

August 2015

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: Blind veteran Tony Harbour abseils down the Grand Hotel in Brighton.

Back page: Brighton centre manager Lesley Garven and blind veteran Martin Shail abseil down the Grand Hotel in Brighton.



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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.

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Activities from the Brighton centre.

August.

Race Week 2nd to 8th.

Activities Week 2nd to 8th.

London Triathlon 9th.

Writers' Forum 15th.

Golf Weekend 15th and 16th.

Archery Club 16th to 22nd.

Planes, Trains and Automobiles Week 23rd to 29th.

Centenary Walk (100 miles) 31st August to 5th September.

September.

Golf Weekend 12th and 13th.

Writers' Forum 19th.

History Week 20th to 26th.

Fishing Week 20th to 26th.

October.

International Week 4th to 10th.

Writers' Forum 17th.

Golf Weekend 17th and 18th.

Bowling Club 18th to 31st.

To book your place at the Brighton centre please telephone the Booking Office: on 01273 391500.

Activities from the Llandudno centre.

August.

Driving Week 16th to 22nd.

Amateur Radio Week 28th August to 5th September.

September.

Cycling Week 6th to 12th.

October.

Walking Week 4th to 10th.

Photography Week 11th to 17th.

For further information or to book your place at the Llandudno centre call 01492 864580.

Activities from the Sheffield centre.

August, September and October.

Gardens Week 10th to 14th. Photography Week 31st August to 4th Sept.

Culture Week 28th September to 2nd October.

For further information please telephone the Sheffield centre on 0114 267 2550. Or to book your place please telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500.

From the Chairman.

Your message from Tim Davis.

I'm pleased to say that in recent years Great Britain can really say that it has not forgotten. Throughout the year the country has stopped to remember the brave commitment of so many in defence of our country. On 15th August we will remember the 70th Anniversary of VJ Day. The name given by the Allies to the Victory over Japan, after they named VE Day for the Victory in Europe. Of course in part, the momentum of Remembrance and Thanksgiving days during the year has been amplified as we have eclipsed the 100th anniversary of many events to do with the First World War; our own 100th Anniversary of Blind Veterans UK has been a very memorable feature of this.

It is an even greater source of comfort that as a nation we continue to remember the events of the past and thank those who have served. Particularly as we also face a rising tide of horrific acts by terrorist groups around the world, and more particularly in the Middle East. The shock events recently in Tunisia serve only to remind us, that there is very real evil in the world when we continually confront horrific images and hear news of depraved acts in the name of religion. I can only believe that our acts of Remembrance and Thanksgiving must be helpful in creating unity across our nation and between nations and reminding ourselves to look out for each other, and look after those who may be vulnerable.

I'm quite certain I see looking out and looking after as a strong characteristic of the Blind Veterans UK family, and an example we should seek to spread through collaboration with others. Winning the hearts of others, and engendering care, consideration and tolerance, can sweep a nation but only happens by example and between individuals. It's up to all of us to play our part in remembering those who have served before us, leading by example and demonstrating through individual acts of kindness to others.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Please display your No One Alone poster.

As we know there are more veterans who are eligible for our support this month we ask you to help us reach them by displaying the enclosed No One Alone poster somewhere prominent where you live. You may wish to display the poster in your local GP Surgery, community hall, Church hall or in a shop window.

By doing this you will help us to ensure that, like you as blind veterans, no-one who has served their country will have to battle blindness alone.

If you would like to receive further posters please contact Caitlin Dunham in the No One Alone team on telephone: 020 7616 7999 or email: caitlin.dunham@blindveterans.org.uk

The Ripple Pond.

The Ripple Pond is a growing network of support groups across the UK that provide support for the family members of ex-Service men and women who have sustained either physical or emotional injuries whilst in Service. By bringing together people in their local area who have been affected by a loved one sustaining injuries whilst in Service The Ripple Pond provides a community of peer led support in a safe environment. The group meetings allow parents, wives, husbands, siblings or children to share their experiences in a non-judgemental setting with people who are in the same or a similar position and who understand what they are dealing with and how they feel.

It doesn't matter how or when the family member was injured, it could have been during the Second World War, Northern Ireland, Falklands War, Bosnia, Iraq or Afghanistan, or if the injury is physical or emotional, or as is so often the case, both. Just being able to talk to people who are in a similar situation helps many to find comfort through being understood and meeting someone who knows what they are going through. To find out about support groups near you contact The Ripple Pond on 01273 310329 or visit www.theripplepond.co.uk or email theripplepond@gmail.com

Sign up to our fundraising activities in 2015 and 2016.

Red Devils Skydive Nottingham — Tuesday 1st September 2015.

Experience the adrenaline rush of tandem skydiving with the best in the business at Nottingham's Langar Airfield. The Red Devils are one of the world's most famous parachute display teams and the official parachute display team for both the Parachute Regiment and the British Army. The registration fee is £100 and you need to raise a minimum of £500 in sponsorship or you can pay £299 for the experience and raise as much as you can in sponsorship.

ArcelorMittal Orbit Abseil — Sunday 6th September 2015.

Join us for our thrilling new event where we are giving you the opportunity to abseil 80 metres down the UK's tallest sculpture in the world-famous Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. To take part, we ask that you pay a registration fee of £25 and raise a minimum sponsorship of £250.

Major Series Obstacle Course — September and October 2015.

The course features mud, obstacles, hills and water, along with over 40 former or currently Serving members of the Armed Forces. You can choose to do the 5km or 10km courses in three locations. In Kent on 3rd October, Leeds on 18th October or in Birmingham on 26th September. For the 5k option, registration is £20 with a sponsorship target of £150. For the 10k option, registration is £35 with a sponsorship target of £250.

Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon — Sunday 11th October 2015.

You will run the 13.1 miles through four of London's Royal Parks — Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, St James' Park and Green Park in their autumnal splendour. The registration fee is £30 and you need to raise a minimum of £300 in sponsorship. Please get in touch as soon as possible as the deadline to register is in August.

Brighton Half Marathon — February 2016.

The course starts and ends on Madeira Drive, on the seafront between Brighton Pier and Brighton Marina. Runners briefly head north past the Brighton Pavilion

before turning back to the coast. The route then turns east until runners are sent westward towards Hove. At the Hove Lagoon runners make their last turn and head east to the finish line on Madeira Drive. The registration fee is £25 and you will need to raise a minimum of £250 in sponsorship.

Virgin Money London Marathon — April 2016.

Every year, approximately 30,000 people run the 26.2 mile (42.2km) marathon through the streets of London. The route runs along the south of the Thames and then the north side after crossing the river on Tower Bridge. From Greenwich and Blackheath to Buckingham Palace, runners pass some of the capital's famous landmarks, including the London Eye and the Tower of London. We have guaranteed places for £45 registration fee and £2,000 minimum sponsorship so please get in touch if you would like to join our team.

100k London to Brighton — 2nd and 3rd July 2016 and 100k Yorkshire — 18th and 19th June 2016.

Entries are open for the 2016 London to Brighton walk. The event is a tough personal challenge for anyone who wants to take part; experienced walkers, recreational strollers, or beginners who want to do something great for themselves and for charity. You can take part as an individual and tackle the whole 100km course, or you could take part as a relay team where a team of four can each complete 25km. If you would like to take part the early bird registration fee is £50 for the 100k or £100 per relay team (£25 each). Individuals need to raise £300 for the 100k and relay teams need to raise £500. To sign up go to www.blindveterans.org.uk/100k/ or please get in touch if you are interested in the Yorkshire event and we will get in touch when entries are open.

If you have any questions about any of the events or you would like to find out how to apply for a place, please email fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk or telephone Jennie Chmura on 020 7616 7959.

Qualified masseurs invited to sign up to hot bamboo and bala bachi training at the Brighton centre.

If you are qualified in massage please contact blind veteran Iain Millard if you would like to complete hot bamboo or bala bachi training on 16th and 17th November at the Brighton centre. The cost is £120 for both courses. You can contact Iain on mobile: 07968 740089 or telephone the Brighton centre on 01273 307811.

Audio described workshops at the Whitechapel Gallery.

The London Open 2015 is the Whitechapel Gallery's triennial exhibition. Sculpture, painting, performance, moving image, photography, printmaking and many other media and practices showcase some of the most dynamic work that is being made across the capital in 2015. From a record number of 2,133 applicants, 48 artists have been selected.

The sessions are free and please telephone the Whitechapel Gallery on 020 7522 7888 if you would like to book a place or you can phone Gary Haines on 07814 748316 or contact him via email on garyhaines@whitechapelgallery.org

The dates are:

Thursday 6th August from 11.30am to 1pm.

Thursday 3rd September from 11.30am to 1pm.

These workshops, which are free, will focus on the forthcoming The London Open exhibition, which is at the Whitechapel Gallery from 15th July to 6th September 2015.

The Whitechapel Gallery is located at 77-82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

The Gallery is less than one minute walk from Aldgate East underground station. Alternatively, Liverpool Street and Tower Gateway stations and Shoreditch High Street overground station are approximately 15 minutes walk away.

Buses: The 25, 205 and 254 stop outside the gallery. The 15, 115, 40, 42, 45 and 67 buses stop outside Aldgate Station. The 35, 43, 78, 149, 242, 344 and 388 stop on Commercial Road. The 242 and 253 stop outside Liverpool Street Station.

Blue Badge holders can park in the space in front of the gallery (max three hours stay), on a first-come, first-served basis. Alternatively there is accessible parking on Osborne Street.

Guide dogs are welcome and staff will be happy to provide a bowl of water.

Mass centenary abseil in Brighton.

To celebrate our centenary Rachel Chitty, Regional Fundraiser at the Brighton centre, and her assistant Stacey Jones organised an abseil down the Grand Hotel in Brighton on 14th June. It was a great success when 108 people choose to eschew the more conventional lifts and stairs to descend the building, and instead stepped off the roof of the Victorian seafront hotel to bounce down the outside.

The mass abseil raised more than £14,000 and members who took part were Martin Shail, Tony Harbour, Carol Sharpe, Rod Matthews and David Yeoman. They were joined by Brighton centre manager Lesley Garven and Dan Skinner, Brighton centre security.

Martin Shail and Tony Harbour would like to thank everyone who sponsored them.



Picture top left: David Yeomans. **Picture above right:** Rod Matthews and Carole Sharpe.

For he's a jolly good fellow.

When Barry Porter, Director of Welfare Services, retired on Friday 3rd July after 13½ years with the charity his popularity within the family of Blind Veterans UK was evident from the outpourings from well wishers.

One of the many moving farewell speeches was made during the annual Church Stretton Reunion when Joan Osborne on behalf of everyone attending said:

"Barry you will be greatly missed as we knew that we could always talk to you and that you would listen and do your very best for us. You're a very special person as you understood everyone's needs and you cared."

In response Barry spoke with great compassion of the many wonderful blind veterans he had the honour to meet and the important work of the charity.

Barry we wish you a very happy retirement.



Picture: Barry Porter at Church Stretton with June Tufnell, Anne Moore, Joan Revis (seated), Jane Martyn, Joan Osborne and Beryl Tatchell.

Westminster Abbey.

We are delighted to have received so many applications for The Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey to mark the Centenary of our charity when we will have 1,800 Blind Veterans UK guests in total. We have started to send out confirmation postcards to members whose applications we have received. Please note that these are not your invitations, they are just a confirmation to say that you have a place and will be receiving your official invitation directly from Westminster Abbey at the end of September. If you have sent back your application form to attend and haven't yet received a Westminster Abbey confirmation postcard from us please do get in touch with Abby Tarrant on 020 7616 8372.

All members and their guests are invited to join us for a complimentary sandwich lunch in the Westminster Abbey College Garden after the Service. The lunch will be in marquees just in case the weather isn't favourable on the day. If you sent back your form in June and didn't have the option to tick to attend the lunch, please call Abby Tarrant on 020 7616 8372 and she will be happy to add you and your guests to the lunch guest list.

We would recommend that you bring an overcoat for the service and the lunch just in case it is chilly; however there are no cloakrooms at Westminster Abbey so you will need to keep coats with you for both parts of the day.

Although the deadline for applications has now passed we have reserved additional places for members who have not yet been able to complete their application form or for those who have misplaced their form. If you haven't yet completed an application form but would like to attend, please call Abby Tarrant on 020 7616 8372. Abby will be able to assist you by filling in a form on your behalf over the telephone.

We are hoping to have a member of the Royal Family and two VIPs in attendance at the Service. As soon as we receive their confirmation we will announce details in the Review.

We are delighted to say that the Order of Service will be available at the end of September and will be posted to you in advance of the Service. It will also be available online.

We very much look forward to welcoming you and your guests at this very special event.

Thank you Sutton Valence Cadets. By Colin Williamson, Contributing Editor.

Staff and students alike donned their running shoes recently to raise vital funds and awareness for Blind Veterans UK courtesy of two fundraising events. Three members of staff, Major Prem Ale, Major Glen Millbery and Mrs. Mel Horley ran the Royal Parks half marathon and the following staff and pupils took part in the school's annual 'Night Walk.'

Emily Clement-Walker, Major Prem Ale, Mr Craig Worcester, Lt. Phil Horley, Mrs Mel Horley, Laura Horley, Tom Bennett, Cameron Grabowski, Charles Gellett, Nicole Payne, Guy Thomas, Charles Court, Tom Costin, Sabin Gurung, Mathew Jones, Lawrence Mair, Jamie Drew, Harriet Aburn, Rehannah Houghton-Judge, William Dransfield and Nicholas Payne.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Anne Wilkinson from Sutton Valence School CCF for all of her help and support throughout the years. Thank you very much Anne, your valued support is much appreciated.

The school's CCF retained the Top Fundraisers trophy which they first won in 2012 and also the Cadet Challenge Winners trophy which they have won for the past two years.



Picture: Headmaster Bruce Grindlay, another great supporter of Blind Veterans UK, is pictured with Colin Williamson and some of the participants.

Project Gemini 30th May to 7th June 2015. By Colin Williamson, Review Contributing Editor.

The 2015 Project Gemini annual exchange programme got under way at our Brighton centre in late May early June and once again we welcomed two members of St. Dunstan's South Africa who joined beneficiaries from Blind Veterans UK and the U.S. based Blinded Veterans Association to spend a week of fun, learning and companionship.

The week long exchange, which started back in 2011, brings together blind veterans from all three organisations in order to participate in discussions regarding advances in technology which could assist blind and vision impaired ex-Service men and women, the chance to experience the unique camaraderie that only exists amongst the Forces community and to participate in a variety of cultural and educational visits which we hope will enhance their visit to the UK and to our Brighton centre.

Many veterans find this a very cathartic experience and some have gone as far to say that it is a vital step in their healing process.

The four Blind Veterans UK members, Rob Long, Carl Adamson, Billy Black and Michael Surgenor, journeyed to Port Hall, adjacent to our Brighton Centre, on Saturday 30th May to link up with staff member and Project Gemini co-ordinator Colin Williamson and beneficiary Chris Nowell, who was to be our photographer for the week, in readiness for the arrival of our American and South African fellow blind veterans the following morning.

It was an early start for some of us on Sunday morning as the South African contingent, consisting of Peter Hall and Renier Heyns, were due to arrive into Heathrow at 06.25 closely followed by the U.S. veterans, Adam Rowland, Aaron Hale, Jason Pepper, Chris Rader, BVA President Marc Cornell and Project Gemini U.S. coordinator Tom Zampieri at 06.50. David Epstein, the Director of Government Relations and education at the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR) based in Rockville, Maryland, also travelled with the group.

After an hour or so of running around (the two groups arrived into two different terminals which were some distance apart) we herded them all into one of our coaches and headed back to Port Hall in a typical British downpour. Welcome to England!

We were greeted at Port Hall by Member Activities Manager Esther Freeman who helped organise the exchange and after a quick introduction we all ventured out for Sunday lunch at The Eagle pub in nearby Brighton. After a splendid Roast dinner and a couple of pints of good old English Ale the group returned to Port Hall and a chance to unpack, get to know their surroundings and have a chat with their peers. On Sunday evening we strolled up to the Brighton centre where we relaxed in the bar and chatted with the residents and trainees.

After a good night's sleep which hopefully shook off the jet lag our American and South African brothers were eagerly looking forward to a tour of the Brighton centre and our very impressive facilities. After a briefing in the Trophy Room the group were divided into smaller sub-groups and went off to tour the centre, escorted by various members of staff from the different departments.

After the tour, Steve Mills from the Sports and Recreation department (who, along with his team did a tremendous job in assisting us during the week) had organised an archery competition in the sports hall which had been billed as 'Blind Veterans UK versus The Rest of the World' and what a close match it was, eventually going down to a 'one balloon shoot-out' which I'm pleased to report the Blind Veterans UK came out on top!

By this time Kevin Alderton, the Younger Group Coordinator had joined the group and after a cracking lunch in the Winter Gardens we hurried off to our next appointment which was to be a game of cricket at Sussex Cricket Ground. Again, it was 'us against them' and after some expert coaching by the staff at the ground the match began in earnest.

Rob Long, batting for Blind Veterans UK, put in a superb performance and if it wasn't for some excellent fielding by the visitors Adam Rowland would have gone on to record a great score but he was eventually ran out and the game then swung to and fro with some excellent batting and bowling by both sides. Finally, after the last man was dismissed and the umpire had totted up the scores he declared, much to the Rest of the World's delight, that they had triumphed by one run! Disaster for the Blind Veterans UK team! Behind the scenes there were some serious questions being asked about the impartiality of the umpire and a few murmurings of 'money changing hands' but the British sense of fair play prevailed and we applauded our opponents off the field.

That evening we went along to the Bowlplex at Brighton Marina for a game of ten pin bowling and despite some very erratic and sometimes 'bordering on the dangerous' bowling we had a great time. One of our guests, who shall remain nameless, even managed to deliver his bowling ball into the next lane and amazingly, much to everyone's disbelief, scored a strike!

Tuesday morning saw us down in Brighton where we had booked a visit to The Royal Pavilion and after an audio descriptive tour of this beautiful former royal palace we were off to our next destination which was Brighton Racecourse and an afternoon of horse racing. We were treated to a talk on the history of the racecourse by a very effervescent lady who kindly gave everyone a horse shoe which had been worn by previous runners at the course and a practical lesson on using the whip! I was a bit concerned by the enthusiasm of some of our beneficiaries when the lady in question asked for volunteers to try out the whip. A few of our party ended up winners on the day and some of us ended up out of pocket but a good afternoon was had by all.



Picture: From left to right at the Royal Pavilion in Brighton: Tom Zampieri, Carl Adamson, Adam Rowland, Billy Black, Leon Groombridge, Renier Heyns, Tania Hobbs (R&T Support Worker), Peter Hall, Rob Long, Colin, Aaron, Kevin Alderton, Jason Pepper, Mark Cornell, Mike Surgenor and Chris Rader.

In the evening we once again trooped over to the centre where we treat our guests to the British staple diet of fish and chips with mushy peas and curry sauce which went down extremely well.

Hastings is awash with history and this was why we chose this delightful seaside town for our destination for Wednesday. It was a glorious sunny day as we made our way up to the West Cliff Lift, the funicular railway that transports you up to Hastings Castle and as you could imagine the views over the town and the Channel were spectacular.

Unfortunately there's not much left of the Castle to see but just to wander around the ancient ruins and imagine what life would have been like for those living or working in the castle was enough to satisfy even the most inquisitive of visitor.

After a wonderful pub lunch we rendezvoused with our guide for the afternoon who had organised a guided walk around the old town to show us some of its hidden treasures. One of these hidden gems was St. Clements Church where our guide Lyn explained that the church originally stood a lot closer to the sea but in 1286 Alan the Cheesemonger and his wife Alice gave a piece of land to the Abbey of Fecamp so that they could rebuild the church closer inland.

On Wednesday evening we visited a well known Kemptown pub called 'The Sidewinder' to participate in the popular pub quiz. Unfortunately we didn't fare very well as the first nine questions formed a picture round! Craig Brindley from Sports and Rec was a great help trying to describe the various pictures of 'unusual vegetables' but his descriptions left a lot to be desired. Some of the group thought that he was describing aliens from a distant galaxy.

The alarm clocks were set for 'stupid o'clock' on Thursday as it was the big day; a trip to the nation's capital and the once in a lifetime opportunity to visit Buckingham Palace to celebrate Blind Veterans UK's one hundredth anniversary! Everyone was suited and booted as we boarded the train at Brighton Station and our reserved carriage, courtesy of Southern Railway. After some refreshments from the complimentary trolley and a pretty uneventful journey (at least by Project Gemini standards) we arrived into Waterloo station en-route to our first visit of the day, the Imperial War Museum and a guided tour of the First World War galleries. Our tour guide was very knowledgeable and seemed

to know the answer to every question thrown at him by our inquisitive bunch. It was an excellent tour and hats off to the IWM for making it happen.

After lunch we made the short journey from Victoria to Buckingham Palace. We stopped off at a prominent place near to the main gates and explained to the group that this was to be the R.V. point in case someone went AWOL during the afternoon and then it we all trooped off to join the queue to have our credentials checked before entering. It was a fantastic day and some of the group — Tom Zampieri who represented the BVA, Peter Hall representing St. Dunstan's South Africa and our very own Rob Long — were presented to Her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex, something that they will never forget.

After a splendid afternoon (and a frantic search for one of our beneficiaries who got himself lost within the vast grounds of the Palace despite serving



Picture: Colin Williamson, Tom Zampieri, Peter Hall and Rob Long speak with HRH The Countess of Wessex, with Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB.

there during his time as an Irish Guardsman on ceremonial duties) we were escorted to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess at nearby Wellington Barracks for dinner. We were joined at the table by the U.S. defence attaché Brigadier General Bareihs who went around the table thanking everyone for their service. We responded by presenting the one-star General with a Blind Veterans UK plaque as a token of our appreciation for taking the time out of his busy schedule to join us. Adam Rowland, one of our American guests and a recent winner of his first 'buckle' in the sport of 'Cow Sorting' in his home state of Arizona then went on to present the Mess President with a plaque of his own which included his 'lucky spur' which he had worn when he won his coveted award. The Mess President also received a Blind Veterans UK plaque.

Friday morning dawned bright and sunny and our merry little band were off to Hove Lagoon for a spot of Wakeboarding. Everyone managed to stand up on the board (even Peter with his prosthetic leg, which was a fantastic effort) and in particular BVA President Mark Cornell did exceptionally well and for those who didn't fancy the wakeboarding they had a go on the Paddleboards. Lunch was taken at Woodies American Diner just in case the U.S. guys were feeling a little homesick and in the afternoon we visited Newhaven Fort for a tour of the impressive fortifications.

On Friday evening we all gathered in the bar at the Brighton centre to meet some of our distinguished guests that had been invited along to the Finale Evening dinner and presentation in the Winter Gardens. One of our guests who came along to the presentation was Alex Hooper, the Global Sales Vice-President of Revision Military, a company whose headquarters are based in Vermont in the United States and who supply protective solutions to military and tactical clients. Revision Military has kindly agreed to sponsor Project Gemini for the next two years.

Another distinguished guest was our Chairman Tim Davis and wife Lyn. We also welcomed Blind Veterans UK President Ray Hazan and his wife Robbie and trustee and beneficiary Paul Palmer. Centre manager Lesley Garven was also present and later in the evening we were joined by trustee and beneficiary Kerry Levins and his partner.

All of the U.S. and South African blind veterans were presented with their honorary life member certificates, their much coveted Project Gemini commemorative coin and pennant by our Chairman Tim Davis.



Picture: Styling in Revision eyewear at Newhaven Fort from left to right: Aaron Hale, Tom Zampieri, Leon Groombridge (Sports and Rec) Billy Black, Colin Williamson, Jason Pepper, Mark Cornell (BVA President), Rob Long, Chris Rader, Carl Adamson and Mike Surgenor. Sitting at the front are Adam Rowland and David Epstein.

They were also given a bottle of Blind Veterans UK centenary ale to take home with them as they all had developed quite a fondness to the delightful Golden Ale! The Blind Veterans UK participants were also presented with their Project Gemini coins by the Chairman, who gave an outstanding address.

Our U.S. guests responded by presenting Tim with some beautiful bespoke plaques to hang on the Project Gemini wall and the South African contingent presented him with a fantastic glass trophy shaped in the outline of the map of Africa which will go on display in the Trophy Room. The presentation was accompanied by some very moving speeches from our guests that touched everyone present.

Saturday was spent on the famous Brighton Pier where Adam our adopted cowboy rode the bull and after a superb fish and chip lunch we enjoyed a bit of souvenir shopping. On Saturday evening the group sat down for their final dinner of the week at the much acclaimed Cock Inn in nearby Ringmer where it is customary for our guests to have Spotted Dick for pudding! Friendships have been created and bonds have been further strengthened. Everyone went away taking with them some very happy memories of, in the words of one of our American guests, "an awesome week".



Picture: Blind Veterans UK Chairman Tim Davis presents Renier Heyns from St Dunstan's South Africa with his Project Gemini 2015 certificate.

I'm certain that I can speak for everyone concerned with the event by saying that it was a truly memorable week and one that we'll all never forget. Lifelong friendships have been created and bonds have been further strengthened. Everyone went away taking with them some very happy memories of, in the words of one of our American guests, "an awesome week".

I'd like to thank the staff from our Brighton centre for helping out on the event, also great credit must go to Esther Freeman for all of her hard work in helping to organise the event and for all of her support during the week, it is very much appreciated.

Thanks also to Kev Alderton, Chris Nowell, Bill Lyth, Steve Mills, Craig Brindley, Alex Tring, Leon Groombridge, Catherine Goodier, Lauren Pridmore, Tania Hobbs, Louise Partridge, Catherine Corbett, Amy Hall, Mark Wheeler, Paul Grundy, Dave Vinall, everyone at the transport department and apologies to anyone that I've missed.

Kenneth Hill speaks on the eve of the 70th anniversary of VJ Day. By Catherine Goodier.

Sitting with Kenneth and Brenda Hill in their charming canal side cottage it is difficult to imagine a more perfect setting as canal boats chug past in the sun, and the only sound comes from birds as they fly overhead and the gentle bleat of sheep in the neighbouring fields. It is a perfect pastoral scene, one that brings to mind the words of Keats and Wordsworth.

I am here to speak with Kenneth about a time that is far removed from the life he and Brenda have built over 68 years of marriage. Before we start, Kenneth removes a smooth metal strip from his back trouser pocket. Just three inches in length and two inches in width, carved into it are seven numbers below Japanese writing. It is Kenneth's name, rank and number. Although it weighs almost nothing, it is a heavy reminder of the years from 1942 to 1945 when he was a prisoner of war of the Japanese. As part of F Force, who with H Force were the last parties to leave Singapore, he has carried this small metal strip in the back pocket of his trousers for more than 70 years.

An apprentice electrician before the war, he joined the TA 8th Army Field Workshop with his eldest brother Geoffrey in June 1939. Both received their call up papers in August that year. As Kenneth was only 18 at the time he was sent to The Royal Army Ordnance Corps's 4th Division Anti Aircraft Workshop to work on ack-ack guns in Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Dudley. He then moved to a heavy ack-ack unit as an electrician. His brother went to France, to Dunkirk and Kenneth later moved to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Kenneth said: "At the end of 1941 my unit left England to go to Basra to protect engineers who were building a railway up into Russia. As we sailed towards Basra our ship was rerouted to Singapore to look after the guns that were already there. In Singapore we set up a workshop in an engineering factory. We had to search for food as it was in short supply, and, as the Japanese had turned the water supply off, there was no clean water. Looking for food one day I found a wet box, I looked inside and it was full of tins of bully beef. The tins were rusty but the meat inside was perfect. I took the whole lot back to the workshop and we had a great meal. Although we were at war and we had little food and

water, before we were made prisoners of war (PoWs) I had a lovely life in Singapore. I was a Corporal and had a servant who would bring me a cup of tea and shave me in the morning, and do my washing.

"When Lieutenant General Arthur Percival surrendered on 15th February 1942 we were given instructions to smash the machines in the workshop. There was a crane in one bay and we had to take the stops off and run the crane along the track. We also had to get rid of our rifles. There was a canal near the workshop that we drove the lorries into and then set fire to them. They burnt for ages, but it meant that the Japanese couldn't use them.

"On the day we were made PoWs we had to parade and line the main road while the Japanese marched in. We were then moved up to Changi Gaol. Some went into Barracks, and some like me were initially under canvas before they moved us into some old shops that we slept in; they were made of sheets of corrugated iron. My first working party at Changi Goal was to level the runway there before I was then sent back to Singapore with a different working party.

"I remember that back in Singapore one canal was full of the bodies of Chinese men and women and horses and pigs — all slain and thrown into the canal. The job to clean the canal and remove the bodies fell to the Australians. The Japanese took us into a shop and showed us a shelf with five severed heads on it and told us that is what happened to looters and there was a severed head on a pole on every street corner to deter looters.

"One of the first jobs we were given by the Japanese was to collect the cars, which took us up into Malaya. That was before working on the Railway. Everything was easier than working on the Railway. I would drive a lorry and tow five cars at a time. We would take them on to a field and the Japanese would have them done up. We would always search the cars and one day one of our chaps found a Bakelite hand grenade, I don't think he realised what it was. At the time I was at the back of a lorry and he threw the grenade and it landed beside me and went off. It caught my eye and the Japanese took me to the Japanese doctor who treated my eye and told me it would be OK. We were in a working party of three with one Japanese guard. Our guard had fought in China for 10 years and he suffered from terrible rheumatism and would seize up. When that happened we would have to push his joints back into place. If the Japanese had seen us doing that to him, even though we were helping him, they would have shot us. Some of the Japanese were good to us though.

"My next working party was on the Railway. I was a lucky man really as we had to march from Changi Goal to Kamburi, which was the base camp for the railway. When my friend, Vic Morrell, and I reached Kamburi we were taken sick. We were given a day to recover. We went back the next morning and they gave me a further day to recover, but not my friend. He had to walk for 250 miles to the Burma border. I stayed at Kamburi for another week as I had to wait for a working party. When I did get up to the railway it was to a little place called Nike. I asked about my friend and they told me that he had died after he contracted cholera. That was a terrible blow.

"Our working party was responsible for keeping the road open. As it was the monsoon season the lorries would get stuck in the mud and we would use elephants to pull the lorries up. We would cut trees down and place them in the road for the lorries to drive over. That was when I lost the hearing in one ear as we had to carry the tree trunks and lay them in the road. I was holding one end of a tree trunk when the man holding the other end dropped it. The trunk bounced and whacked me in the ear, perforating my ear drum.

"It's well documented that there was a lot of cholera in the camps and that we had to burn the bodies of those who had died as the Japanese were scared that if they buried the bodies the infection would seep into the water supply."

There was one time when Kenneth could have been shot for escaping from the camp, but his life was saved by a Japanese guard.

"I had to drive the ration wagon to pick up supplies for the camp. There was a Japanese guard with me and when the truck wouldn't start after we had loaded the supplies he told me to go and fetch a mechanic while he guarded the truck. As I walked in search of a mechanic an MP cycled by. He thought I had escaped from the camp and took me to the MP station where I was questioned for almost a day. I told them what had happened but they wouldn't believe me. I really thought they were going to shoot me. Thankfully the Japanese guard found me and told them what had happened. They released me and I went back to the camp. That guard saved my life.

"The brutality of the Japanese guards is well known and they would use the dreaded speedo, a bamboo stick that they would hit people with as they yelled 'speedo, speedo' to make them work faster. I was lucky as I was young

and fit and although I was quite skeletal at the end, I remained healthy and that kept me safe from the speedo.

"I experienced Japanese brutality when we were wrongly accused of stealing sugar. A Japanese guard slapped my face a number of times with his wet hand. Later they took us out into a field at night and we were told we would have to stay there until we confessed. We didn't as we hadn't taken anything. The Malayan PoWs were also there and one of them said he'd seen one of the Chinese prisoners go into the caravan where the sugar was kept. They found him and they tied him to the back of a lorry and drove him around the field. Of course they got faster and faster and he was dragged around the field until long after his death.

"Much has been said about the diet of those of us who worked on the Railway. We got up in the dark and came back in the dark. On Sunday morning when we didn't go out we couldn't eat our breakfast as we could see that it was full of maggots. We ate them in the dark as we couldn't see what we were eating. They only gave rations for people who went to work, the sick were denied rations. We had to try to get everyone on parade in the morning and then get the sick back to bed before we went out on our working party. Occasionally on a working party in Singapore we had been given shark, it was usually given to us to impress a Japanese General when they came to inspect the camp."

Kenneth and his fellow PoWs found out that an Atom bomb had been dropped on Japan when they were told one night by an Officer.

"An officer came to our hut and told us the bomb had been dropped. We were told not to let on that we knew. He came back again to say that the Japanese had surrendered. That bomb saved our lives. We were saluting the Japanese one day and the next morning they were saluting us and the next day they had gone. We didn't see them go, they just left. Although they did leave a few people behind on the aerodrome. On the day freedom was declared I was transferred to a headquarter company who had a hut outside the Gaol. At that time two Australian Officers landed by parachute on the runway, which is now Changi airport and they took over command of the camp. We received a message to put a white cross on the runway for planes to drop supplies for us. We searched to see what we could find to put down and were told by an Australian Officer to make the Japanese do it. It felt good to watch them work as they put a white cross on the runway.

"As I'd somehow managed to keep myself fit, I put it down to the fact I was so young, I was given duties to carry out after our release from Changi Goal. It meant I was one of the last to leave, as I was driving a lorry to ferry people to Singapore to get on board their planes. I was at the airport at the same time as General Slim's plane and his pilot came and asked if I'd sent word home. I hadn't and he took me into General Slim's plane, gave me a postcard, which I filled in, and he made sure that my mother got the notice that I was well.

"At last it was time to return home and we boarded a boat for Southampton. Our first meal on board was rice, the doctors said as we'd eaten rice for three and a half years our stomachs wouldn't initially be able to take rich foods. They gradually built us up to eat properly. On the journey home I sent a telegram at each stop. I sent one from Colombo in Sri Lanka. When we arrived at the bottom of the Suez Canal we were given new uniforms and our stripes and medals were put on them. My cousin was waiting for me when I got off the boat there as he was a Batman to an Officer and he showed me around. We stopped there for two or three days. The next stop was at Gibraltar and then on to Southampton and home and family. We thought once we got to Southampton we could go straight home, but they wouldn't let us and we had to stop overnight. I was feeling a lot healthier by then, as they had really looked after us on the journey back to England, which took three weeks.

"Leaving Southampton I took a train with a chap from Wolverhampton. I was undecided whether to get off at Birmingham or go on to Dudley Port. In the end I decided to get off at Birmingham and he went on to Wolverhampton. There was a 'get you home service' for Service men and I thought I would use that, but as I was going up the steps at New Street station who should come down the steps but my dad and my sister Dorothy who was in the WAAF. They didn't know I would be there, they thought I might get off the train there. They had a car to take me home. It was great to see them. We got home and it was great to see my mum after three and a half long years.

"When I'd settled back at home my mum arranged a birthday party for me in a Church Hall, as we didn't get to celebrate my 21st birthday together. By then I was 25. I'd spent my 21st birthday as a PoW. We were captured in February and my birthday was on 6th March. One of my mates, a Staff Sergeant from Liverpool, had given me a bar of Cadbury's chocolate for my 21st. We kept in touch after we were released and he came to our wedding when Brenda and I married on 7th June 1947.

"I found out what my mum had been through during the war. On one day in February 1942 three telegrams had landed on her mat informing her that her three sons were missing in action. I was captured in Singapore; my brother Geoffrey, a Staff Sergeant, was captured in Java. For a short time Geoffrey and I were both in Changi Goal, although in different parts of the camp. I had a gramophone and a few records and I would carry it across the camp to play him some music. He was sent to Borneo and that was the last I saw of him until the war had ended. My other brother Granville, a Sergeant in the RAF, managed to get out of Greece into Crete and hide in the rocks until he could get a boat to Egypt. He made his way back to England and went over to France on D-Day. I was reunited with Granville, but Geoffrey had to go to Australia to recuperate, and it was a while before he was well enough to be repatriated, although he was still a bit of a wreck when he got home. He got better, he married and raised a family and ended up as a works engineer at the steelworks in Brierley Hill.

"Life carried on. I was offered my old apprenticeship, but I was 25 by then, a man, and I told them I couldn't afford to live on the wages they paid. I took a job at Baldwin's steelworks in Swindon, near Dudley. It's where Brenda had worked on the big sheets of metal that she had to catch. We always say that she did proper man's work during the war! It's where we met.

"On VJ Day I mark it in my own way as I think of everyone I knew. As this is the 70th Anniversary it somehow feels particularly poignant this year. I don't feel bitter about my time as a PoW. I felt bitter towards the Government of the time as they sent us to Singapore knowing there was no protection. I keep the steel plate with my name, rank and number in my back pocket to remind me. We also had to wear a bracelet with the information carved into it as we didn't have shirts and I have kept that. For everyone I knew - my pal Vic Morrell, the Cathedral organist in Changi who would practice on a wooden keyboard, and the thousands of men and women who lost their lives - the FEPOW prayer."

THE FEPOW PRAYER by Cpl. Arthur E. Ogden and Victor Merrett (Fepows).

And we that are left grow old with the years,
Remembering the heartache, the pain and the tears,
Hoping and praying that never again,
Man will sink to such sorrow and shame.

The price that was paid we will always remember,
Every day, every month, not just in November.
We Shall Remember Them.



Picture: Kenneth Hill with the steel plate that he has carried in his back pocket since his days as a Far East Prisoner of War and the steel bracelet he had to wear from 1942 to 1945.



Picture: Corporal Kenneth Hill, 7601985, REME, after his release from Singapore.

G.O.A.L. Group. By Chris Humphrey.

The June 2015 Get Out And Live (GOAL) event at Port Hall was attended by John Brice, John Cantwell, Lindy Elliot, Dave Hazelgrove, Pete King, Diane Mountford and myself, Chris Humphrey. As a couple of the group had never been to the Brighton centre, a familiarisation tour had been arranged to show off the excellent facilities available for any future visits there which, along with the introductions and the discussions about the forthcoming week, very much filled the remainder of the Monday afternoon. The evening was similar to future evenings where quizzes were led mainly by Dave, over a coffee or glass of something.

On Tuesday driver Steve from the centre's Transport Section drove the seven of us and volunteer Gary Chabot to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard where Trevor Sapey of the Mary Rose Trust met us and first took us on board HMS Victory. There Mandy from the visitor team had a number of tactile items to demonstrate and enthusiastically explain the historic vessel's past and answer our "landlubber" questions.



Picture: At HMS Victory Diane Mountford, Dave Hazelgrove, Chris Humphrey, John Cantwell, Lindy Elliot, Peter King, John Brice, Gary Chabot and Steve Burchett, a driver from the Brighton Transport section.

This was followed by a visit to the Mary Rose. As well as seeing how well the vessel was being preserved we saw and were able to handle some of the many artefacts that had been recovered and the programme for the future was explained which will enable even better viewing for vision impaired visitors after spring 2016. This was followed by a guided tour of the upper and one of the lower decks of HMS Warrior — the first ironclad warship. Regrettably (as always on visits to the Historic Dockyard) we ran out of time and had to leave while there was still plenty to see for future return trips. After a full day out, the evening was once again comprised of quizzes, with jokes between rounds.

Wednesday was a local day. During the morning along with volunteer Mike Maddox we undertook a 90 minute Brighton City Story walking tour, or should I say 'Brighthelmstone' as we were soon to learn it was originally called when it was just a fishing village. Julian the tour leader explained how today's cosmopolitan city grew due to it becoming a health spa after Dr Russell advised people to immerse themselves in the local sea water and drink five glasses of sea water a day. A practice that is neither endorsed nor recommended by the G.O.A.L. members! We were shown the famous old houses and other buildings such as the old Brighton Hippodrome and the famous Lanes before ending up at the Royal Pavilion gardens. In the afternoon we were joined by another volunteer Viv Thompson when we undertook a guided tour of the Royal Pavilion. Our tour guide Penny explained the history and how the Prince Regent, later King George IV, changed what had been a farmhouse into a decadent palace that still impresses all these years later. Once again we enjoyed a very full day learning numerous new facts about a city that most of us had visited a number of times before.

On Thursday we were joined by volunteer Linda Chase when we catch the 10:03 train to Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre. On arrival we were greeted by Martin, a director, Debbie who led the educational visits, and volunteer Richard, who all eagerly welcomed us and started to guide us around the site. Our first stop was the wireless exhibition, where the proud occupants showed and explained to us a large range of domestic, amateur and professional communication equipment, ranging from some of the British First World War service radios and Second World War German radios to others such as radiograms and TVs of the 1960/70s. Even the Amateur Radio shack on site was staffed and working. We then moved on to Greenwood village where old arts of living and working with wood are demonstrated.

We watched as Greenwoodsmen Ian showed his apprentice for the day how to put a new handle into an axe head using such tools as drawknives to get the wood to fit perfectly, and he demonstrated how to make a wooden hay rake. Very interesting but time to move on to bodger Colin. He told us a bodger is someone who does half a task e.g. makes legs for chairs but not the chair backs or seats, and demonstrated how he used his woodman lathe which was operated by his treading on a wooden pedal to pull a length of string which was attached to a branch of ash above him.

As he trod on the pedal the string went back and forth which turned the wood on his lathe. Watching people work was obviously very tiring for us as well, so we had lunch, after which we started a tour of the site on a 1978 South Downs double decker bus, when a very entertaining conductor explained to us the many different crafts and buildings on site as we went past them. However, after passing the second garage that contained South Down buses, we heard the potter was in and keen to give us a demonstration. We abandoned the bus tour to see his shop and watch him make a small jug (it initially started as a vase but as we asked questions he altered it to demonstrate how he achieved different shapes and heights). As time was running out we went to the halt near the (rescued and re-sited) old Hove ticket office and caught the narrow-gauge railway train back to the station near the Museum entrance. After thanking everyone for their help and assistance in enabling us to have a very informative and enjoyable day we then left the site and crossed the road to catch the modern train back to Brighton.

Friday, was the going home day, so after breakfast we all said our goodbyes prior to going to the station to catch our trains home after a thoroughly enjoyable week, but looking forward to another G.O.A.L. event in the near future.

If you would like to undertake this sort of trip and you are aged between 60 and 72 and can use public transport to get to a Blind Veterans UK centre why not come and join us? You can phone me, Chris Humphrey, on telephone: 01603 701402 or email: chrisandhazel3@gmail.com or contact Carol Davies on telephone: 01754 450232 or on mobile: 07789 373 960 or email: cdaviesgoalclub@gmail.com

We will be at the Llandudno centre from Sunday 11th to Saturday 17th October for our next G.O.A.L. event and we look forward to meeting you.

Blind Veterans UK centenary merchandise.

If you are attending our centenary Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey from 12 noon on Tuesday 6th October 2015 you may wish to purchase one of our centenary products to wear to Westminster Abbey or simply for a memento of our very special year.

The UK centenary logo is featured on a range of new merchandise that includes ties and tie and lapel badges, paperweights, a commemorative medal, blazer badges, baseball caps, umbrellas, clothing and passport holders. You can also visit our online shop at <http://shop.blindveterans.org.uk> Or telephone 0300 111 0440 for credit or debit card orders. When you place your order please quote the reference Review. There is a £4.95 charge for postage and packaging.

Picture: Blind Veterans UK centenary tie. Celebrate our centenary in style by wearing this silk, non crease striped Blind Veterans UK 100th Anniversary tie with gold detailing. It is the perfect tie to wear to our centenary Special Centenary Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey. It is also a great way to raise awareness of Blind Veterans UK as you travel around town on the day drawing attention to the tie and perhaps answering questions about Blind Veterans UK. **Price:** £20. **SKU:** CM15027.



Picture: Cufflinks, lapel badge and tie pin with the Blind Veterans UK wavy flag logo.

Price: £14.

SKU: CM15034.

Picture: Our crystal paperweight features the image of Little Ruby, who was the three year old daughter of William Smith, the head gardener at St Dunstan's Lodge. She is shown holding the hand of a young blinded veteran as they walk between workshops in the grounds. The reverse of the cube is engraved: Blind Veterans UK 100 YEARS OF SERVICE. It is presented in a bespoke gift box with gold printed logo and royal blue silk lining. The crystal block cube dimensions are 60 x 60 x 60mm. **SKU:** CG15008. **Price:** £35.



Picture: The Executive Cross Bailey Medallist Ball pen in chrome with gold trim in a bespoke Blind Veterans UK Centenary box. The pen is engraved on the upper barrel adjacent to the clip with Blind Veterans UK 100 YEARS OF SERVICE. **Price:** £30. **SKU:** CG15005.



Picture: On 29th January 2015 we began our centenary celebrations to mark 100 years of proud service. To commemorate this unforgettable and auspicious date in our history we commissioned a medal from the Tower Mint. The front of the medal features the Blind Veterans UK centenary logo while the St Dunstan's Torch, our former logo, sits on the reverse of this prestigious collectable medal. **Price:** £17. **SKU:** CH15009.



Picture: Bespoke Blind Veterans UK glitter badge. Two dimensional Blind Veterans UK logo three colour glitter badge engraved with 100 years of service. Gold plating with front side polishing, stamped brass imitation hard enamel. At 22mm in size it comes with a safety pin attachment. **Price:** £4.00. **SKU:** CM150035.



Family News.

Congratulations to:

David Lang, grandson of Brian and Margaret Lang of Liverpool on his graduation from Durham University with an MSc in Chemistry.

Weddings:

Louise Heyes, daughter of Janey Heyes, on her marriage to Derek Webster on 20th June.

Kerry Hames, daughter of Jackie and Vince Hames, on her marriage to William Rogers on 18th July.

Birthdays:

Richard Stupples on his 101st birthday on 3rd July.

Wedding anniversaries:

Diamond Gold (75th):

Leonard & Clara Milnes of Sheffield, South Yorkshire on 20th July.

Platinum (70th):

Charles & Joyce Smith of Penicuik, Midlothian on 18th July.

Walter & Doreen Jakeman of Birmingham, West Midlands on 24th July.

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Ed & Evelyn Bonner of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear on 15th July.

Ken & Brenda Nolan of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire on 22nd July.

Kenneth & Pat Whiteside of Barrow In Furness, Cumbria on 29th July.

Diamond (60th):

Don & Jean Bevan of Taunton, Somerset on 9th July.

Derrick & Marlene Thomas of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan on 15th July.

Eric & Jean Sayce of Coventry, West Midlands on 23rd July.

Golden (50th):

John & Doreen Harrison of Scunthorpe, South Humberside on 10th July.

Ruby: (40th)

David & Pamela Kearle of Port Talbot, West Glamorgan on 30th July.

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.

George Batey who died in April 2015. He was the husband of Phyllis Batey.

Nancy Bickley who died on 18th June 2015. She was the wife of the late George Bickley.

Pauline 'Jill' German who died on 14th May 2015. She was the widow of the late Kenneth German.

Myrna Guest who died on 3rd June 2015. She was the wife of Christopher 'John' Guest.

Gillian Hosking who died on 15th June 2015. She was the wife of James Hosking.

Phyllis Lewis who died on 30th December 2014. She was the wife of Ronald Lewis.

Joyce 'Jackie' Murray who died on 18th June. She was the wife of Peter Murray.

Carole Muscat who died on 23rd June 2015. She was the wife of Bernard Muscat.

Patricia Pallister who died on 27th April 2015. She was the wife of Harold Pallister.

Dora St Clair who died on 2nd April 2015. She was the wife of Richard St Clair.

Irene Underwood who died on 18th June 2015. She was the widow of the late Horace Underwood.

Joan Williams who died on 24th June 2015. She was the widow of the late Henry Williams.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

Cyril Barnett of Weston Super Mare, Avon Served in the Royal Artillery from 1944 to 1947.

Margaret Berry of Seaford, East Sussex Served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1946.

Yvonne Bertie (nee Backinsell) of Preston, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Thomas Brennan of Bonnyrigg, Midlothian served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Thomas Brown of Preston, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1946.

Alan Carroll of Colwyn Bay, Clwyd served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1957.

Christopher Clark of Tettenhall Wood, Wolverhampton served in the Worcester Regiment, Royal Lincolnshire Regiment and the Leicestershire Regiment from 1941 to 1948.

John Connolly of Woodford Green, Essex served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Dennis Cottrell of St George, Bristol served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Richard Dadford of the Isle Of Man served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1953 to 1956.

William Davidson of Arbroath, Angus served in the Merchant Navy from 1943 to 1972.

William Dell of Chesham, Buckinghamshire Served in the General Service Corps, the Royal Artillery, Royal Norfolk Regiment, Leicestershire Regiment and the Royal Warwickshire Regiment from 1943 to 1946.

Michael Flavin of Felixstowe, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force 1941 and 1946.

Brian Fleetwood of Wirral, Merseyside served in the Parachute Regiment from 1961 to 1965.

John Godfrey of Clevedon, Avon served in the Gloucestershire Regiment from 1939 to 1946.

William Gough of Dudley, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Roland Hargreaves of Malvern, Worcestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1953.

George Haslam of Welling, Kent Served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Signals from 1943 to 1947.

John Hawkes of Needham Market, Ipswich served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

Peter Hobday of Tunbridge Wells, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1937 to 1946.

Peter Hodgson of Broughton In Furness, Cumbria Served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1952.

John Howell of Swansea served in the Merchant Navy from 1948 to 1972.

Fanny Hugill (nee Gore Browne) of Fairford, Gloucestershire served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1946.

Petain Jenkins of Skeyyt, Swansea served in the Royal Army Service Corps and the Army Catering Corps from 1940 to 1946.

Alan Johnson of Oswestry, Shropshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1953.

Frederick Johnson of Brighton, East Sussex served in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment from 1939 to 1940.

Kenneth Jones of Bexhill-On-Sea, East Sussex served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1951 to 1964.

Kenneth Jones of Llandudno Junction, Gwynedd served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Georges 'George' Jurish of St George, Bristol served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1962.

George Leech of Egremont, Cumbria served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1954.

Scott Leng of Gosport, Hampshire has served in the Royal Navy from 2009.

Derek Lively of Stockton-On-Tees, Cleveland served in the Coldstream Guards from 1957 to 1960.

Ronald Marsden of Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1947.

William Morgan of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire served in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment from 1953 to 1955.

Carlton Muir of Chippenham, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1944 to 1979.

Vincent O'Halloran of Liverpool Served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1954.

John Olley of Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1956.

Eric Peters of Ruislip, Middlesex served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1955.

Clive Reynolds of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire Served in the Royal Signals from 1956 to 1958.

James Richardson of Spennymoor, County Durham Served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1957.

Kenneth Scholes of Stockport, Cheshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1953.

James Shipley of Hawick, Roxburghshire served in the Royal Tank Regiment and the Queen's Own Lowland Yeomanry from 1958 to 1964.

Harold Slater of Poulton-Le-Fylde, Lancashire served in the General Service Corps, the Army Air Corps and the East Lancashire Regiment from 1946 to 1948.

William Smyth of Canvey Island, Essex served in the Royal Ulster Rifles and the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers from 1952 to 1955.

Donald Solway of Mickleover, Derby served in the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment and the Sherwood Foresters from 1951 to 1957.

Eileen Stevens (nee Andrews) of Guisborough, Cleveland served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Gary Stevenson of Borrowash, Derby served in the Royal Engineers and the Royal Corps of Transport from 1988 to 1991.

Tom Stooke of Bristol served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1945 to 1948.

Alfred Sturgess of Stevenage, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Signals from 1947 to 1949.

Victor Swain of Whitby, North Yorkshire served in the Royal Marines from 1940 to 1946.

Ernest Thomas of Coventry, Shropshire served in the Royal Marines from 1945 to 1958.

Archibald 'Archie' Thomson of Edinburgh served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1955.

Joseph Tottenham of Kirkcaldy, Fife served in the Royal Signals from 1951 to 1953.

Philip Twibill of Wakefield, West Yorkshire served in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment from 1972 to 1976.

Clifford Williams of Pembroke, Dyfed served in the General Service Corps and the South Wales Borderers from 1947 to 1949.

Peter Williams of Colchester Served in the General Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

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.

Anthony Batson of Tadley, Hampshire died on 10th June 2015, aged 85. He was called up for National Service in 1948 and joined the Royal Artillery, completing his basic training at Oswestry. He was transferred to the Royal Military Police and completed specialist training in Woking. He spent his entire service in Taunton and was discharged in 1950.

Geoffrey Bray of Royston, Hertfordshire died on 19th June 2015, aged 98. At the outbreak of war he joined the Home Guard, Dudenhoe End Platoon. His duties at night included guarding railway tunnels and railway lines near to his farm. He was discharged in 1945 when the Home Guard disbanded.

John Bunting of Doncaster, South Yorkshire died on 22nd June 2015, aged 89. After initial training in the General Service Corps he joined the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in April 1945 and transferred to the Royal Engineers in August that year. He served in Italy and Austria before discharge as a Sapper in 1948.

Peter Conlin of Stanley, County Durham died on 5th June 2015, aged 83. He served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1950 to 1952. He completed his training at Blandford. He was then posted to Blackdown where he was employed in the stores. He was later transferred to Bordon.

Anthony 'Tony' Darney of Neath, West Glamorgan died on 11th March 2015, aged 85. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1947, serving until 1949. He re-enlisted in 1951 and served in the RAF postal service in Iraq, the Far East, Germany and Austria, discharging as a Leading Aircraftman in 1956.

Arthur 'Michael' Flint of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 28th June 2015, aged 87. He started out as an apprentice in the Royal Navy before enlisting in the General Service Corps in August 1946 and transferring to the Royal Armoured Corps (Depot) in October 1946 and then transferring again to 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards in 1947. Posted to Germany, Korea and Egypt, he was a Corporal by the time of his discharge in 1953.

Norman 'Reg' Gill of Birmingham died on 13th June 2015, aged 98. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1939. He accompanied the British Expeditionary Force to France and was evacuated from Dunkirk. He also served in Malta during the siege and was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946.

Christopher 'John' Guest of Petworth, West Sussex died on 10th June 2015, aged 85. He joined the General Service Corps in October 1947, transferring to the Royal Artillery in February 1948 and then to the Rifles Brigade in June 1948 where he served in Northern Ireland and BAOR. He was discharged as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1959.

John Harrison of Redcar, Cleveland died on 25th June 2015, aged 81. He joined the Green Howards in 1952 for National Service and served in Hong Kong, Korea and Gibraltar until his discharge as a Lance Corporal in 1954. He continued with part-time National Service until 1958.

Ronald Harvey of Kenilworth, Warwickshire died on 1st May 2015, aged 95. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and served in the UK and Mediterranean as a Telegraphist until 1946.

Peter Jack of Carmarthen, Dyfed died on 14th June 2015, aged 87. He joined the General Service Corps for National Service in March 1946 and transferred to the Royal Scots in September 1946. Posted to Scotland and Warminster he was a Corporal on discharge in 1948.

John James of Swansea, West Glamorgan died on 15th June 2015, aged 84. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps in 1949 at Aldershot and Hastings until discharged as a Private.

Robert 'Bob' Jarvis of Pontefract, West Yorkshire died on 16th May 2015, aged 89. He joined the General Service Corps in November 1943 for initial training. Transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps a month later he served in Palestine, Marseille and Belgium until discharge as a Driver in 1946.

Thomas Levett of Uckfield, East Sussex died on 18th June 2015, aged 100. He joined the Royal Navy in 1934. He served in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean and on Russian convoys onboard HMS Pozarica, an anti-aircraft ship built in Poland and was sunk off the coast of North Africa. He was discharged in 1947 as a Petty Officer.

John Newton of Watford died on 25th May, aged 84. He joined the Middlesex Regiment in 1949 for National Service and served in Korea and Hong Kong until released to the Reserve as a Private in 1951.

Alfred Parker of Felixstowe, Suffolk died on 22nd May 2015, aged 91. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941 and trained at HMS Ganges, Shotley, qualifying as a Seaman. He served in the cruiser HMS Cumberland and later the destroyer HMS Kale. Discharged in 1946 as an Able Seaman he joined the Merchant Navy for four 4 years.

Henry 'Harry' Noble of Diss, Norfolk died on 13th June 2015, aged 89. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served in minesweepers and the aircraft carrier HMS Colossus during its first commission. He was discharged in 1947 as a Stoker 1st Class. In 1960 he joined the RAF medical branch and worked at hospitals in Germany and Changi, Singapore, mainly in the aeromedical branch. Discharged in 1982 as a Sergeant he worked for NAAFI before retiring at 65.

Alan Mays-Smith of Heathfield, East Sussex died on 21st May 2015, aged 82. He began National Service in 1951 with the Royal Green Jackets and was sent to Eton Hall to complete officer training and was commissioned in 1952. He was posted to Munster and discharged as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1953. He continued in the Territorial Army with the East Surrey Regiment until 1957 when he was discharged as a Lieutenant.

David Oakley of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 17th June 2015, aged 80. He joined the Royal Air Force prior to National Service call up in April 1954. He specialised in the medical branch and completed a PNC course. His duties ranged from clerical work for Wing Commander Neil in Bomber Command to working with a Reserve Unit in the Sinai Desert. He spent some time in Cyprus during EOKA emergency and left regular service as a Corporal in 1956.

Alfred Parker of Felixstowe, Suffolk died on 22nd May 2015, aged 91. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941 and trained at HMS Ganges, Shotley, qualifying as a Seaman. He served in the cruiser HMS Cumberland and later the destroyer HMS Kale. Discharged in 1946 he joined the Merchant Navy for four years.

Thomas 'Tom' Scott of Cramlington, Northumberland died on 29th June 2015, aged 90. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and Served in an Algerine Class minesweeper for four years. He did five Russian convoys, receiving two Russian medals, and was involved in clearing the Channel of mines before D-Day. He was discharged as a Steward in 1946.

Patrick 'Pat' South of Horsham, West Sussex died on 16th June 2015, aged 96. He joined the Royal Sussex Regiment (TA) in 1936 and was mobilised at the start of the war. Deployed to France with the British Expeditionary Force he was captured at Dunkirk and spent the war as a PoW in Poland. Liberated in early 1945 he was discharged in 1946.

William 'Bill' Stephenson of Preston, Lancashire died on 4th June 2015, aged 83. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers for National Service in 1949. He Served in Germany and following discharge as a Craftsman in 1951 remained on part-time National Service until 1955.

Ernest 'Ernie' Tait of Wrexham died on 30th June 2015, aged 81. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1956 for National Service and was based in Cyprus with 35 Engineer Regiment, taking part in the Suez invasion. He was then posted to Ripon Barracks before discharge as a Lance Corporal in 1958.

Alan Thomson of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire died on 28th June 2015, aged 81. He Served in the Royal Army Medical Corps for National Service from 1954 to 1956. He trained at Church Crookham and was posted to 40th Division in Sek Kong in the New Territories in Hong Kong where he worked in the medical centre as an orderly. After discharge he remained with the TA until 1957.

Alma Weeden of Sunbury On Thames, Middlesex died on 21st June 2015, aged 85. She joined the Women's Royal Auxiliary Air Force in 1948. She carried out her training at Wilmslow and was posted to 16 Maintenance Unit (16 MU) based in Staffordshire. She was discharged in 1950 as an Aircraftwoman Second Class.

Aubrey Williamson of Downham Market, Norfolk died on 25th June 2015, aged 91. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1943 and served in India and Arnhem. He was captured in Arnhem and was a prisoner of war for nine months until freed by the allies.

Lewis 'Lew' Woodroffe of Worthing, West Sussex died on 14th June 2015, aged 93. He joined the Royal Fusiliers in June 1939 and transferred to the Royal Artillery in August 1940. He served in the UK and played in various Army football teams, later becoming a professional footballer. He was discharged as a Sergeant in 1946.

