

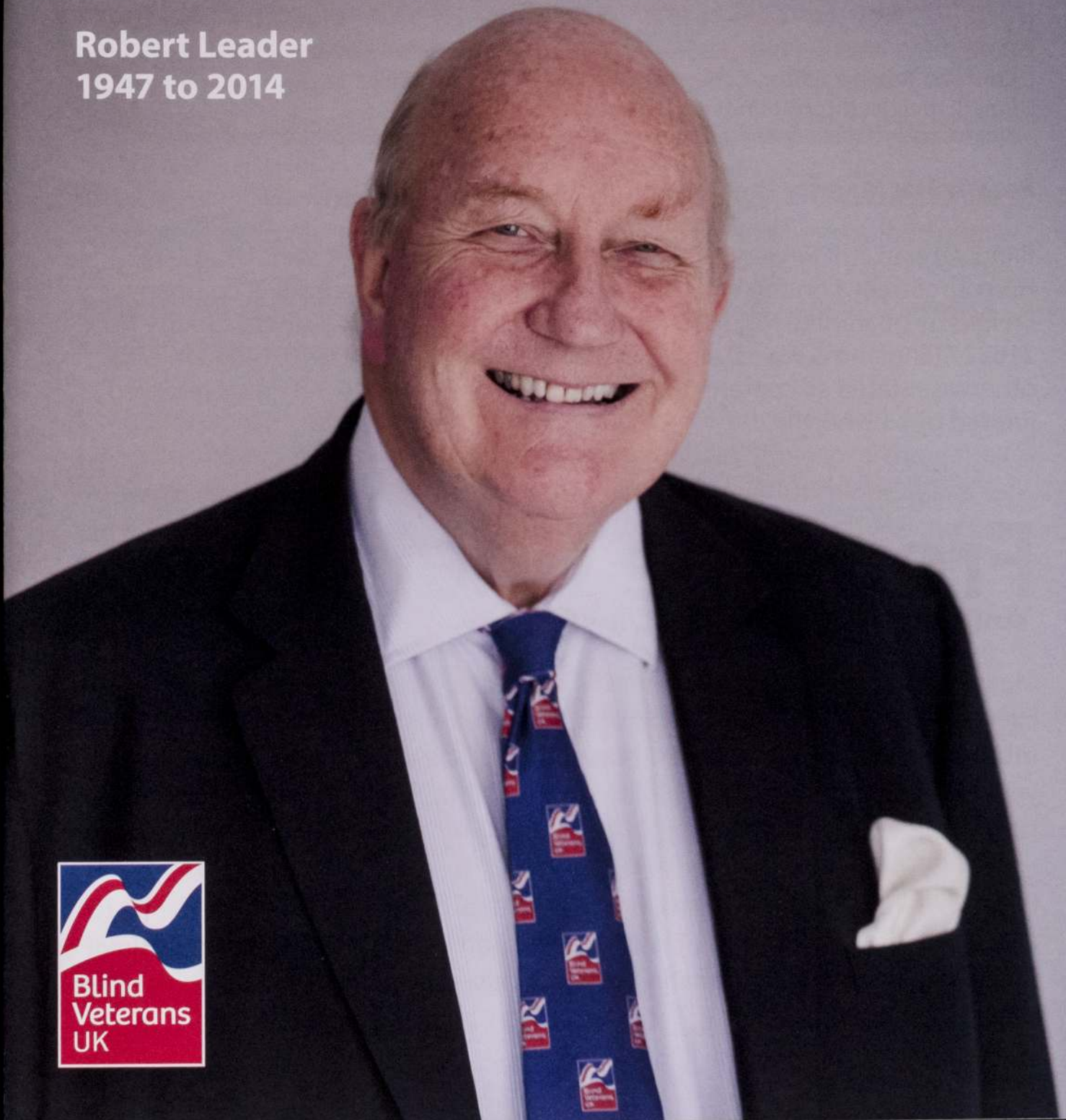
May 2014

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



Robert Leader
1947 to 2014



On the cover: Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Robert Leader.



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Contact: Review Editor, Catherine Goodier 020 7616 8367
Email: revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk



Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

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From the Chairman.

Your message from Tim Davis.

Many of you will already have heard of the passing of Robert Leader, Chief Executive, Blind Veterans UK. Featuring on the cover of this edition, we pay tribute to his character and the tremendous contribution he made over 13 years. The news of his death, his life and the thoughts of many, are covered later in this edition.

I've known Robert for five years, not a great deal of time, but enough for me to appreciate he was a man of principles and good judgement, who cared a great deal about his family and creating a highly valued organisation in Blind Veterans UK.

He also committed himself very actively in many other organisations, as well as giving of his own time to support our organisation. I greatly appreciated his genuine openness and consideration of others, and sincerely thank him and his family, for all they have done to help so many. My heart felt best wishes to Sue and his family. This organisation will always value what you've done Robert, and the significant contribution and leadership you've displayed.

In April we held Founder's Day in our Sheffield centre, and celebrated the great achievements of members, staff and volunteers. As with so many events when I come into contact with the members and all those who work at Blind Veterans UK, my heart is lifted and I'm inspired in so many ways. As you read about the Founder's Day Award winners later in this edition, I feel sure you will understand my feelings; as they are individuals who have tirelessly given back and promoted the values of Blind Veterans UK and raised awareness of it to others.

They are members who have overcome tremendous physical and emotional injuries to then go on to build a family, learn new skills and help others to do the same. They have demonstrated great courage as they have conquered the challenges of sight loss to develop expertise and talent to incredible levels of achievement.

A common thread with all award winners is their determination and passion to overcome their own challenges, only to go on and help others overcome theirs. I've learnt developing independence, shapes individuals with colour, character and personality, and its individuals like these who inspire others to do the same.

With this in mind, I'm conscious that there is growing support by a large number of participants in this year's 100K London to Brighton fundraising yomp! Please do sign up now or encourage others to do so, it's a really great event. Having participated in this twice, I somehow feel "walk" does not characterise the pain and challenge each participant goes through. Not just on the day, but in the months of training beforehand, individuals will commit many weeks of effort; the injuries can often be the evidence! If you're not planning to participate there is plenty of opportunity to give your support; in this edition there are a number of participants, who would be delighted for your sponsorship. Please read their stories, and I'm sure they would be grateful for your support.

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Activities from the Brighton centre. May.

Widows' Week 4th – 10th. Writers' Forum 17th May.
The Golf Club 17th – 18th. Archery Club 30th May – 9th June.
Water Sports for Heroes Day – date TBC.

June.

Sports & Fitness Week 1st – 7th. Writers' Forum 21st.
The Golf Club 21st – 22nd. Gardening Week 22nd – 28th.
Paddle Round the Pier 29th June – 7th July.

July.

Writers' Forum 3rd – 5th. Planes, Trains and Automobiles 6th – 12th.
Ladies Week 13th – 19th. The Golf Club 19th – 20th.
Geocaching/Treasure Hunt Week 27th July – 2nd Aug.

August.

Amateur Radio Club 1st – 9th. Recreation Taster Week 10th – 16th.
Family Weekend 22nd – 25th.

Activities from the Llandudno centre. May.

Potting & Plants Week 4th – 10th. Welsh History and Culture Week 11th – 17th.
Wood-fest 25th - 31st. History Week and Wood Fest are now fully booked.

June. Next Level Fishing is now fully booked.

Welsh Water Week 8th – 14th. Next Level Fishing Week 29th – 5th July.

July. Both are now fully booked.

Music Week 6th – 12th. Fishing Taster/Beginners Week 20th – 26th.

August. Recreation Week and Family Weekend are now booked.

Amateur Radio Club 1st – 9th. Recreation Taster Week 10th – 16th.
Family Weekend 22nd – 25th.

Activities from the Sheffield centre. May/June.

Gardens Week 30th – 4th June.

July.

Photography Week 28th – 31st.

August.

Luncheon Club 18th – 22nd. G.O.A.L Group 26th to 29th.

Contact telephone numbers.

The Brighton centre 01273 307811.

The Llandudno centre 01492 868700.

The Sheffield centre 0114 2672550.

The Booking Office: To book accommodation please contact the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please first contact your Welfare Officer.

ROVI on Duty: If you need to speak with the ROVI on Duty please telephone: 01273 391447.

IT Training Support: If you need to speak with the IT Instructor on support please telephone: 01273 391432.

New members: If you know someone who could be eligible to join Blind Veterans UK they can phone our Membership Department on freephone: 0800 389 7979.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Annual Act of Commemoration at Runnymede Memorial on Sunday 11th May.

The RAF's Ceremonial Events has extended an open invitation for Blind Veterans UK members, their families, staff, supporters and volunteers to attend an annual act of commemoration on Sunday 11th May 2014. Wreaths will be laid on behalf of the Commonwealth Air Forces and Ex-Service organisations in honour of the 20,458 members of the Commonwealth Air Forces who lost their lives in the Second World War from the years 1939 to 1945, while operating from the United Kingdom and North West Europe, and who have no known grave. This moving ceremony is open to all who wish to pay their respects to those named on the memorial. The address is Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial, Coopers Hill Lane, Englefield Green, Egham, Surrey TW20 0LB. People should arrive at the Memorial no later than 1030 as the Service will commence at 1100 and conclude at approximately 1140 when wreaths will be laid. There is parking in Coopers Hill Lane and toilets next to the car park.

Two for one holidays at our centres.

We are pleased to announce that the two for one offer on holidays that so many of you enjoyed this year will be repeated across the Brighton and Llandudno centres in January and February 2015.

We know that the demand for these weeks are proving very popular so please contact the Bookings team on telephone 01273 391500 to book your holiday and to avoid disappointment.

Crawley Blind Bowls Club.

If you would like to join the Crawley Blind Bowls club please contact Blind Veterans UK member Ray Wood who would like to hear from you. He can be contacted on telephone: 01293 544227.

Defence Discount Service.

Veterans and their spouses can apply for a defence discount card to save money on the high street. If you do not have a computer you can telephone 01509 233446 to apply. If you have a computer you can apply online at: www.defencediscountservice.co.uk

Trooping the Colour - Ticket Draw.

The Queen's Birthday Parade will be held on Saturday 14th June 2014 on Horse Guards Parade. The Colour will be trooped by Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards in the presence of Her Majesty.

As Blind Veterans UK has been allocated tickets, members wishing to attend should send their name and address to Barbara Sweeney, Blind Veterans UK, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 16th May, or telephone 020 7616 7922 or email: barbara.sweeney@blindveterans.org.uk

A draw will determine the final allocation of tickets; please note these will be limited to two per applicant.

Those who are selected from the draw will be responsible for arranging and paying for their travel and accommodation.

The annual concert by Her Majesty's Royal Marine Band at the Brighton centre on 16th July 2014.

It is approaching that time again when we will soon have the pleasure of the company of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Band at our Brighton centre.

We at Blind Veterans UK are privileged each year to experience the magic of this concert; a day which is always immensely enjoyed by all. This special event is a highlight amongst our annual programme for local and visiting members. However hosting this event also provides an opportunity to invite and give something back to our volunteers, VIPs and supporters and to demonstrate our ongoing connection with this group of people.

As you are aware it is a popular event and we only have a limited number of seats available for local members and their spouses. If you wish to apply for a place, please contact Charlotte Davies on telephone: 01273 391412.

There will be a limited bus service for members who live in the immediate vicinity of the centre who require the assistance of transport. If you do live locally and are able to make your own way to the centre this would help to alleviate unwanted pressure on the Transport Department.

Unfortunately lunch bookings cannot be taken on the day except for those already staying in house. We look forward to enjoying the concert with you.

Order of events for the afternoon:-

1330	Pimms served in the Inner Garden
1400 – 1515	Royal Marines Band concert
1520	Afternoon tea in the Inner Garden
1600	Guests depart

Random Acts of Kindness.

In the December 2013 edition of the Review we asked you to tell us of any random acts of kindness.

Ken and Joan Humphries from Diss in Norfolk phoned to tell us that Anthony Sulch had donated £20 to Blind Veterans UK after Ken told him about the charity. Thank you Anthony from all of us.

Letters to the Editor.

We welcome your letters so 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

Would you please pass on my thanks to all members of staff involved in the recent Younger Group Battlefield Tour on the Somme.

The tour guide and drivers were excellent and most helpful.

Although the sights of the actual battles and cemeteries are very sad, it is very important to understand the reasons why, and we should not forget what happened there.

Once again, many thanks for all the help and support by Blind Veterans UK.

Yours sincerely,

David Blagg.



Picture: Dave Blagg is pictured fifth from the left at The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme.

The End is Nigh! (For Windows XP). By David Dent, IT Instructor.

Microsoft has announced that it is ending support for Windows XP in April 2014 and a number of members have asked us about this. If your computer is less than four years old, it is very unlikely that it is using Windows XP and you needn't worry. If it is an older machine, it might have Windows XP but don't panic: your computer will not suddenly stop working in April!

It is like driving an older car: it doesn't do many miles to the gallon and there are no airbags in case of a crash but it will still give good service if you look after it and drive carefully.

Windows XP computers may develop faults that can't be easily fixed or they may develop security problems over time. An update will be needed eventually. Sadly, for most Windows XP users this will mean that a whole new computer will be required and, except for people using Guide, the new computer will seem quite unfamiliar and more training might be required. As you can imagine, this is quite a big step for many and is not something to rush into.

How soon you need to upgrade depends upon what you use your computer for.

People who have Windows XP and who use the worldwide web and email every day – particularly those who use their computer for work, shopping or banking — should consider upgrading to a new computer fairly soon. People who never go on the Web and only email occasionally might not need to change computer at all.

We have a helpsheet we can send you that details steps that you could take to make your Windows XP machine more secure after April. We also have a little information about how you might obtain a new computer. If you are concerned about your Windows XP computer and would like advice please contact the Rehab & Training IT helpline on 01273 391432 or email: rehab@blindveterans.org.uk and we will do our best to help.

Robert Leader 1947 to 2014.

We are saddened to announce that Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Robert Leader passed away peacefully at his home with his family present at 6am on Thursday 17th April 2014, following a short illness.

The many tributes that flooded onto our Facebook page within minutes of announcing the sad news of his passing demonstrated the high regard that Robert was held in. One message was from member Darren Blanks from Cumbria who wrote: "Rest in peace Robert. A great man who will be missed by all. You always had time for all of the Blind Veterans UK members and staff." Robert's Executive Assistant Nicki Turnbull said that her life is richer for having had Robert in it.

Robert was a man of principle who always did what was right, not what was easy. We know that many of you will be saddened at the news of his passing and will have your very own personal memories of Robert, as you recall his many kindnesses, words of wisdom, strength, support and his ready laugh and love of life. If you would like to send them into the Review by post, email or phone, using the contact details on page two, we will send your messages to his family.

Blind Veterans UK's Chairman, Tim Davis, said: "Robert Leader's death is a terrible loss for everyone at Blind Veterans UK.

"In his 13 years as Blind Veterans UK's Chief Executive, Robert Leader successfully took the organisation through a period of historic growth. During Robert's tenure, Blind Veterans UK changed its constitution, to enable the organisation to support ex Service men and women no matter what the cause of their sight loss. The organisation also opened two new national centres, in Sheffield and Llandudno, to supplement the work of its Brighton centre, and grew its community services, to adapt to the changing needs of our beneficiaries and develop the accessibility of our services. In the last three years, Robert led on the rebranding from St Dunstan's to Blind Veterans UK and helped launch the No One Alone campaign, which has enabled us to help a record number of ex Service personnel with severe sight loss.

"Robert will be remembered not only for his exceptional leadership and professional achievements, but also for his personal warmth, kindness and his

lasting commitment to helping blinded ex Service men and women. He will be missed by everyone who had the pleasure of working with and, indeed, knowing him."

Born in Sheffield, Robert initially worked in the banking and the furniture industries, before moving to the public and voluntary sectors, where he spent most of his career. His many roles included serving as a Director of an NHS Acute Hospitals Trust and managing a residential home for the Leonard Cheshire Foundation. Prior to joining Blind Veterans UK, he spent four years as Head of the Health Service for British Forces Germany, based in Rheindahlen near Düsseldorf.

In addition to his role as Chief Executive of Blind Veterans UK, Robert was Vice Chairman of the Confederation of Service Charities (COBSEO) and Chairman of the British Members Council of the World Veterans Federation. He was also a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London (Representative DL for the London Borough of Ealing) and Upper Warden of the Worshipful Company of Horners (a City of London Livery Company).

Robert is survived by his wife, Sue, their two grown-up children and three grandchildren.

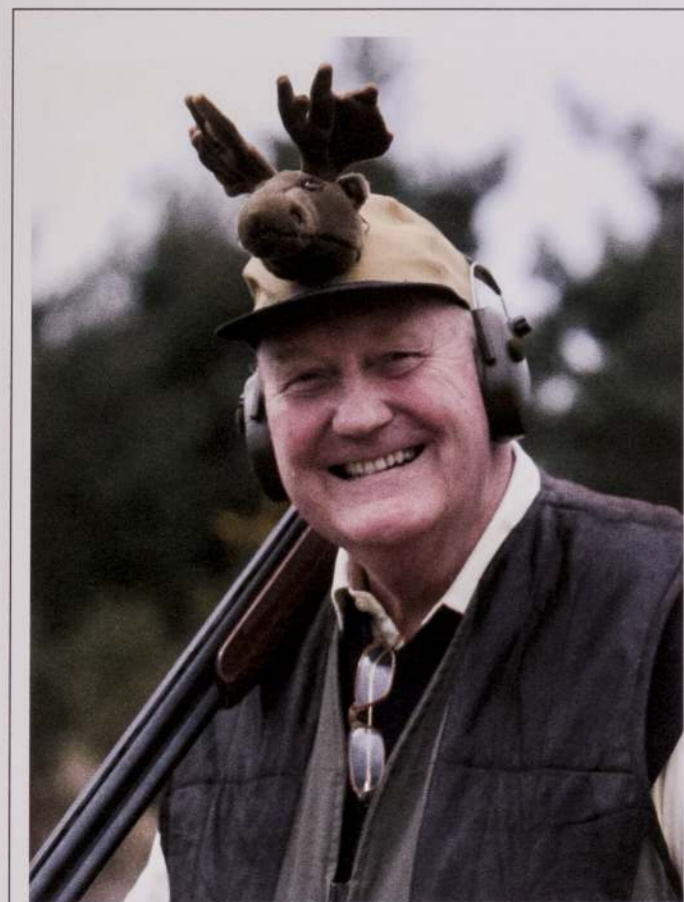


Picture: Always the quintessential English gentleman.

The Blind Veterans UK flag was lowered to half mast at our centres and Harcourt Street on 17th April and it remained lowered at all four locations until the family funeral on 25th April. There were books of condolence at each centre and at Harcourt Street for members, staff and visitors to sign. Each centre and Harcourt Street held their own acts of remembrance for Robert. An event that will celebrate Robert's life will take place on Friday 6th June, in Ealing, all who knew him are welcome to attend.

Blind Veterans UK is in the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive. To cover the recruitment period, Barry Porter, Director of Welfare Services, has been appointed interim Chief Executive. Chairman Tim Davis and Blind Veterans UK's Trustees are working closely with Barry Porter and the organisation's senior management team to ensure continuity of the charity's operations.

Blind Veterans UK President, Ray Hazan OBE said: "We mourn the passing of Robert Leader who played such an important role over the past 13 years. Robert addressed his work in a calm and unruffled manner and I never heard him utter an angry word. Veterans, Trustees and staff owe him an enormous debt. I know all will join me in offering our sincere condolences to his wife Sue, his son, daughter and grandchildren."



Picture: Showing his great sense of humour this rather natty hat was originally bought by Robert for his son, also Robert, who for some reason didn't want to wear it. Robert is shown sporting appropriate headgear at the annual shoot at Bisley.

An egalitarian Robert never forgot the roots of the charity and wrote: "It was the vision and determination of our founder, Sir Arthur Pearson, to be the blind man rather than a blind man and the energy and drive of Lord Fraser, also blind and our Chairman for 53 years, that set the personal example of an independent life, which was the hallmark of what has been an inspiration to so many of our members over the years. I truly believe that these two blind men of vision would applaud the way in which the organisation has adapted, grown and prepared itself to embrace the future."

Robert often spoke of the need for everyone to work as a team and that everyone had the right to be listened to. His words were echoed by Gerry Jones when speaking of Robert. Gerry from St Agnes, who joined Blind Veterans UK in 1972, said: "I found Robert a gentle giant who would listen to anyone and be helpful. No one was too low for him to speak to, he treated everyone the same and that gave you a lot of confidence. He will be missed."



Picture: Robert prepares to lay a wreath in honour of the fallen at the former battlefields of The Somme.

Spring tips for blind gardeners. By Gillian Verrall.

Sowing seed is a cheap and very satisfying way to start growing. There is nothing like the magic of finding seeds that you sowed have germinated and are now showing leaves above the soil.

A common difficulty experienced by gardeners with sight problems is in distinguishing a weed from a plant. A solution is to sow seed in controlled conditions and plant out the established young plants in blocks or rows in well-cleared ground. Any smaller plants that come through later must be weeds!

Cut out the need for pricking out seedlings, by sowing in modular containers and creating your own plug plants, or, for larger seeds, in individual pots. Modular trays are sectioned inserts that fit into ordinary seed trays. Plastic types are available from garden centres and come in various sizes, ranging from 12 to 60 cells, or modules, per tray.

To sow, put your seeds in a small container with upright sides that you can easily get your finger and thumb in. Take a pinch of seeds and gently rub them between your finger and thumb until you can feel that you have just one seed. (With some very small seeds, such as Lobelia, it doesn't matter if there is more than one seed per module.) With your spare hand locate the corner module in the tray and place the seed in the centre of it.

Move your free hand on to the next module, either above, below or to the side of the sown module and take another seed and place it in the centre. By not moving your spare hand away from the tray you can work your way methodically over all the modules, placing a seed in each. Work systematically from one side of the tray to the other, making sure that you do not miss any sections.

If you hold a small stick or label in your hand, you can place it in the last section completed when you get that annoying phone call that takes you away.

Once the soil warms up enough you can sow direct into the ground. Try using string with elastic on the end to mark out your line for sowing seeds – and keep

it as tight as possible. Mark out the drill; use your finger so that you can feel how deep you are making it. Get a plastic clothes peg and clip it onto the line so that you can slide it along. Move the peg to where you want to start the seeds from. Take a pinch of seeds, and as you sprinkle the seeds, move the peg along. When you run out of seeds, stop; the peg will mark where you have got to. Leave the line where it is until the seeds germinate so you know where they are.

Thrive is a national charity which uses gardening to bring about profound transformations in the lives of disabled people. We have a number of publications available for people with sight loss, some of which are free. For more information visit www.thrive.org.uk e-mail: info@thrive.org.uk or call us on 0118 988 5688.



Picture: Annette Gahling planting flowers using a wheel for blind gardeners.
Photo: Caroline Nieuwenhuys.

Blind Veterans UK Founder's Day Awards 2014.

Writing of our First World War training centre in London's Regent's Park our second Chairman, Lord Fraser, said: "I went to Regent's Park and it was there a marvellous change came over me. It was partly that I was getting stronger and partly the example and invigorating personality of Sir Arthur Pearson himself. The house in Regent's Park was a haven of rest after the battlefield. It stretched a helping hand out to the blinded soldier, sailor or airman in pain, in need, in success, or failure, in all the trials and tribulations of the day to day life. It sustains him materially and the spirit that was to be found there sustains him too. It was there we rebuilt our shattered lives."

Today the spirit of our organisation that Lord Fraser wrote of and the example of Sir Arthur Pearson still exist as members of Blind Veterans UK rebuild their lives after sight loss. They discover that they are no longer alone as they bond with their fellow veterans and get involved in the many activities at our centres and the array of clubs. Each year on 26th March we celebrate Sir Arthur Pearson through The Founder's Day Awards, which go to members and volunteers who have achieved something outstanding. The date is significant, as it was the date in 1915 when 16 war blinded Servicemen entered our training centre in London's Regent's Park.

This year's Founder's Day Awards ceremony took place at the Sheffield centre where The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley and The Lord Mayor's Consort, Mr Lloyd Priestley, were the guests of honour.

Under the guidance of centre manager Terry Heaton the Sheffield centre is often the first to do things. It was the first centre to host the Founder's Day Awards, the first to host the Younger Group and the first to host the G.O.A.L Group.

Barry Porter, Director of Welfare Services, was once again an outstanding MC, as he introduced each award winner with a speech that outlined their journey to such a great achievement. It was the first Founder's Day Awards for our new Chairman Tim Davis who had a great day as he presented four members of staff with their Chairman's Commendation Award. A recording of the Founder's Day Awards Ceremony, with all speeches, is on the Talking Review.

Community Award – Nigel and Jacqueline Whiteley, Brighton.

The first award to be presented by The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley at the 2014 Founder's Day Awards was to Nigel and Jacqueline Whiteley. Proposed by Terry Bullingham they received the Community Award in recognition of the hours they put in to promote Blind Veterans UK. In his proposal Terry wrote:

"Nigel, with over 25 years Royal Naval Service, joined Blind Veterans UK on Millennium eve. Following rehabilitation training in 2001, he embraced the organisation. For the past eight years, Nigel has delivered, on a voluntary basis, regular lectures on the ethos of Blind Veterans UK to a wide range of social groups and professionals, in addition to a variety of naval and military establishments. Although Nigel delivers the talks Jacqueline fills the vital support role in ensuring they reach the venues on time. It would be fair to say that Nigel would be unable to function effectively in this work without Jacqueline and that is why I would like to put this forward as a joint proposal. Nigel and Jacqueline have represented our organisation on display stands and tents, at air shows, fêtes, and other public venues, for over 10 years. Their approach has always been enthusiastic and representative of the 'can do' spirit of Blind Veterans UK. Nigel is an excellent Ambassador for Blind Veterans UK and a role model to inspire others."



Picture: Nigel and Jacqueline accept their Founder's Day Award from The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley.

Training Achievement Award – Gary Tomlinson, Bedale North Yorkshire.

Gary Tomlinson was proposed by Gaye Atkins, IT Instructor at the Sheffield centre. In her proposal she wrote:

“Gary has overcome many obstacles and using a computer has become a lifeline for him (Gary’s words). He has grasped the nettle with both (very large!) hands with tenacity and good humour. Gary is also the first to offer help to others. As well as pushing himself, Gary has been quick to find technical issues with Guide software and website accessibility. This has helped IT instructors in feeding back to the software developers and also to adapt our teaching. He was the initiator of the Younger Members’ Chatroom redevelopment and has been an editor of the Younger Members’ newsletter.

“Gary was also one of the first members to use the Synapptic accessible phone. He can now speak to those who can understand his speech and text those who can’t. Of course he showed the same powers of curiosity and problem solving which he had shown in his use of Guide. This year Gary attended the social networking course at the Sheffield centre. Everyone on the course benefitted from his experience, willingness to help and ‘can do’ attitude. He especially contributed to the security debates and quickly learnt how he could get around the problems he was experiencing. In summary, Gary has shown great tenacity and courage and is truly an inspiration to others.”



Picture: Gary Tomlinson receives his Training Achievement Founder’s Day Award from The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley

Sports Person of the Year – Peter Price.

Peter Price from Peterborough was proposed by his Welfare Officer Alan Hay. In his citation Alan wrote:

“Peter joined Blind Veterans UK in 2010. On the intro week he was introduced to the sport of blind archery. Peter has since taken to this sport with great application and determination. He has joined the charity’s archery club and devised a practice range at home. He has already broken a scoring record and is to have trials for the national Paralympics team. Peter openly says that archery has helped him mentally and emotionally, he has found that he now has something to focus on, that he has regained a lot of positivity in his life. He has also embarked on a programme of physical training so that he can improve his performance at archery and this is further demonstration of his commitment to his sport and the new positive outlook it has given him.

“This year Peter took part in the Disability Sports Forum in Peterborough as a committee member, coaching disabled archery. He is also trained as a Bocca leader and runs sessions at the Peterborough lunch club.”



Picture: Peter Price with his Sports Person of the Year Award.

Creative Art Award – Bill Mooney.

A skilled woodturner Bill was proposed by Joe Elsander, a friend and fellow member of Blind Veterans UK from the North East.

Humbled by the award Bill Mooney said: "It was a lovely day and nice to meet new people. I felt incredibly humble as I picked up the award, as everyone else seemed to have done more than me. I was there to collect the award for those who helped me. If people didn't buy my work I wouldn't be able to donate the money to Blind Veterans UK. It's an incredible organisation that makes you want to push yourself to achieve as everyone is so supportive. I have a little maxim 'Confidence breeds independence and independence breeds confidence.' And that's what Blind Veterans UK helps you to achieve. The big thing about Blind Veterans UK is that you find out you are not alone, as an awful sense of isolation comes in when you lose your sight, and that isolation breaks down when you come to Blind Veterans UK."



Picture: The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley presents Bill Mooney with his Founder's Day Award.

Volunteer of the Year Award – Bob Hind.

Nominated by Dewi Roberts, Sports & Recreation Instructor, for his work at the Llandudno centre, Bob Hind picked up the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Thrilled with his award volunteer Bob from Anglesey, who is ex REME, said: "There are plenty of other people who also deserve recognition and I am honoured to have been nominated for this award. The volunteer role is great as I just enjoy taking people out on the tandem and taking people like Charlie Parkinson out running. We did the London Marathon and it was great to see Charlie so happy with his achievement. I got as much pleasure from taking a 96 year old swimming for the first time in years. There's always plenty for me to do with the many activity weeks that take place at the Llandudno centre and I also help with the fundraising and collections. I go to to the centre about three times a week, but one or two of the members let me know if they need me to come in outside those days. It is a very varied and thoroughly enjoyable role."

Victoria Dickinson, Head of Volunteering, said: "We are grateful to all our wonderful volunteers who help provide better and more flexible services to our members. In total 383 volunteers gift many hours as they donate their talent and skills for our members to have a great experience with us."



Picture: Volunteer of the Year Bob Hind with The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley

Outstanding Achievement Award - Chris Nowell.

Nominated by his Welfare Officer, Alison Molloy, 30 year old Chris from Dronfield in Derbyshire, received the Outstanding Achievement Award. In her citation Alison wrote:

"Chris became a war blinded member in 2008 after losing his sight when he sustained a serious head injury in Afghanistan in September 2007 whilst serving with the King's Royal Hussars. The extensive skull fracture and neurological damage meant Chris had to undergo three major operations and begin an intensive period of rehabilitation in relation to his sight loss, speech and cognition. Chris was described as being able to undertake only simple tasks such as making drinks and laying the table when he first joined us. He showed great determination immediately telling his ROVI about his ambition to climb Mount Snowdon and to cook Christmas dinner for his family.

Chris has done both and so much more.

"At the time of injury Chris' wife Claire was pregnant with their first son Luke. Chris is now a hands on and confident father to three boys, Luke (5), Adam (3) and Rhys who is 11 months. His caring nature and determination have shone through with his desire to support his family, his peers in Blind Veterans UK and the charity whilst making great strides in his own journey of recovery physically and emotionally. Chris has gone from trainee on our photography course to becoming volunteer trainer and the official photographer for our Sheffield centre and for Project Gemini when members of the Blinded Veterans of America join with the war blinded of Blind Veterans UK. He has also married up his two great passions of photography and football to become the official match photographer at Sheffield United.

"Chris always talks about 'giving back' for the help and support the charity has given him and he does so through his role of photography volunteer, the support he gives to fundraising from participation in publicity and events and by sharing his enthusiasm and passion with other members supporting their ambitions. Chris promotes the charity's values in his endeavours by being courageous stepping out of his comfort zone, showing commitment, being resourceful and working collaboratively with members and staff alike.

"Chris has shown great passion and commitment to improving his own life and that of others. I and others have witnessed a great transformation and people

will contact me to say 'Wow, what's happened to Chris, he's a new person'. I think so too and it is so humbling to work with him."



Picture: Outstanding achiever Chris Nowell receives his Founder's Day Award from The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Sheffield Councillor Vickie Priestley.

The Ted Higgs Trophy – Terry Bullingham.

This award is given in memory of the late Ted Higgs, who lost all of his sight in 1944, whilst serving with the Royal Artillery. It has been kindly donated by members of his family. The award is given to a War Blind member in recognition of lifetime achievement. This year's recipient was Terry Bullingham, pictured on the back page with Valerie Shannon Higgs and Pauline Edwards, daughters of the late Ted Higgs. Introducing the award, Barry Porter mentioned that Ted Higgs had been a keen model maker and he had one of Ted's models in his office.

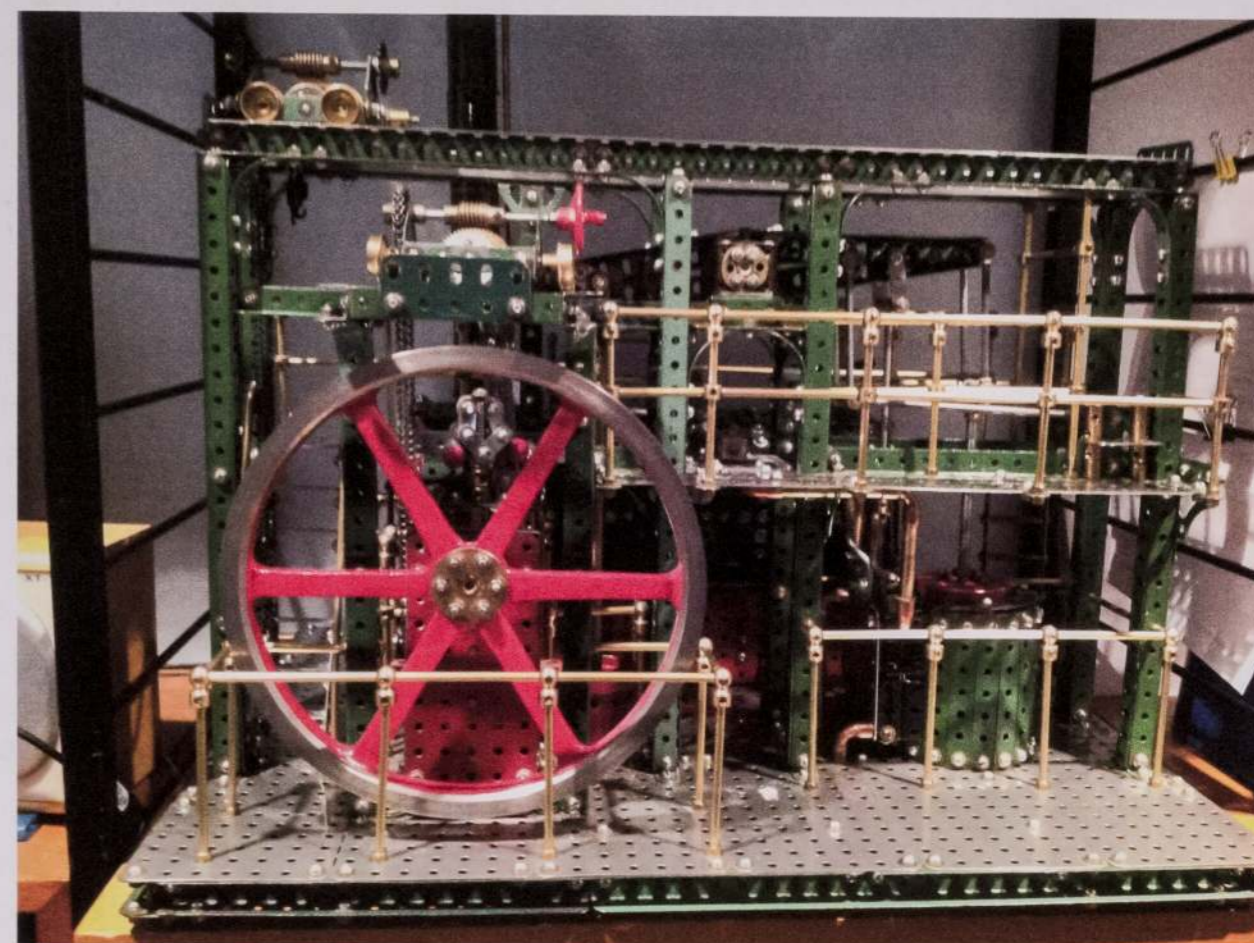
Terry was proposed by his Welfare Officer, Rachel Jennings, who wrote:

"Terry can only be described as one of this country's finest model engineers. He has not only made a working replica of a steam engine from Meccano, but over the past few years, in order to challenge his skills and capabilities designed, engineered and made a working crane, the full size of which was used regularly in dock yards. The crane has over 3,000 pieces, the majority of which have been tooled by Terry in his workshop at home, on his own lathe (other than some of the nuts and bolts). It is a creation of passion, determination and ingenuity. Terry is presently taking the working model to meetings where like minded model makers and engineers meet, hence the large plastic wheels on it. When you consider that Terry has no sight it truly is a terrific achievement."

His wife Maria said: "It is an amazing piece of engineering, people are in awe when they see the detail that Terry has managed to get into very often small places on the model and he is never beaten by things. If they don't quite go to plan he always works out another plan! I often can't believe it myself when he shows me parts he's made on his lathe (frightens me to death while he's operating it!)."

Terry Bullingham said: "I initially encountered Meccano as a schoolboy and thoroughly enjoyed constructing models with it until I discovered Rock and Roll. Features I enjoy are that it is an adaptable medium, construction being relatively quick, and the end result is seamless inasmuch that all the mistakes and 'try-outs' have been removed during the construction. I returned to it after totally losing my sight as I have a clear memory of the range of parts and thus have a reasonably accurate mental image of the models progress."

Valerie Shannon-Higgs and Pauline Edwards both said how proud they are that the memory of their late father is continued through the Ted Higgs Trophy.



Picture: Just one of Terry's Meccano masterpieces.



Picture: Terry Bullingham checks one of his Meccano models.

Four members of staff receive a Chairman's Commendation Award.

During Founder's Day the Chairman Tim Davis presented the winners of The Chairman's Commendation Awards with their certificates. Tim was appointed Chairman at the Trustee meeting on 5th December 2013, as successor to Major General Andrew Keeling CB CBE RM, who retired after five years as Chairman and 19 years on the Board of Trustees.

Tim became a Trustee in 2009, coming from a background in management, marketing and commerce for major international companies. Most recently on the management board of Hilton Hotels where he was responsible for developing the brand and transforming its internal processes and technology, and currently where he is developing an international consulting and commercial services business. He comes from a military family of several generations, and at the start of his career spent a few short years in the Royal Marines Reserves and then the regulars. His introduction to Andy Keeling came as a result of his involvement in other military charities. In his leisure time, Tim is a private pilot, father to three teenage boys, and he enjoys running, sailing, cooking at home and playing the piano.

The winners of the Chairman's Commendation Award were introduced by Di Blackman, Director of People Services, who said:

"The Chairman's Commendations part of the Founder's Day Awards are designed to recognise staff who go above and beyond what is normally expected of them in their roles. Not only will they be doing the day job to the highest of standards but they also go beyond the day job and excel in very different ways. They also very often demonstrate clear alignment with our vision, our mission and our values and show that they have integrated them fully into the work that they do on a day to day basis."

The winners were Barbara Sweeney, PA to Welfare Services. Steve Janering, Security & Maintenance Supervisor at the Brighton centre. Matt Lee, IT Instructor at the Llandudno centre and Catherine Goodier, Review Editor.

Di Blackman said: "Barbara Sweeney has worked at Blind Veterans UK since 2005. Apart from the day job that she carries out to a very high standard she organises one of our premier annual events, the Church Stretton Reunion.

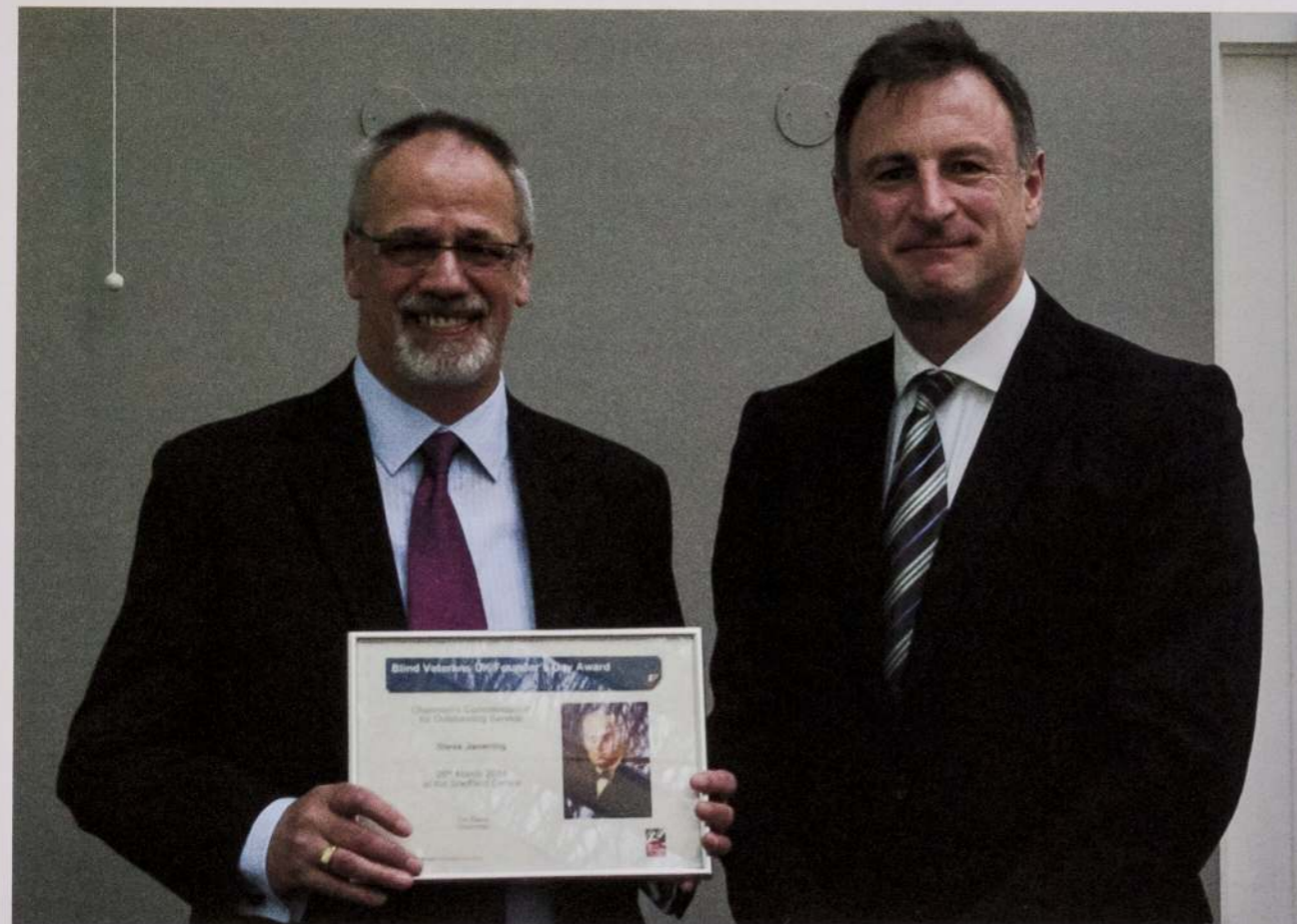
"During the Second World War our rehab and training facilities moved from Brighton to Church Stretton for the duration of the war returning to Brighton soon afterwards. About 700 members were trained there. This gathering is for our longest 'serving' members who have achieved the Blind Veterans UK 50 year badge.

"In common, with many of our big events, it is a huge logistical challenge. That said it is important to recognise this event is solely down to Barbara not a team of people and down to her her organisation, creativity and diligence. As you will appreciate for a significant number of attendees this is one of the few events they can continue to attend and is highly valued by them. Sustaining an important link with their Charity and maintaining long held friendships. It is especially poignant for those members and widows who originally met at Church Stretton — a real trip down memory lane and a link to their shared past. Barbara is always the first to arrive and last to leave and whilst appearing a calm coordinator for the entire duration we are aware that she is probably paddling furiously beneath the surface. I'm sure Barbara will just say she enjoys the event and it is just part of her job but in our view it is a great example of someone going the extra mile for a very special group of members."



Picture: Barbara Sweeney accepts her award from the Chairman Tim Davis.

Steve Janering, Security & Maintenance Supervisor at the Brighton centre, won a Chairman's Commendation Award as Diane said: "I have known Steve for many years and in particular from the years I was based at Brighton. He has worked for Blind Veterans UK for 17 years. I have always known him to be extremely conscientious and devoted to providing high quality services to our members and staff at Brighton. Steve has the kind of job that means you can rarely plan ahead and whilst he is employed on a set number of hours he is regularly called out outside of his normal hours and always responds in a very positive manner. For example he has been known to cancel his holiday at short notice so that he can ensure that there is sufficient cover within the team, he has come in to do night shifts with only about one hour's notice. He often checks the Blind Veterans UK war graves in Brighton in his own time to ensure that they are being maintained and he does all of this very willingly and with minimal fuss often to the detriment of his own personal plans. Steve is a fine example of the dedication that a lot of our staff show towards their work and the Charity - always putting the Charity and its members before their own personal interest."



Picture: Steve Janering Security & Maintenance Supervisor at the Brighton centre with Chairman Tim Davis.

Another recipient was Matt Lee, IT Instructor at the Llandudno centre. Introducing his Award Diane Blackman said: "Matt has worked at Blind Veterans UK in Llandudno since September 2011 and when our centre opened, was one of our first IT Instructors supporting our members to develop their IT skills. He was the initial brain and impetus behind what became known as the Liquorice Torpedo. The Liquorice Torpedo project was a project that took a very simple computer called a Raspberry Pie (some of you may have seen it on the TV and developed this into a talking keyboard device that assisted our members. The initial idea and early work on this project was the brain child of Matt and is a great example of the values of the organisation in action. A lot of the early work was done in his own time and the project was rooted in the desire to aid the learning of our members. He showed courage and commitment throughout its development and showed the ultimate in resourcefulness. That is the serious side to Matt but when I asked his manager to give me a few insights into the Matt Lee as known to his colleagues he said the following.

"Matt is very proud to be a self-confessed geek. His inventive prowess is not only IT orientated. At the summer fete in Llandudno his game was Smack the Rat and he is also known for his cider making ability. A keen mountain walker who is quite happy to finish work and walk up Snowdon. He is also a keen fisherman and owns his own boat but also gets incredibly sea sick much to the happiness of Billy Baxter! His manager goes on but I will spare Matt any further embarrassment. Suffice it to say that Matt both works hard and plays hard."



Picture: Matt Lee, IT Instructor at the Llandudno centre with the Chairman.

Someone all Review readers should know is the Review Editor Catherine Goodier who also received a Chairman's Commendation Award. She was nominated by David Bassom, Head of Marketing & Communications who said:

"Catherine is an exceptional employee of Blind Veterans UK, who embodies the commitment, courage, resourcefulness and collaboration members expect of the organisation's staff. As Editor of Review, she works tirelessly to ensure the magazine is produced — in its different formats — to deadline and to the top quality that members deserve, each and every month. Above all, Catherine is determined that Review continues to inform, inspire and entertain its readers, and that it fully celebrates and enriches the lives of Blind Veterans UK's extraordinary members."



Picture: Review Editor Catherine Goodier receives her Chairman's Commendation Award from Chairman Tim Davis.

Support blind veterans taking on the 100K London to Brighton Challenge.

As we prepare to celebrate our centenary in 2015 the Review has gone through past issues of the magazine and we have come up with a report of the first London to Brighton Walk in the summer of 1922. Here we bring you a historic account by our second Chairman, Lord Fraser of Lonsdale, and updates from today's members who will take part in the 2014 100K London to Brighton Walk from 09:00 on 21st June to 17:00 on 22nd June.

Lord Fraser wrote of the inaugural 1922 London to Brighton walk:

"Someone suggested a competitive walk from London to Brighton, on the same lines as walks held by the big clubs. Padre Williams, our Sports Captain, was sceptical about the probable response, but tremendous keenness was shown. That was all very well, but the Padre rightly decided that would be entrants would have to pass a stiff test before they were allowed to attempt the 52 miles to Brighton. Training for this began at once, and in October a test walk was held. It was three times round the Outer Circle [at Regent's Park], nearly nine miles — and it had to be completed in 1¾ hours. Fifteen men entered and they all passed the test. The following month the first Brighton Walk was held.

"The Surrey Walking Club put off a special walk and at 5am the 15 men — followed by a great crowd of supporters — set off from Big Ben. Each walker was accompanied by a cyclist and guide, with whom he maintained contact by a tape tied lightly to the wrist. It was a great event, without precedent in the blind world. People turned out to cheer all along the route.

"Not all the men finished the course. Some had to retire through foot trouble, others because of their old wounds. One man covered 46 miles before his weak ankle gave way. Yet eight men finished the course, and the winner, F.H. Cassidy, took only a shade over 10¾ hours. My wife and I held the tape when he was cheered home by an immense crowd. That gave our organisation walking fever."

And that walking fever continues today as Blind Veterans UK members Maria Pikulski, Darren Blanks, Clive Huntingford, Anthony 'Coops' Cooper, and Graham Kiff train for the 100K London to Brighton walk.

Maria Pikulski is walking 100K in 24 hours with Richard Hughes in the 100K London to Brighton Challenge for Blind Veterans UK.

If there's a way Maria can raise the profile of her beloved Blind Veterans UK she's there. She has undertaken numerous sporting challenges and is one of our best known spokespeople.

Maria said: "I can say that Blind Veterans UK saved my life. When I lost my sight my world fell apart around me, and there were times when I didn't even want to carry on living. Coming to Blind Veterans UK in 2004 saved me, as until that point I had no idea how I could carry on. I had to give up the career I loved as a nurse, but the more time I spent training at the Brighton centre, the more I realised that I could turn my life around. I needed to be around people who shared my circumstances, and I have met some truly amazing and inspiring individuals. Blind Veterans UK worked with me to help me turn my life around and I cannot thank them enough."

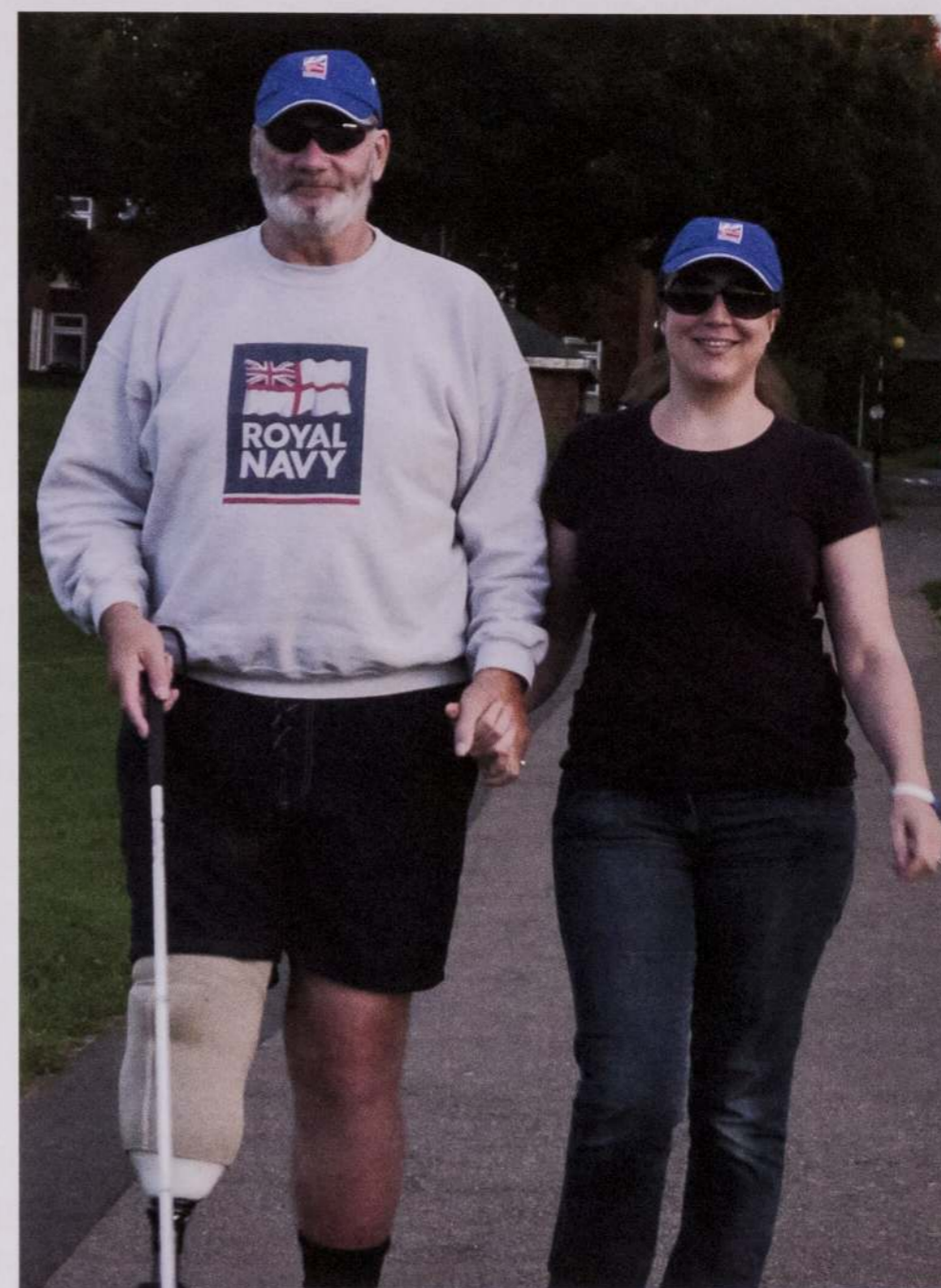
If you would like to sponsor Maria and Richard go to: www.justgiving.com/Maria-Richard



Picture: Maria Pikulski takes a break during training for the 100K.

Clive Huntingford is walking the 100K with his wife Anne. Clive who joined the Royal Navy at the age of 15 for the adventure said: "I had the honour of serving with some of the finest men and women this country has ever produced. I served in the Falklands where unfortunately my ship was lost. I and my lovely wife are walking the 100K to raise money for Blind Veterans UK. I am blind and have lost my right leg below the knee so Anne will not only be my eyes but will pick me up if I fall down. We have been training now for many months as we want to give something back to the charity that helps us."

If you would like to sponsor Anne and Clive go to: www.justgiving.com/The-Huntingfords



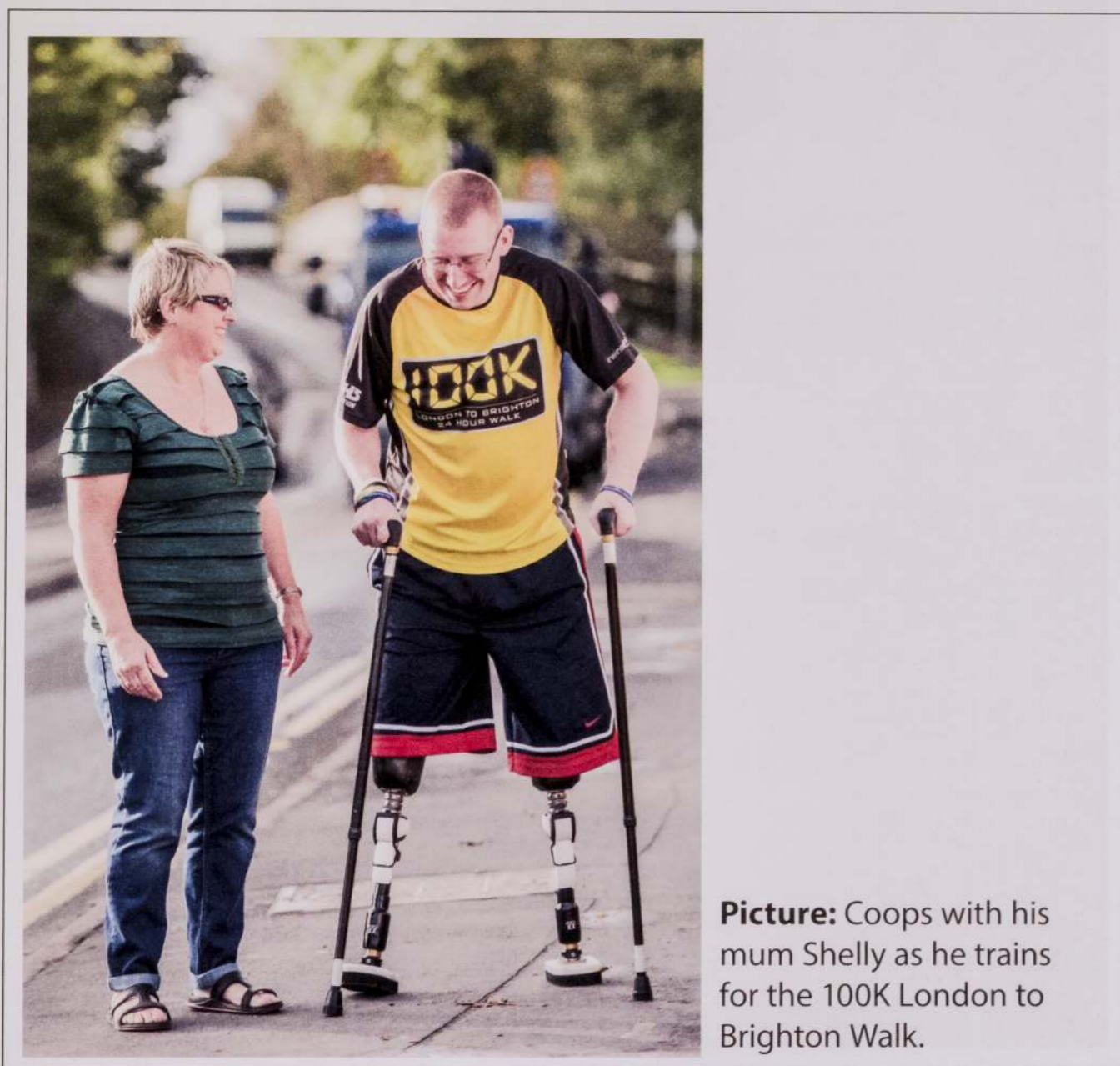
Picture: Anne and Clive Huntingford train for Blind Veterans UK London to Brighton 100K Challenge.

Anthony 'Coops' Cooper joined Blind Veterans UK in 2011 after he was wounded in Afghanistan. He is now in training for the 100K London to Brighton trek, as part of a relay team, walking with other Blind Veterans UK members on the prosthetic legs he is getting to grips with using.

Coops says: "I'm going to tackle the 100K walk because it's a challenge and I enjoy a good challenge. Doing the walk in a relay team with other blind veterans will make me feel part of a team again. If someone had said to me two years ago I would be signing up for this I would have laughed but after all the hard work of getting up on legs again here I am getting ready to do it. It makes me feel alive and ready for the challenges ahead."

If you would like to sponsor Coops to go:

www.justgiving.com/Kingo-Anthony-Cooper



Picture: Coops with his mum Shelly as he trains for the 100K London to Brighton Walk.

Graham 'Kiffy' Kiff from Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire is also training hard. No stranger to endurance challenges he said: "I've got the right footwear for the distance and training is going well. It's great to do this to give something back, as Blind Veterans UK has done more for me than I could ever have imagined.

"In 2006, I was put in touch with a charity that I had never heard of, now going by the name of Blind Veterans UK. As I travelled to Brighton on way to the induction week, I thought how Doctors had told me that I had Retinitus Pigmentosa and one day everything would be black, and there was no treatment for my ever decreasing tunnel vision. So what could Blind Veterans UK do? On my way home I was already missing the place and people I had just met, in that one week, my whole attitude and outlook on life and the future had changed forever.

"Like the Basic training we have all been through when we joined the Forces, gives us the foundation and ability to be a member of the Best Armed Forces in the world!

"Blind Veterans UK gives us inspiration and the foundation to move forward with sight loss. I wanted and needed to do something, but I didn't know what that was. Then I got a copy of the Review through the letter box, in it was a small paragraph asking if anyone wanted to take part in the London Triathlon in 2007. That was it!

"So with the help of Louise Timms and the gym staff at the Brighton centre, I took part in the London Triathlon. I was the only disabled person that year out of 10,000 or so entrants. Blind Veterans UK assisted me and my guide to go to Hamburg that same year to enter the World Triathlon Championships, and I was in the British Disabled Team, yes just me and my guide, the only disabled entrants from Britain. In 2008, again with Blind Veterans UK's support, I went to Vancouver this time following on from more publicity and more interest, there were four of us in the British Disabled Team. I won the gold Medal, Guided by Alex White from Blind Veterans UK. It's great to be able to do these sporting challenges and I'm looking forward to the 100K London to Brighton Challenge."

To sponsor Kiffy go to his Justgiving page at: Justgiving.com/kiffy or for txt go to: KIFF68 to 70070. If you don't have access to the internet you can sponsor people by phoing Community & Events Assistant Aaron Tillyer on telephone: 020 7616 7927.

Amateur Radio Society report by Ray and Claire Peart.

Operating from our Llandudno centre, CQ CQ CQ was again heard reverberating from the Shack from 14th to 22nd March 2014. The Society met again to promote amateur radio and Blind Veterans UK. We were able to establish a radio shack to contact as far afield as possible.

The station was manned primarily by Harry Docherty (G4 ZJO), Dick Hardy (G3 TIX), John Houlihan (G4 BLJ), Ray Peart (G0 FHK) and our invited guest John Wake (M0 JPA) and new member Alistair McGoff (2E0 TGF). The details of contacts were recorded by our QSL Manager Edna McGoff (M6 ELA).

We achieved in excess of 169 contacts which included Germany, Russia, Netherlands, Denmark, Lanzarote, East and West USA, and many others at home and abroad.

During our stay we were supported by John Houlihan (G4 BLJ) Brighton and Gordon Ward (GW0 GBR) from the North Wales Amateur Radio Society without whose help we would have struggled.

Throughout our stay we were well fed and watered and all our needs were sated by all the staff and management, to whom we extend our sincere thanks.

The Station was duly closed on 21st March 2014 until our next meeting at the Llandudno centre from 1st to 9th August 2014.

We would like to thank the local Lions Club who do so much for the centre as they kindly sponsored the room. We were pleased that they saw the Amateur Radio Club in action.

Existing and new members are welcome, please direct any enquires to our Chairman Ray Peart (G0 FHK) on telephone: 01452 533839.

Book Review from Deb Ryan, RNIB. A Tap on the Window by Linwood Barclay.

When Cal Weaver stops at a red light on a rainy night while driving home, he ignores the bedraggled-looking teenage girl trying to hitch a lift. Even when she starts tapping on his window. But when she says, 'Hey, aren't you Scott's dad?' and he realises she's one of his son's classmates, he can't really ignore her. OK, so giving a ride to a teenage girl might not be the smartest move, but how much harm could it do?

It's an intriguing start and Cal is about to find out as he becomes the prime suspect when the girl is found murdered. Cal comes into conflict with the police force; made more complicated by the fact the Chief is his brother in law. While the police investigate Cal's involvement in the murder Cal is doing some investigating of his own around the death of his son – he doesn't accept the verdict of misadventure while high on drugs and who was supplying and distributing drugs around the small town of Griffon. An important element of the story is around Cal and his wife who are finding it hard to relate to one another as a consequence of their son's suicide. I found Barclay's characterisation real and touching. Sometimes Cal crosses the line in trying to get to the truth but you can feel his desperation to get answers.

Linwood Barclay as usual grabs your attention from the first page and keeps the story moving as Cal doggedly pursues the truth. Barclay uses the small town setting to enhance the feeling that everybody knows everybody else's business but that there are plenty of secrets too. There are twists and turns a plenty in this pacy thriller as you would expect from Barclay, although I have to say at 500 pages it does lose some momentum halfway through but then picks up again. As usual Barclay deftly threads strands of the storyline until the shocking end. I've read most of the Linwood Barclay titles and although I did enjoy this one I prefer some of his others: Too Close to Home and Trust Your Eyes spring to mind. I'd recommend if you've not tried him to give his books a go.

Available from the RNIB National Library service. Tap on the Window is available in Braille and giant print and from Audible.com. Too Close to Home is available as talking book TB18883, Braille and giant print. Trust your Eyes is available as talking book TB20630 and giant print. If you want to know more about the RNIB National Library Service or find more reviews and suggestions for books to read go to web pages www.rnib.org.uk/reading or call 0303 123 9999.

Photography Week, Brighton 2014.

By Keith Harness.

The much respected American photographer Ansel Adams once said "You don't make a photograph just with a camera. You bring to the act of photography all the pictures you have seen, the books you have read, the music you have heard, the people you have loved." From 30th March to 5th April members who attended the Photography Week at the Brighton centre embraced his passion.

The week threw together the enthusiastic amateur with just his compact camera for company to the professional with his sophisticated camera, filters, lenses, tripods, lights and all of the other associated paraphernalia that you would expect to see on someone who's at the top of their game.

To start the week the group, led by Esther Freeman, Member Activities Manager, took part in an introduction session; where we shared our previous photographic experiences, including examples of photographic achievements, and said what we hoped to achieve from the week. We went on to take part in discussions lead by ROVI Jo Sinkins about the visual aids that are available for photographic activities and the use of mobility aids whilst on location to help capture the perfect image.

Following morning break we received a project brief from Transport and Bookings Manager Chris Kirk, to capture images related to 'transport and bookings' that could be used in the future by the department. Some of the group headed outside to capture a mixture of close up and full view images of the vehicles outside the centre's main entrance and on location in the surrounding area. Others visited the Transport and Bookings Office to capture a variety of images of staff members at work as they planned future routes and went about their everyday duties.

After lunch accompanied by Esther, Natasha Cartwright, Activities Coordinator and Phil Morley and Lee Edwards, drivers, we headed off on our first field trip of the week to Brighton Pier, the Big Wheel and The Lanes where we were divided into groups for the afternoon's activities. Everyone captured a wide variety of images that included coastal scenes, an array of detailed images of the Victorian architecture that is to be found on Brighton Pier, and some street photography of people going about their everyday life, both at work and enjoying the great weather.

Tuesday morning began with an IT discussion led by Matt Lee, an IT Instructor at the Llandudno centre, on the various ways images can be transferred from the camera and stored in files on the computer, as well as backed up to a variety of storage devices and mediums including those offered by a host of Internet based storage companies (Cloud services). After morning break we departed for our second field trip of the week to Lewes, where after being placed in groups for the day's activities we went on to capture images of the castle, listed buildings found within the town and the centre with its small boutique shops, bobbled side streets and surrounding areas. We then headed off to Stanmer Park, with its vibrant flower beds, slow moving stream, and Abbey ruins where we enjoyed the fantastic weather whilst taking a lunch break in the midday sun.

Throughout the afternoon we captured images in Stanmer Park where there was an abundance of floral images of the vibrant neatly planted spring flowers in the many flower beds. Later after dinner at the Brighton centre several members of the group headed out after the evening meal towards the under cliff and beach to capture images of the sunset before heading back inside to listen and enjoy photography DVDs.

On Wednesday morning we were joined by Esther and Tasha, whilst Dave Bryant left the confinement of the Art and Craft department to spend time with us to cover various aspects of portrait photography, which included the use of natural lighting to lighten areas of the face normally in shadow and the different ways we could ask subjects to sit or stand. That afternoon we were joined by Catherine Benson, from Catherine Benson Wedding Photography in Lewes, who kindly shared her experiences as a professional wedding photographer and showed examples of her work. She also demonstrated high and low key portrait photography with studio lighting equipment she'd brought along for the afternoon session. The group captured a number of stunning portraits of each other and some staff members who kindly agreed to model for us.

Despite the low cloud cover, once again some of the group headed out directly after the evening meal determined to capture images of the sun setting across the sea and Brighton Marina. They had to wait for some time for the colour to appear in the sky once the sun had set.

Thursday morning saw us out and about capturing a range of close up (macro) images of various floral subjects that ranged in colour, shape and size before

we set off on the third field trip of the week to Arundel Castle, where we were once again placed in small groups for the day's activities. We looked around the castle, taking in the many paintings and rooms filled with antique furnishings as we listened to the audio description of the building. We then headed outside to capture external images of the castle, its many features and the grounds, before breaking for lunch within the castle grounds. Then it was time to head into the centre of Arundel to capture images of its boutique shops, Tudor buildings and small passageways.

After the evening meal there was a talk by Mark Pile, a member of Blind Veterans UK, about the photo editing aspects of photography and a demonstration on the various techniques and methods that can be used to edit images. This was followed by a Q&A.

On Friday we printed images that had been captured throughout the week, which were displayed in the centre throughout the day for all to see. Feedback from these was quick in coming from both members and staff alike, as they were very impressed at the level of the images the group had produced. Meanwhile, some members set out to capture images around the centre in areas which had recently been renovated, whilst others were happy to discuss the events of the week and give their feedback on the week's activities and improvements they felt could be made for future events.

After lunch some of the group set out to do documentary photography capturing images of other members socialising in communal areas at the centre such as the lounge and bar. This was followed by the presentation of the images captured earlier in the week to the Transport and Bookings department.

The week ended with a closing talk and the presentation of themed week attendance certificates and a copy of selected images to each member who took part. For the final evening we went with some staff members for a meal to Brighton Marina and on Saturday morning we left happy and better educated in many matters photographic.

Our thanks go to Esther Freeman, Member Activities Manager, who organised the week and to all members of staff and volunteers who helped us throughout the week. The next Photography Week will take place from 28th – 31st July at the Sheffield centre.



Picture: Keith Harness's photo of his fellow members on a bench perfectly demonstrates low light photography.



Picture: The beautiful walled gardens that show the built environment and nature in perfect harmony.

Blind Veterans UK Bowmen Indoor Archery Week 7th - 15th March. By Graham Walker.

We held our indoor championships at the Brighton centre from 7th to 15th March when there were 15 archers plus spotters and coaches in attendance. It was a very good meeting that was enjoyed by all and the results were:

Sunday 9th March.

We had a match with Southampton University who were a sighted team which we won.

The following received gold medals.

Peter Price.
Paul Palmer.
Dennis Cook.
Bert Nelson.

Scores were : Blind Veterans UK Bowmen 5875 — Southampton University 5844.

Monday 10th March.

We shot a Worcester for the Longhill trophy. The results were:

Gold - Carole Sharpe.
Silver - Leslie George.
Bronze - Peter Price.

Tuesday 11th March.

We shot a Portsmouth for the Lawrie Austin Trophy. The results were:

Gold - Graham Walker.
Silver - Dennis Cook.
Bronze - Sandy Donnelly.

Wednesday 12th March.

We had an evening match with local side Ditchling. We shot a FITA25 but we lost this match by three points. So the silver medals were won by our team.

Peter Price.
Graham Walker.
Carol Davies.
Sandy Donnelly.

Scores were: Blind Veterans UK Bowmen 5969 — Ditchling 5972.

All the people who were not in the team shot a FITA25 for the McKinley Trophy, Results as follows:

Paul Palmer.
John Cunnington.

March 13th and 14th.

We shot a combined FITA for the Marjorie Scott trophy. The results were:

Gold - Carole Sharpe.
Silver - Sandy Donnelly.
Bronze - Robert Stevens.

Peter Price also collected the Gaygan Gold trophy for the most golds scored over the year, plus a GNAS medal for the best handicap reduction.

We are all looking forward to the outdoor championships from 30th May to 9th June, which will be held at the Brighton centre.

If you would like to find out about joining Blind Veterans UK Bowmen please contact David Poyner on telephone: 0161 2829524 or email: d.poyner@ntlworld.com Or go to: www.blindveteransukbowmen.org.uk

Family News.

Birthdays:

Congratulations to:

Francis Burrow who celebrated his 100th birthday on 2nd April.

James Edwards who celebrated his 101st birthday on 13th April.

Wedding anniversaries:

Blue Sapphire (65th):

John & Yvonne Moxham of Bath, Somerset on 2nd April.

David & Doreen Ash of Westham, Pevensey on 16th April.

Arthur & Joy Banton of Maidenhead, Berkshire on 18th April.

John & Doreen Simcock of Abergele, Clwyd on 18th April.

Diamond (60th):

Ron & Anne Dovey of Gloucester, Gloucestershire on 3rd April.

Nev & Kathleen Lees of Lincoln, Lincolnshire on 3rd April.

Maurice & Pat Leighton of Stafford, Staffordshire on 3rd April.

Rev Denis & Helen Newman of Taunton, Somerset on 3rd April.

Darwin & Alice Evans of Carnforth, Lancashire on 19th April.

Ted & Margaret Nicholas of Walton-On-Thames, Surrey on 19th April.

Drew & May Hunter of Bath, Somerset on 22nd April.

Ruby (40th):

Geoffrey & Joan Orton of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire on 8th April.

Pearl (30th):

Reg & Beryl King of Addlestone, Surrey on 4th April.

Charlie & Jacqui Eastwood of Hartlepool, Cleveland on 14th April.

Tony & Karen Watson of Sunderland on 28th April.

Silver (25th):

Reggie & Pamela Willimott of Wetherby, West Yorkshire on 15th April.

Frank & Anne Pollington of Urmston, Manchester on 21st April.

Leslie & Brenda Cheetham of Wigan, Lancashire on 29th April.

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

Doris Adams who died on 21st March 2014. She was the widow of the late Tom Adams.

Dorothy Allison who died on 24th December 2013. She was the wife of Arthur Allison.

Josephine Barker who died on 17th March 2014. She was the widow of the late Nathan Barker.

Margaret Edwards who died on 20th March 2014. She was the wife of Victor Edwards.

Elsie Galway who died on 6th March 2014. She was the widow of the late Fredrick Galway.

Freda Hockley who died on 29th March 2014. She was the wife of John Hockley.

Glenys Jones who died on 3rd March 2014. She was the wife of Llewelyn Jones.

Lady Jennifer 'Jenny' Lambert who died on 1st July 2013. She was the wife of Sir John Lambert.

Kathleen 'Kath' Wood who died on 22nd April 2014. She was the companion of Alfred Sageman.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

Michael Absalom of Havant, Hampshire served in the Royal Marines from 1944 to 1947.

Henry Adlam of Bristol served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1952.

Alan Ainsworth of Sheffield served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

Stanley Bates of Stroud, Gloucestershire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) from 1946 to 1954 and in the REME (TA) from 1968 to 1981.

Norma Beeforth of Doncaster, South Yorkshire served in the Women's Royal Army Corps from 1950 to 1951.

John Best of Birmingham served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

George Beavan of Dagenham, Essex served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1956 to 1961.

Edna Bowman-Sutton from Manchester served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1946 to 1947.

Thomas Brassington of Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

James Briers of St Helens, Merseyside served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1946 to 1949.

Michael Carter of Chorley, Lancashire served in the Royal Artillery from 1956 to 1958.

John Clines of Taunton, Somerset served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

Peter Cluness of Dundee served in the Royal Navy from 1978 to 2000.

Elizabeth Cory of Westbury, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Irene Currie of Hythe, Kent served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

Roy Darlington of Llandudno, Gwynedd served in the Army Catering Corps from 1957 to 1963.

Brian Davies of Middlesbrough, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1957.

Ronald Dilworth of Paignton, Devon served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1944 to 1946.

Kenneth Dobson of Hucclecote, Gloucester served in the Essex Regiment from 1956 to 1962.

Daniel Driscoll of Cardiff served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Leslie Ellwood of Saltburn By The Sea, Cleveland served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1956 to 1962.

Donald English of Jersey, Channel Islands served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1940 to 1946.

Roy Flint of Brentwood, Essex served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1957.

Dennis Fowler of Wimbledon, London served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1979.

Isaac Fyfe of Aldershot, Hampshire served in the Parachute Regiment from 1962 to 1977.

Roger Godfrey of Bath, Somerset served in the Royal Signals from 1951 to 1956.

Frederick Goldsmith of Seaford, East Sussex served in the Queen's Royal (West Sussex) Regiment and the Middlesex Regiment from 1942 to 1947.

Anthony Goodger of Port Talbot, West Glamorgan served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1948.

Alan Grandfield of Salisbury, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1958.

Christopher Guest of Petworth, West Sussex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1948.

Ronald 'James' Hanaway of Herne Bay, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Ronald Hay of Darlington, County Durham served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1953.

Norman Hayes of Crawley, West Sussex served in the Loyal Regiment, the Reconnaissance Corps and the Army Catering Corps from 1938 to 1946.

John Heasman of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1953 to 1955.

Roy Holloway of Basingstoke, Hampshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1950.

Bretha 'Pat' Keeble of Hove, East Sussex served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1945 to 1946.

Peggy Kite of Ipswich, Suffolk served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1945.

Phillip Lawrence of Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

John Luther of Chepstow, Gwent served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1957.

Emily 'May' Luxton of Sidmouth, Devon served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Allan Maynard of Blackburn, Lancashire served in the Royal Pioneer Corps and the Light Division from 1969 to 1970.

Cyril Mathews of Tyn-Y-Gongl, Gwynedd served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1955.

Brian McIntyre of Eastbourne, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1959 to 1961.

George Minnikin of Durham served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1955 to 1958.

William Mooney of Liverpool served in the Royal Marines from 1942 to 1946.

John Morrish of Bognor Regis, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Anthony Mulheron of Glasgow served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1987 to 1990 and the Royal Logistics Corps from 1993 to 1994.

George Mullinex of Birmingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

James O'Hara of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1973 to 1985.

Raymond Partridge of Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Jeffrey Phipps of Maidstone, Kent served in the Royal Signals from 1963 to 1969.

Kenneth Potten of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the General Service Corps, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1945 to 1951.

Kathleen 'Kit' Pyman of Camberley, Surrey served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1946.

William Restall of Swansea served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1952 to 1956.

Gordon Rowlands of Seaford, East Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1949.

John Scott of Dunfermline, Fife served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1953 to 1960.

Eric Sharp of Pontyclun, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Ralph Sheffield of East Grinstead, West Sussex served in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1977.

Dennis Simmons of Lewes, East Sussex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1945 to 1953.

Reginald Slater of Ilford, Essex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1941 to 1947.

Christopher Strudwick of Faversham, Kent served in the Irish Guards from 1981 to 1982.

Ian Teasdale of Devizes, Wiltshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1990 to 2000.

Derek Thornton of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the King's Own Royal Regiment and the East Lancashire Regiment from 1954 to 1959.

Arthur Vine of Cranbrook, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1987.

Kenneth Walker of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1950 to 1952.

Ernest Waring of Wolverhampton served in the Parachute Regiment from 1948 to 1953.

Brian Warwick-Smith of Dereham, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1954.

Roy Valentine of Lytham St Annes, Lancashire served in the Royal Engineers from 1951 to 1957.

Amy Watts of Bexhill On Sea, East Sussex served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1946.

Raymond Yeates of Hailsham, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Alan Warman of Brackley, Northamptonshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1953.

Frederick Westlake of Wadebridge, Cornwall served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1943 to 1946.

Trevor Wildman of Prenton, Merseyside served in the Royal Signals from 1956 to 1963.

Herbert Wilkinson of Turnham Green, West London served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Astley Wylde of Richmond, Surrey served in the Royal Signals from 1939 to 1946.

In Memory.

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

Reginald 'Reg' Bell of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire died on 22nd March 2014, aged 91. In 1941 he joined the RAF and became a Radio Mechanic. He was posted to Egypt for a year and then back to the UK in time for the invasion of Europe, before being posted to Burma. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1946.

James Bruce of South West London died on 22nd February 2014, aged 86. He served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1947 for National Service, serving on board a minesweeper. He spent time clearing mines in Norwegian waters and off Londonderry before discharge in 1947.

William 'Joe' Chamberlain MM of Sittingbourne, Kent died on 30th March 2014, aged 90. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1942, served with the 1st Army in North Africa and Italy and was discharged as a Driver in 1947. He was awarded the Military Medal in Italy in 1945.

Millicent Chambers of Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear died on 5th March 2014, aged 96. She volunteered for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941 training at RAF Innsworth and Morecambe specialising in accounts. She served at several RAF bases including Weeton, Hartlebury, Portreath and Coltishall before discharge in 1946 as an LACW Leading Aircraftwomen.

Arthur Cobb of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 12th March 2014, aged 87. In 1944 he joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He completed six weeks training at Aldershot but, whilst on leave in London he was badly injured by a German V1 flying bomb in Earls Court Road and was invalided out of the Army.

Arthur Cole of Guildford, Surrey died on 21st March 2014, aged 93. He joined the Royal Pioneer Corps in 1941 and three years later landed on the beaches at Normandy. After fighting through to Germany he was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946.

Andrew Cowan of Gloucester, Gloucestershire died on 1st April 2014, aged 94. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and trained as an Ordnance Artificer at Devonport and served in the Battle of the Atlantic and the Pacific before discharge as Acting Chief Petty Officer in 1946.

Kevin De Lacy of Hove, East Sussex died on 31st March 2014, aged 86. He joined the Royal Navy in 1946 as a Writer and served in various ships including HM ships Defender, a destroyer and the aircraft carrier Ark Royal. He was also in shore establishments in Malta, Germany, Chatham and Devonport. He gained a commission and retired as a Supply Lieutenant (Writer) in 1967.

The Hon. Sir Frederick 'Maurice' Drake of Harpenden, Hertfordshire died on 6th April 2014, aged 92. Sir Maurice joined the RAF in 1941 where his nickname became "Quack". He trained as a navigator on night fighters serving in the UK, North Africa, Italy, Belgium and Germany before being discharged as a Flight Lieutenant in 1946.

Kenneth 'Ken' Easton of Swaffham, Norfolk died on 6th February 2014, aged 90. He joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1942 and was posted to North Africa, Italy and Germany as tank crew. He was discharged as a Trooper in 1947.

Frederick Farrow of Dereham, Norfolk died on 1st March 2014, aged 92. He joined the RAF in 1942 and served in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany until discharge as an LAC Leading Aircraftman in 1946.

George Gregson of Preston, Lancashire died on 15th March 2014, aged 90. He joined the General Service Corps in April 1944 and transferred to the Durham Light Infantry in June 1944 and then to the East Yorks in February 1945 and the Green Howards in October 1945 until November 1947, leaving as a Lance Corporal. He served in South East Asia and Burma.

George Heyhoe of Swaffham, Norfolk died on 1st April 2014, aged 92. He joined the RAF in 1941 and served in the Gold Coast, West Africa, working in the Orderly Room. He was discharged in 1946 as a Sergeant.

Barry Hill of Eastleigh, Hampshire died on 27th March 2014, aged 90. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served in the Mediterranean and Holland as a Telegraphist until discharge in 1946.

Joan Hodcroft of Kidlington, Oxfordshire died on 1st February 2014, aged 90. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941 and served in the UK, until discharge in 1945.

Major Anthony Hotham of Droitwich, Worcestershire died on 7th March 2014, aged 80. He served in the Worcestershire Regiment from 1952 to 1954 for National Service. He joined the TA in June that year where he became a Staff Officer and was discharged as a Major in 1969.

Joan 'Johny' Hubbard of Uckfield, East Sussex died on 22nd December 2013, aged 92. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1943 and was sent to Bletchley Park as a typist. She was discharged as a Leading Wren in 1945.

Winifred Jones of Prenton, Merseyside died on 8th March 2014, aged 88. She started work at the age of 16 in a munitions factory, assembling steel wires for aircraft. Still under age she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941 and was based at Brentwood, Essex until her discharge in 1944.

Alan Lee of Richmond, North Yorkshire died on 10th October 2013, aged 59. He joined the Junior Army as a boy soldier and trained to become a military chef at St Omer Barracks. He qualified in 1969 and joined the Army Catering Corps, serving in the UK and Germany. He was discharged as a Lance Corporal in 1979.

Esther McFarlane of Bromley, Kent died on 1st March 2014, aged 90. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1943. Posted to Leicester and Didcot she worked in stores and was discharged in 1946 as a Private.

John McGinn of Llandudno, Gwynedd died on 19th March 2014, aged 92. He joined the General Service Corps in January 1940, transferring to the Royal Signals. He served with the 8th Army in the North African desert. He took part in the recapture of Sicily and Italy and was later in Northern Europe after the Normandy landings. He was discharged in 1945.

Arthur Nicholson of Daventry, Northamptonshire died on 6th April 2014, aged 89. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served with the Home Fleet at Scapa Flow in HMS Renown until 1945. He served in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean, based in Sri Lanka and was on board when Churchill was taken to the Yalta conference. He was discharged as a Coder in 1946.

William 'Bill' Owen of Swadlincote, Derbyshire died on 27th February 2014, aged 88. He joined the General Service Corps in March 1944, transferred to the East Yorkshire Regiment in June that year and in November to the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. He fought in Belgium, Holland and Germany during the closing stages of the war and was discharged as an Acting Corporal in 1948.

Robert 'Dennis' Page of Walsall, West Midlands died on 10th March 2014, aged 92. He joined the Royal Navy in 1939 and served in destroyers and frigates on Atlantic convoys, North African and Italian landings. He was an ASDIC operator and after the war did experimental work at Portland with sonar and torpedoes until discharge as a Leading Seaman in 1947.

Peter Partridge of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 29th March 2014, aged 85. He joined the Merchant Navy in 1945 and qualified as a fitter serving in various ships including the Manxman out of Tilbury. He was discharged as an Engine Room Greaser in 1951.

Victor Perry of Cheddar, Somerset died on 28th February 2014, aged 94. He joined the Royal Artillery (TA) in 1939 and after training, joined the British Expeditionary Force. Taken prisoner by the Germans he spent two years in a variety of POW working parties and three years in an NCO's non-working camp. He was eventually repatriated by US Forces to the UK where he was medically discharged in 1945.

Harold 'Peter' Phillips of Brighton, East Sussex died on 13th March 2014, aged 83. He joined the Royal Signals in 1948. He transferred to the Royal Army Pay Corps in 1956, serving in Libya, Egypt, Korea, Japan and the UK, leaving as a Sergeant in February 1961. He then joined the TA Royal Artillery in November 1961 until 1963 and again in December 1971 for a decade.

Colin Pogmore of Downham Market, Norfolk died on 31st March 2014, aged 89. He joined the Fleet Air Arm in 1944. He completed his training and was posted to the Mull of Kintyre. He played the drums in the station band and was demobilised as a Leading Stores Assistant in 1947.

Kathlyn Presdee of Taunton, Somerset died on 1st March 2014, aged 95. She joined the Women's Royal Air Force in 1941, serving as a clerk at HQ 12 Group Bomber Command in Nottingham and also Hunsdon. She was discharged in 1945 as an Aircraftwoman First Class.

Dorothy Simpson of Caterham, Surrey died on 25 January 2014, aged 97. She joined the Women's Royal Air Force in 1941, training at Bridgenorth as a Morse Operator. She served in Blackpool and Cambridge before discharge as an ACW2 Aircraftwoman Second Class in 1946.

Eric Simpson of Conwy, Gwynedd died on 16th March 2014, aged 89. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served on the Atlantic convoys as a telegrapher until

1946.

Harry 'Micky' Southgate of Helston, Cornwall died on 8th March 2014, aged 91. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1942 and fought in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany and was discharged as a Driver in 1947.

Charles 'Charlie' Spencer of Sevenoaks, Kent died on 8th March 2014, aged 91. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941, training at Brighton. He specialised as a hydrogen operator and was deployed to Singapore, India and Ceylon before discharge as a Leading Aircraftman in 1946.

Harry Talbot of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 2nd April 2014, aged 92. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1941, serving with 869 Mechanical Equipment Company. He landed on Q Beach on D+10 and then followed the advance through France, Belgium, Holland and finally Germany. He ended up in the military hospital in Hanover and was discharged in 1946.

Alan Temple of Fakenham, Norfolk died on 6th March 2014, aged 81. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps for National Service in 1950 and served as a camp policeman at Blandford until discharge in 1952.

Ernest Williams of Alfreton, Derbyshire died on 19th January 2014, aged 81. He joined the RAF for National Service in 1950 and served as an orderly in the equipment section of the stores at RAF Wyton until 1952.

Terence Williams of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 3rd March 2014, aged 75. He served in the Grenadier Guards from 1956 to 1968 in the UK, BAOR and British Guyana. He left as a Sergeant in 1968 when his character on discharge was described as Exemplary.

Nigel Winchester of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 2nd April 2014, aged 75. He joined the Royal Signals in 1959 for National Service and was posted to Detmold and Berlin, Germany. Discharged in 1961 he remained with the Royal Signals on part time service until 1965 and attained the rank of Corporal.

William Woodall of Whitfield, Dover died on 9th April 2014, aged 68. He was a boy soldier at Whittington Barracks and in 1962 joined the Worcestershire Regiment. He served in Germany, the UK, Gibraltar, Tobruk and Cyprus on UN duty and specialised as a medical orderly, eventually becoming the Medical Sergeant. He transferred to the Prince of Wales's Own Regiment and served in Northern Ireland and Berlin before being discharged as a Sergeant in 1975.



Blind
Veterans
UK



Picture: Terry Bullingham celebrates winning The Ted Higgs Memorial Trophy with Valerie Shannon-Higgs and Pauline Edwards, daughters of the late Ted Higgs.