Southwold, Suffolk Served in the General Service Corps and the Dorset Regiment from 1944 to 1948.

Albert Haynes of Immingham, Lincolnshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Robert Hayter of Evesham, Worcestershire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

Stewart Haywood of Barnsley, South Yorkshire Served in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment from 1954 to 1956.

John Hockley of Clacton-On-Sea Served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

James Hooper of Milton Keynes Served in the Royal Signals and the Army Air Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Terence Kettle of Crewe Served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1958 to 1963.

Phillip Le Mercier of Hunstanton, Norfolk Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Albert Lincoln of Cardiff Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Betty Lunniss of Histon, Cambridge Served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1946.

John Matthews of Farnborough, Hampshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1984.

Eric Mawer of Colyton, Devon Served in the Royal Marines from 1944 to 1947.

James McGuire of Loanhead, Midlothian Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

Lewis Mendoza of Brighton, East Sussex Served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1946.

Betty Metcalfe of Salisbury, Wiltshire Served in the Women's Royal Army Corps from 1940 to 1975.

William 'Bill' Money of Croydon, Surrey Served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

Stanley Morgans of Bromley Cross, Bolton Served in the General Service Corps in 1944.

Sarah 'Gillian' Mulholland from Largs, Ayrshire Served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

David Nicholson of Peacehaven, East Sussex Served in the Royal Navy, Fleet Air Arm from 1954 to 1966.

Alan Oates of Whickham, Newcastle Upon Tyne Served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Bernard Pennell of Northampton Served in the Royal Signals from 1956 to 1959.

Walter Richardson of Yarm, Cleveland Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1947 to 1949.

Ernest Robinson of Chesterfield, Derbyshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946.

Derrick Smith of Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

Frank Smith of Kidderminster, Worcestershire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

James Tribe of Hove, East Sussex Served in the Royal Engineers from 1952 to 1954.

Stanley Waddingham of Balsham, Cambridge Served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Michael Walker of Filey, North Yorkshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1969 to 1976.

Graham West of Barry, South Glamorgan Served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Patrick Wood of Wallingford, Oxfordshire Served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1956.

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.

George Able of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died on 1st May 2013, aged 98. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1936 and qualified as a 3-ton truck driver. He was later posted to the Middle East. He spent some time in Tobruk where he was captured by the Germans and made Prisoner of War and transported to camps in Italy and later Austria. Repatriated by American Forces he was discharged in May 1945 following his liberation.

John Adams of Fakenham, Norfolk died on 8th May 2013, aged 91. He joined the RAF in 1941 qualifying as a pilot. He instructed pilots during the war, mostly in the UK, but also in Sri Lanka and Canada. He was discharged as a Warrant Officer in 1946.

John 'Terry' Andrews of Standish, Lancashire died on 21st May 2013, aged 85. He completed his National Service in the RAF from 1945 to 1948, leaving as an Aircraftman 1st Class.

Edna Baldwin of Wolverhampton died on 13th May 2013, aged 90. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941 and worked in G Section of the RAF Records office in Gloucester, dealing with posting airmen around the world, particularly to the Far East. She was discharged as a Corporal in 1945.

William Beecroft of Wirral, Merseyside died on 19th March 2013, aged 91. He joined the RAF in 1941 and trained at RAF Cranwell and Birmingham Technical College, specialising in radio. He was posted to Iraq and Egypt before discharge in 1946 as a Corporal.

Bernard Beevers of Saltburn by the Sea, Cleveland died on 27th January 2013, aged 89. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1942, was in Northern Europe after D-Day and fought through to Germany with his battery, meeting the Russian forces at Bremen. He returned to the UK and was discharged as a radio operator in 1947.

Gerald 'Gerry' Berry of Accrington, Lancashire died on 3rd May 2013, aged 78. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1956 for National Service and Served at Aldershot and Ash Vale. He was discharged as a Private in 1958.

Claud Bickers of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 12th September 2012, aged 92. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1942 and fought in British Somaliland and Kenya in East Africa. He was discharged in 1947 as a Sergeant.

William Booth of Stockton on Tees, Cleveland died on 20th May 2013, aged 75. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1958 for National Service and Served 20 months with Allied Forces in Naples, Italy. He was discharged in 1960 as a Corporal.

Arthur Bown of Bristol, Avon died on 1st November 2012, aged 93. He joined the Royal Tank Regiment in 1939 and was posted to North Africa. He fought at El Alamein and subsequently through Sicily and Italy. Later he moved to Palestine and Greece. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1946.

Bernard Bradnum of Milton Keynes, Bucks died on 13th December 2012, aged 85. Following training he joined the Buffs Royal East Kent Regiment for National Service before transferring to the General Service Corps. He was posted to Aldershot and was Batman to a Major General in the Royal Army Medical Corps, looking after his house in Virginia Water.

Richard 'Richie' Bullock of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 24th May 2013, aged 99. He Served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946 in Egypt, Italy, Sicily, France, Holland and Germany. He was discharged in 1946 as a Warrant Officer Second Class.

Robert Canham of Mileham, Norfolk died on 21st April 2013, aged 95. He joined the RAF in 1938 and specialised as a radio operator with aircrew in Bomber Command flying in Avro Ansons, Hampdens, Manchesters and Lancaster Bombers. He was stationed at RAF Coningsby and at Woodhall Spa, completing his Service as a Flight Lieutenant in 1947.

John Cavanagh of Altrincham, Cheshire died on 15th May 2013, aged 84. He joined the General Service Corps in 1946 and was briefly in the Loyal Regiment before transferring to the Manchester Regiment in 1947. He was a driver and Served mainly in Germany before his discharge in 1949.

Arthur Davies of Bolton, Lancashire died on 22nd May 2013, aged 83. He was called up for National Service in the RAF in 1951. He Served in the UK as an

engine mechanic on jet engines, notably the Vampire and the Meteor, before discharge in 1954 as a Senior Aircraftman.

Gerald Dibb of South Croydon, Surrey died on 19th May 2013, aged 87. He joined the General Service Corps in 1943. He then joined the Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1944, deployed to Normandy on D+6 he was in Germany at the Battle of Goch, during which he came under mortar attack and suffered shrapnel wounds. After a spell in hospital he transferred to the Black Watch in 1945 and was due to go to the Far East after VE Day. When the Atom bomb ended the war he went to Jerusalem with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders where he was involved in the King David Hotel massacre. He was discharged in 1947 as a Warrant Sergeant.

Raymond 'Ray' Doak of Bromley, Kent died on 15th May 2013, aged 86. He joined the Royal Navy in 1945 and qualified as a Steward. He Served in the aircraft carrier HMS Argus, the destroyer HMS Kitts and ashore at HMS Pembroke, Chatham. He also Served at HMS Glendower and Royal Arthur, both shore establishments. He was discharged in 1947.

Emily 'Pat' Earl of Hove, East Sussex died on 14th May 2013, aged 89. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in August 1941 and Served at RAF Cosford and RAF Gloucester before discharge in 1946.

Myra Ellis of Didsbury, Manchester died on 22nd April 2013, aged 95. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in October 1941 and was posted to RAF Wittering as a plotter. She contracted TB and was invalided out in 1942.

John Florence of Acocks Green, Birmingham died on 31st August 2012, aged 91. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and Served in destroyers in the Mediterranean. He was medically discharged as a Leading Stoker in 1945.

Albert (Jim) Gaywood of Rustington, West Sussex died on 4th May 2013, aged 90. He joined the RAF in 1942 and trained as a Navigator. He later found himself in Canada on further training for the Oxford aircraft. He returned to the UK at the end of the war and was demobilised in 1946.

Donald Goffi of Hove, East Sussex died on 23rd May 2013, aged 87. He joined the RAF in 1943. He trained at Cardington, Skegness and Devon and was then posted to the Far East where he Served with the allied occupation force in Japan at Hiroshima. He was discharged as a Leading Aircraftman in 1947.

Dennis Handby of Haringay, North London died on 7th May 2013, aged 92. He

joined the RAF in 1940 and specialised as a wireless operator/gunner. He later became an instrument technician. Between 1941 and 1943 he was stationed in Gibraltar. He was discharged in 1946 as an Aircraftman 1st Class.

Elsie Hetherington of Fleetwood, Lancashire died on 26th May 2013, aged 94. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942 and trained at Lancaster. She was posted to Leeds, then Saxmundham and finally St Leonards-on-Sea. She was discharged as a Staff Sergeant in 1945.

John Hind of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 13th May 2013, aged 86. He joined 57 Primary Training Wing of the General Service Corps in 1946, transferring to the Royal Army Service Corps. He Served in Germany and the Midlands area, instructing soldiers on shorthand typing. He was discharged in 1948 as a Lance Sergeant.

William 'Bill' Hobbs of St Ives, Cornwall died on 27th May 2013, aged 90. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and Served in landing craft. He stood by at the Dieppe raid and later went ashore at Normandy with the Royal Marine Commandos as a Leading Seaman on D+1. He transferred to the Royal Engineers in 1945, Serving in the Far East. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1947.

Thomas 'Tom' Horton of Woodbridge, Suffolk died on 1st March 2013, aged 97. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941 and qualified as an Aircraft Engineer Serving in the Atlantic Convoys, the Mediterranean in HMS Furious, Malta Convoys, North Africa landings and Operation Pedestal. Commissioned in 1944 he went to the Far East in HMS Implacable returning to the UK in HMS Unicorn. After the war he was seconded to the Ministry of Supply in London doing research work before Serving on HMS Centaur and later he was sent on loan to the Australian Navy. He also Served for three years in HMS Eagle and in various UK Naval Air Stations before being discharged as a Commander in 1965.

Hazel James of Dartford, Kent died on 11th July 2012, aged 88. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941 and Served throughout the war with HQ41 Group in Andover until discharge as a Leading Aircraftwoman in 1946.

Richard Kelly of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 31st May 2013, aged 82. He joined the 10th Hussars in 1949, Serving in the UK and Iserlohën and Bad Oyenhausen in Germany, rising to Corporal. He was discharged in 1952 as a Corporal. He joined the TA in a Royal Artillery Unit and remained with them until 1968.

Donald Kidby of Holland on Sea, Essex died on 25th May 2013, aged 84. He completed his National Service in the RAF from 1947 to 1949. He was posted to Salisbury Plains as a Batman and spent 18 months there until discharge in 1949.

John 'Jack' Lawson of Cottingham, East Yorkshire died on 9th November 2012, aged 90. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) in 1943. He Served in the UK and India, where he was promoted to Sergeant, and in Malaya and Java. He was demobilised as a Warrant Officer First Class in 1947.

Edgar Moss of Southport, Merseyside died on 8th June 2013, aged 90. He joined the RAF in 1941, training as a Flight Mechanic. He was later posted to Alexandria with the Fleet Arm. He ended up in the Canal Zone and was then posted to Kenya for two years, followed by Palestine via Egypt. He was discharged in 1946 as a Corporal.

Michael O'Riordan of Wimbledon, South West London died on 14th March 2013, aged 83. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps for National Service in 1953, Serving as a Medical Officer with the 1st Royal Tank Regiment in the Suez Canal Zone. He was discharged as a Captain in 1955.

Stephen 'Steve' Magill of Llandudno Junction, Conwy died on 15th March 2013, aged 58. He joined the Welsh Guards in 1975 and as a Guardsman he did public duties in London, including at Buckingham Palace, for 18 months. He was then posted to Berlin where, amongst other military activities, he guarded Rudolf Hess in Spandau prison. He left the Army in 1979.

Irene La Touche of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 20th May 2013, aged 95. She joined the Women's Royal Auxiliary Air Force in 1942 where she was a typist with the secretarial branch. She moved to Grangemouth, Scotland, an air training unit and subsequently to RAF Winterton, a Radar Station. She was discharged in 1946 as a Leading Aircraftwoman.

Gordon 'Mitch' Mitchell of St Austell, Cornwall died on 25th May 2013, aged 80. In 1954 he joined the Royal Artillery for National Service and after training joined a Survey Battery, 115 Independent Locating Battery. He later moved to Dortmund British Army of the Occupied Rhine and was discharged as a Lance Bombardier in 1956.

Simon Moore of Burnley, Lancashire died on 15th May 2013, aged 41. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1989 and left in 1990 as a Sapper. In 1997 he joined the Queen's Lancashire Regiment (TA) for three years.

John 'Les' Moreline of Southend on Sea, Essex died on 16th May 2013, aged 91. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1941 and completed his training as a tank transporter driver. He was deployed in the Western Desert, spending time in Libya and Egypt and was later sent to Italy. He returned to the UK and followed up the D-Day Invasion through France, Belgium and Holland. He was medically discharged in 1945 due to injuries sustained in Holland.

Vanda Murray of Lowestoft, Suffolk died on 7th May 2013, aged 94. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942. She Served with an anti-aircraft gun battery in Wales. She was discharged as a Lance Corporal in 1944.

Eric Onslow of Chorley, Lancashire died on 16th February 2013, aged 88. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1943. He went to Normandy on D-Day and fought through to Magdeburg. He extended his Service after the war and was posted to Palestine, eventually being discharged as a Lance Bombardier in 1947.

Elizabeth 'Elaine' Orchard (nee Jacob) of Exeter, Devon died on 11th May 2013, aged 96. She joined the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps in 1941 and went to North Africa, Italy, Greece and Scotland. She was discharged in 1946 as a Sister.

Laurence Peters of Basildon, Essex died on 5th January 2013, aged 92. He joined the Royal Engineers (TA) in 1937, transferring to the Royal Artillery in 1938. He enlisted in the Regular Army in 1938, joining the Cavalry of the Line. He then transferred to the Kings Dragoon Guards and was posted to Egypt with the 8th Army. He then took part in the invasion of Sicily and later Italy. He then moved to Palestine followed by Syria and Greece. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1946.

Thomas 'Tom' Pilsbury of Cannock, Staffordshire died on 8th May 2013, aged 93. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and later fought in the Normandy campaign prior to discharge in 1946 as a Sergeant.

George Rayment of Barming, Kent died on 30th May 2013, aged 83. He Served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1948 to 1950 in the UK and Germany for National Service.

Margaret Richardson of Couldby Newham, Middlesbrough died on 20th May 2013, aged 95. She Served in the RAF from 1941 to 1944 when she was discharged on compassionate grounds, leaving as a Sergeant.

Patricia Ricketts of Norwich, Norfolk died on 29th April 2013, aged 89. She joined the Women's Royal Air Force in 1941 and Served in London before discharge in 1945 as a Leading Aircraftwoman.

Rex Robison of Chinnor, Oxfordshire died on 21st May 2013, aged 96. He joined the RAF in 1940 and trained as a navigator in South Africa and Served in Egypt. He flew in Baltimore aircraft on reconnaissance missions with the Royal Australian Air Force along the North African coast. He then went to Jerusalem to teach navigation to aircrews destined for the Far East. He was discharged in 1946 as a Flying Officer.

Eric Rundle of Lancing, West Sussex died on 8th May 2013, aged 93. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and qualified as a Battery Surveyor. He was deployed to a Super Heavy Battery with 12" howitzers on railway mountings on the south coast and he also Served in Belgium. He was discharged in 1946 as a Brigadier.

Reginald 'Reg' Sams of Warminster, Wiltshire died on 17th May 2013, aged 91. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1941 and Served in the Faroe Islands, Egypt and Denmark. He went to France after VJ Day and in 1945 transferred to the RAOC. Discharged in 1947 as a Sergeant, he joined the Expeditionary Force Institute (NAAFI), Serving from May 1951 to May 1955.

James Scott of Rochester, Kent died on 13th May 2013, aged 87. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and was posted to Devonport, where he was injured. After a spell in a Bristol hospital he returned to Chatham and remained in the Navy, and worked at an ammunition depot. He was discharged in 1946.

Leonard 'Len' Smith of Tring, Hertfordshire died on 28th May 2013, aged 77. He joined the RAF for National Service in 1956. He worked as a Telephonist at RAF Newton, Nottingham and then Andover before discharging as a Senior Aircraftman in 1958.

Thomas 'Arthur' Smith of Rugeley, Staffordshire died on 7th June 2013, aged 91. He joined the RAF in 1941, training as an Air Frame Fitter. He was posted to RAF Halton and he later went to India via Cape Town and Served at RAF Jessore. He then transferred to the RAF Repair Service Unit before leaving India in 1946. He was demobilised as a Leading Aircraftsman in 1947.

Alan Spedding of Leyland, Lancashire died on 13th April 2013, aged 78. He completed his National Service in the Royal Engineers from 1952 to 1954. He Served with 27 Field Squadron and 21 Field Engineers in Germany.

Joan Stevenson of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 4th May 2013, aged 92. She Served in the Woman's Royal Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1946, leaving as a Corporal. She did her training in Harrogate and was posted to Wales for further training and thereafter was sent to Cordington in Bedfordshire. She volunteered for an overseas posting and was sent to Cairo.

James Stroud of Cirencester, Gloucestershire died on 14th May 2013, aged 89. He joined the RAF in 1942 when he was posted to Canada. On returning to the UK he was transferred to the General Service Corps before moving to the Royal Engineers as a Sapper. He completed his Service in April 1946, having Served in Palestine and Egypt.

John Tipping of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 22nd May 2013, aged 88. He joined the General Service Corps in 1943. After three months training he transferred to the Kings Regiment and later the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He fought in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany and was discharged in 1945.

Bertie Tooth of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire died on 1st May 2013, aged 96. He joined the RAF in 1940. He did specialised training at RAF Oakington, Cambridgeshire, 2 Group Bomber Command and dealt with a variety of general airfield duties, mainly within the armaments section. He later became a bomb armourer, was deployed to India on VE Day and Served in Bombay, Jodhpur and Karachi before his discharge as a Leading Aircraftsman in 1946.

Phyllis Tyler of Lewes, East Sussex died on 19th April 2013, aged 91. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1939, specialising in communications. She was posted to General Eisenhower's HQ. She later moved to France and remained with the US Forces until discharge in 1946 as a Sergeant.

Iris Williams of Gillingham, Kent died on 4th May 2013, aged 74. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1958, training at HMS Dauntless. She Served at the RN Hospital in Chatham and was discharged in 1959 as a Sick Berth Attendant when she married.

Leslie 'Les' Yeates of Ormskirk, Lancashire died on 5th May 2013, aged 82. He Served in the Royal Artillery from 1948 to 1976 in England, Germany and Aden where he was promoted to Warrant Officer First Class. He completed his Service as a Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant in 1976.



Picture: Angels by Derek O'Rourke.