

April 2016

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: James 'Jim' Manning and Ernest 'Ted' Ellerton, with Mayor of Dronfield, Cllr Liz Blanchard and Honorary French Consul, Jean-Claud Lafontaine.

Photo: Dronfield Eye/Andrew Eyley.

Back page: Caroline de Peyrecave's portrait of Kingsman Anthony 'Coops' Cooper of the 1st Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment that features in her *WARpaint* exhibition.



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Patron: Her Majesty the Queen.

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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 at the Brighton and Sheffield centres please contact the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please first contact your Welfare Officer.

ROVI-IT Helpline: If you need to speak with the ROVI and IT Helpdesk please telephone: 01273 391447 for ROVI and IT enquiries.

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.

From the Chairman.

Your message from Tim Davis.

I've always been delighted to hear about and recognise the achievements of others, whether in military service or in civilian life. For me it's a heart-warming occasion and one that inspires us to think about what more can be done in service or to help others.

This year a number of blind veterans who took part in the 1944 Liberation of France have been honoured by the French Government with the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur. Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, it's the highest distinction France recognises an individual with, and on average only 10 British nationals receive it per year.

When I read of the tales of men like Ken Godfrey, 90, from Long Eaton and Ray Shuck, 92, from Kearsley who were involved, I'm so glad to hear of the thanks and recognition that they have earned and deserve.

On a different note, this year it is our Patron's 90th birthday in June and many will be celebrating this great achievement by Her Majesty the Queen, by holding a Royal Lunch and raising money for charity. This made me wish to recognise a number of members of the Blind Veterans UK family. Firstly I would like to recognise those who have reached their 90th or older birthday this year. My very best wishes to each of you for a very enjoyable day. Secondly to those of you who have decided to take on an initiative to raise money for our great cause; I wish you every success and want to thank you very much indeed for all your support.

This year I along with a number of Trustees will be taking part in the Northern 100K event when we will walk with blind veteran Paul Jacobs GM around the course. We too are raising money and if you wish to support us, please go to our website www.justgiving.com/PaulsPeople

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Activities from the Brighton centre.

April.

Technology Week 10th to 16th. Masonic Weekend 22nd to 25th April.

May.

Photography Week 1st to 7th. Adrenaline Weekend 6th to 9th.
Archery Club 29th May to 4th June.

June.

Gardening Week 5th to 11th. Ex POW Week 19th to 25th.

Activities from the Llandudno centre.

April.

History Week 11th to 15th. Wood Week 25th to 29th.

May.

Coarse Fishing Week 9th to 13th May.

June.

Adventure Week 6th to 10th. Potting & Planting Week 13th to 17th.
Water Week 20th to 24th.

Activities from the Sheffield centre.

April.

Beginners Photography Week 11th to 15th.

July.

Culture Week 18th to 22nd.

August.

Gardens Week 8th to 12th.

To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Brighton and Sheffield centres.

For further information and to book your place telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please speak with your Welfare Officer.

To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Llandudno centre: To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Llandudno centre please telephone: 01492 868741 or 01492 868740.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information. Review Short Story Competition: The Wrong Turn.

They say that everyone has a novel in them, but for the 2016 Blind Veterans UK Review short story competition we want to find out how many people have a great short story in them.

We invite you to send a fictional work on the theme The Wrong Turn. Perhaps your character, or characters, took a physical wrong turn, when they went up the wrong street and that changed events in their life. Or perhaps your character or characters made a wrong decision that was a turning point in their life.

Whatever it was please get writing as we would love to read your entries. All submissions should be an original work and not previously published. The competition is open to members, their spouses, widows or widowers. The judge's decision will be final.

The three winning stories will be published in the Review in 2016.

Please follow these steps when submitting entries for the competition:

- 1) Entries should be typewritten and should not exceed 1,500 words.
- 2) Only one submission per person.

Please send your entries to Catherine Goodier, Review Editor, Blind Veterans UK, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD by 30th April 2015.

Review format changes.

The Review is also available on MP3CD and USB, by email, on Sonata and in Braille. If you would like to change the format you receive the Review in please telephone Mrs Shernaz Kapadia on 020 7616 8368.

Frogmore House and Gardens

Charity Day: Wednesday 8 June 2016

By gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen, Frogmore House and Gardens, Windsor Home Park, will be open to the public in aid of Blind Veterans UK, the charity for vision-impaired ex-Service men and women.

To purchase tickets for this unique opportunity, priced at only £6.20 each visit blindveterans.org.uk/frogmore or call 020 7616 8368.

Registered Charity No. 216227 (England & Wales) and SC039411 (Scotland).
Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2016



Life beyond sight loss
St Dunstan's since 1915

Join us at our Charity Day at Frogmore House and Gardens.

We have been granted permission by Her Majesty The Queen to hold a Charity Day at Frogmore House and Gardens on Wednesday 8th June between 10am and 5.30pm. The Frogmore Estate comprise 33 acres of private gardens within the grounds of the Home Park, adjoining Windsor Castle, in Berkshire.

If you would like to join us to enjoy a day in this beautiful setting, when you can also meet with your fellow blind veterans, their families and friends, please fill in the application form on the following page and return it to us with your payment.

If you would prefer to book by telephone please call us on 020 7616 8368 or you may prefer to book online at www.blindveterans.org.uk/frogmore

We look forward to meeting you on what promises to be a wonderful day.

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Registered Charity No. 216227 (England & Wales) and SC039411 (Scotland).
Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2016



Life beyond sight loss
St Dunstan's since 1915

Frogmore House and Gardens Charity Day: 8 June 2016

CS1701.CF011

Booking form for garden tickets:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

How did you hear about attending Frogmore House and Gardens?

Contact no: _____

Email: _____

Keeping you updated on our work is easy by phone and or email. If you're happy for us to contact you in this way, please write your details below. By providing your details you are giving your consent for us to send you information about the work of Blind Veterans UK and/or Blind Veterans Trading Ltd, including upcoming news, events and fundraising activities.

- Please tick if you're happy to be contacted by phone
 Please tick if you're happy to be contacted by email
 If you would prefer not to be contacted by post in future – please tick here

Number of admission tickets @ £6.20 each (under 5's free of charge) £ _____

Donation (optional) £ _____

Total £ _____

Send this completed form and your cheque/s to: Frogmore House and Gardens,
Blind Veterans UK, 12-14 Harcourt Street, London, W1H 4HD

Please make cheques payable Blind Veterans UK. Credit card payments can be made via our website blindveterans.org.uk/frogmore

- If you are arriving as an organised coach party, please tick here so that we can issue you with a coach pass.

I would like Blind Veterans UK to treat all eligible donations I have made during the previous four years and all future donations I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise. I understand that I must pay an amount of United Kingdom income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on my donation in each tax year (currently 25p for each £1 given).

If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay sufficient tax, you can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying Blind Veterans UK.

Agreed: Yes No

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Opening times: 10am-5.30pm (last admission 4pm).

Refreshments: Available from the refreshment tent. Picnics are welcome.

Access: Frogmore House is accessible to wheelchair users, but help may be required for touring the gardens. Dogs, other than guide dogs, will not be permitted in the house or gardens.

Frogmore House Tickets: Tickets for Frogmore House can be purchased on the day at a cost of £6.80 per adult, £5.80 over 60s and students, £4.80 per child aged 5-16 years old.

Please note, only cash or cheque payment is permitted on the day.

Volunteers required for pilot scheme at the Brighton centre.

With the news that Swedish car giant Volvo is seeking to recruit one hundred volunteers to participate in a trial of driverless cars in Sweden, Blind Veterans UK has made the bold decision to participate in the scheme here in the UK. We are currently negotiating a deal with the car manufacturer to lease 10 driverless cars for use at our Brighton centre.

The trial has been approved at Board level and Transport Manager Chris Kirk has been given the green light to implement the plan to train 10 beneficiaries to pilot the vehicles.

Initially, the trial will take place on a specially built track on the Archery field, but, as the trial progresses and the confidence levels amongst the drivers climb it is hoped that the vehicles will be allowed out onto some quieter sections of roads that surround the centre and eventually into Brighton.

A Department of Transport spokesperson, Baroness Lily Prada-Foos told the Brighton Argus: "We believe that Blind Veterans UK should lead the way in testing driverless vehicles here in the UK and we would encourage beneficiaries of this unique charity to put their names forward for the trial."

Anyone interested in participating on the trial should be in possession of a valid driving licence and be able to demonstrate that your eyesight is good enough to drive safely. This can be achieved by reading a number plate from a distance of 20 metres with or without spectacles. Those beneficiaries with prosthetic eyes will be allowed to keep them in during the trial.



50 per cent reduction on your TV Licence fee.

If you are registered blind (severely sight impaired) then you are entitled to a blind concession TV Licence which gives you 50 per cent off the cost of your TV Licence. If you are partially sighted (sight impaired) you are not eligible.

The blind concession TV Licence covers anyone who lives with you, as long as the licence is in your name. If your licence is in someone else's name then you can change this and then claim the reduction.

How to apply for your blind concession TV Licence:

You'll need to complete an application form and provide proof of your registration status to claim the blind concession TV Licence. You can fill in the application form online, print the form and then send it with proof of your registration status and payment to:

Blind Concession Group, TV Licensing, Darlington DL98 1TL.

To prove you are registered (certified) as severely sight impaired, you must send a copy of one of the following two documents:

The certificate from your eye specialist (ophthalmologist) that states that you are eligible to be certified as severely sight impaired. In England and Wales this is called a CVI (Certificate of Vision Impairment), in Scotland it's called a BP1, and in Northern Ireland it's called an A655.

A certificate or other document issued by, or on behalf of your local authority that shows you are registered as severely sight impaired with them.

Please don't send your original documents as TV Licensing only need to see a copy and there is always the risk that you could lose your original document in the post.

With the 50 per cent reduction, the cost of a colour TV Licence is £72.75. For a black and white TV Licence the cost is £24.50.

If you have any difficulties with your application or would like more information then call TV Licensing on 0300 790 0366 or visit tvlicensing.co.uk/blind

Free TV Licence if you are aged 75 or over.

Whether you are sighted or not, if you are aged 75 or over then you are entitled to a free TV licence for your household.

To claim this, call TV Licensing on 0300 790 6154 with your National Insurance Number. If you don't know your National Insurance Number then you will have to send in a copy of one of the following that proves your age:

Your passport.

Your UK birth certificate.

Your national identity card.

If you're name is not on the TV Licence for your household then you can ask TV Licensing to transfer it to your name when you claim your free licence. For more information, please call TV Licensing on 0300 790 6154 or go to website: tvlicensing.co.uk/over75info

Sign up to run the Royal Parks Half Marathon with the Sports & Rec Team at the Brighton centre.

The Sports & Recreation department at the Brighton centre has guaranteed places for eight runners in the Royal Parks Half Marathon that will take place on Sunday 9th October 2016.

This is one of the most popular events in the UK, taking you through London's scenic parks: Hyde Park, Green Park, St James's Park and Kensington Gardens. Runners have the chance to enjoy these beautiful parks in the autumn as you run past some of London's most iconic landmarks that include the Houses of Parliament and the Royal Albert Hall.

Sports & Rec Instructors at the Brighton centre will work with you to prepare a training schedule to ensure that you are half marathon ready. If you would like to sign up please contact Russell Scullion on telephone: 01273 391481 or email: russell.scullion@blindveterans.org.uk

If you don't have a guide Russell and his colleagues will try to match you with a sighted running guide.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I thought you may be interested in the little incident that happened to my son-law, Andy, and I on our way to the House of Commons to attend the Parliamentary reception that was held by Blind Veterans UK.

Arriving at York station we found our platform crowded with people armed with cameras. Enquiring what all the excitement was for we were informed that the Flying Scotsman was due any minute. As our train to London was also due we had to hurry to our own platform, and expecting to see one of the new electric engines pulling in, we instead had the uninterrupted view of the old veteran in all her glory.

Andy had his camera at the ready hoping to be able to photograph her as she came in on the other platform; instead he had the picture of two veterans on their way to London.

The reception was a great success with the Blind Veterans UK speakers putting their points over to the assembled MPs and dignitaries in a great manner.

Yours truly,

Brian Davies.



Picture: Two magnificent veterans, The Flying Scotsman and Brian Davies.

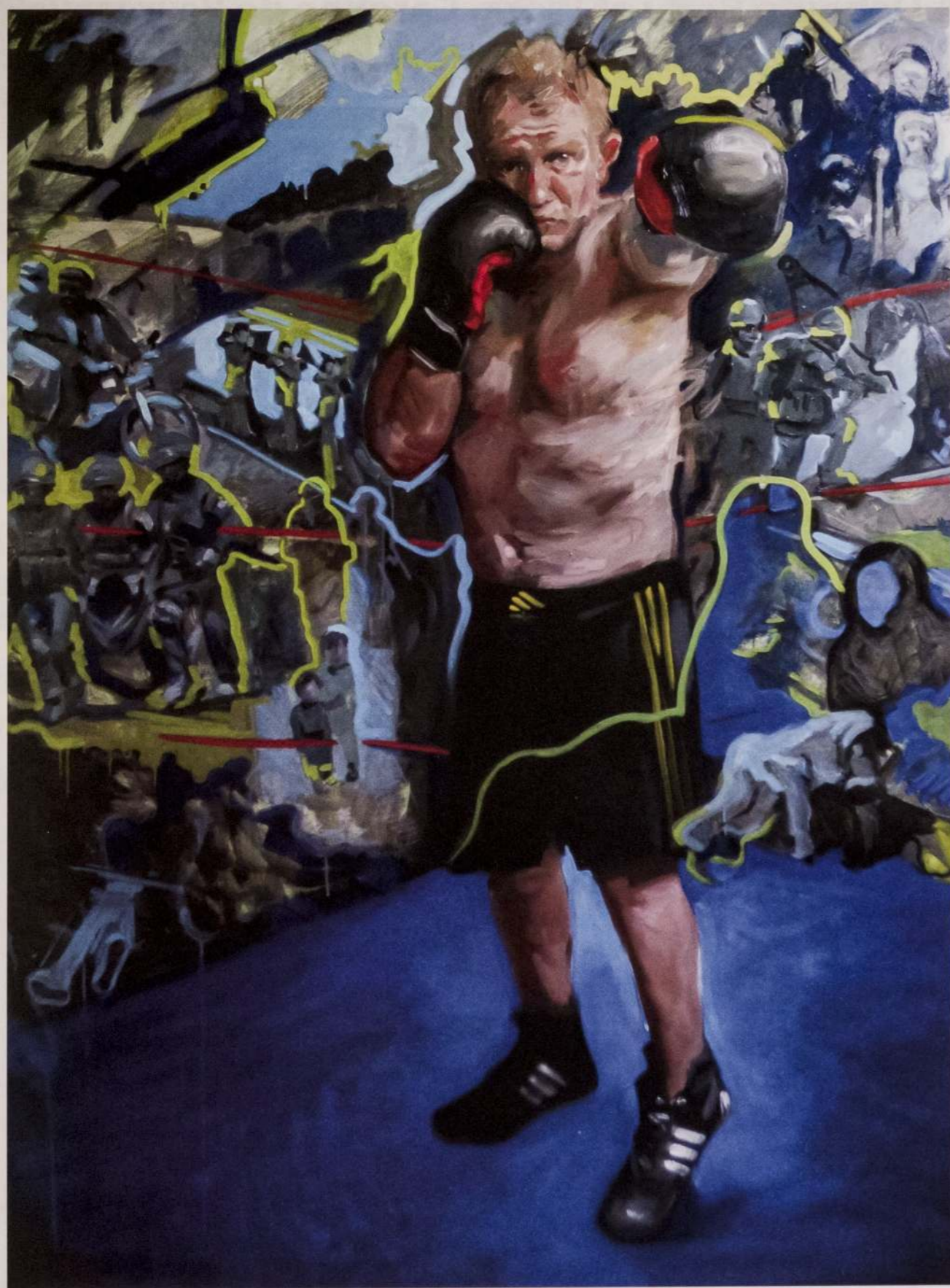
Photo: Andy Skelton.

A Defining Body of Work. Caroline de Peyrecave's *WARpaint* Exhibition. By Paul Jacobs GM.



Above: Caroline de Peyrecave prepares to paint Simon Brown.

Adjacent: Caroline's finished portrait of Rugby fan Simon Brown.



Picture: Caroline de Peyrecave's portrait of former Royal Marine Andy Lock. Just one of the many portraits that form Caroline's *WARpaint* exhibition.
www.warpaintexhibition.com

Standing with *WARpaint* artist Caroline de Peyrecave in her London loft studio I can clearly picture her portrait of former Royal Marine Andy Lock as she describes it to me. Shown in the boxing ring, in my mind's eye I see Andy staring from the canvas ready to take on his opponent, his gloved hands raised for fight.

As Caroline describes the figures outside the ring that run throughout the canvas, they too are familiar. Caroline has expertly interpreted the ghoulish figures that represent Andy's PTSD and the nightmares that he has suffered since his service in Afghanistan. There are images of three Royal Marines carrying a wounded comrade on a stretcher, a Chinook, local kids, Taliban on bikes, shadowy figures, some of them menacing, faceless and ghoulish in appearance, and groups of guns.

As Caroline says, the images are abstract and she doesn't quite know when to stop. But that is the same as the nightmares and PTSD that service men and women suffer from, as they too are abstract and seem never ending.

This is just one of the portraits that form Caroline's *WARpaint* exhibition, a project she started to show the men and women who are presently serving in our Armed Forces, and veterans who have been injured on operations, either physically or emotionally. Two of Caroline's *WARpaint* portraits are of blind veterans. Shown on the back page of this Review is Caroline's portrait of Kingsman Anthony 'Coops' Cooper of the 1st Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment who was wounded in Afghanistan in 2010 when he sustained injury to his head, eyes, hands and legs. The previous pages show Caroline's portrait of Simon Brown, Blind Veterans UK's Communications & Engagements Officer. A former Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Simon served in Kosovo, Poland, Canada and Iraq until he was wounded in Iraq in 2006 when he was shot in the head.

When I asked Caroline of the origins of *WARpaint* she told me:

"Back in 2010 I was commissioned by The Coldstream Guards to paint Lieutenant Dougie Dalzell MC for the Officer's Mess in Windsor. Dougie was awarded the Military Cross posthumously after he was killed on his 27th birthday by an IED in Afghanistan. Through that commission I met Dougie's family and his friends and the people he'd been working with and a lot of them have become very good friends. I realised just how important that painting was and how many people knew him and it meant so much to me that I wanted to carry on doing something similar, so that was the start of *WARpaint*."

"So many are leading positive lives and that's what really attracted me to the sitters. I want to get across in these paintings that your life isn't over and that you won't be beaten. It's an important message that comes from today's serving men and women and veterans to those who will be injured in the future. Through the Andy Lock portrait, with his nightmares in the background we wanted to show he uses boxing to fight his PTSD. I try to imagine what he could be thinking, it's obviously quite difficult for me not having been through that experience, but by meeting so many people who have, you start to get an idea.

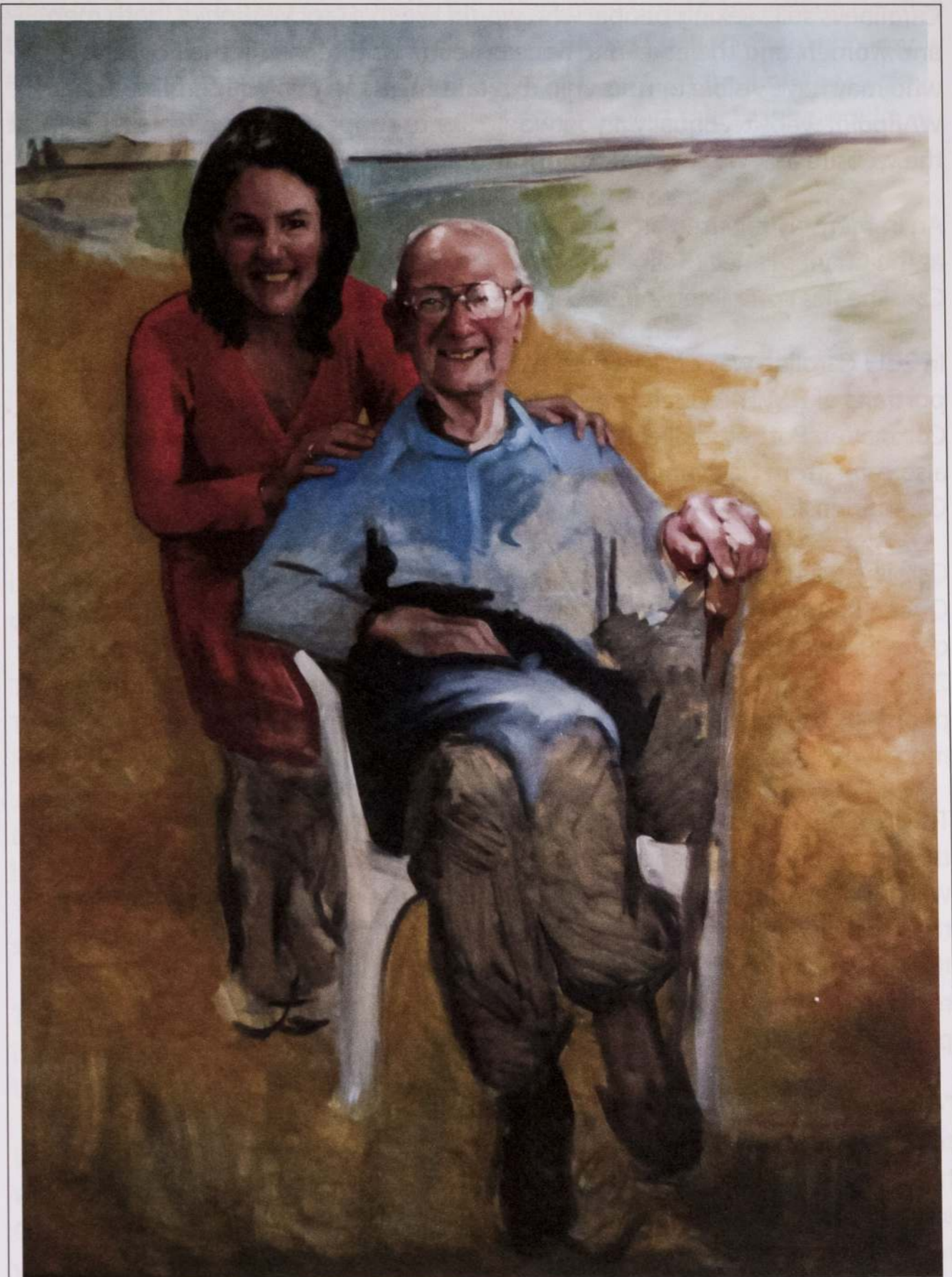
"Another portrait that shows the unseen injuries of war is one of Andrew Jelinek. He's sitting on a bus looking out of the window into a park in Wandsworth where he used to live. Shown standing while he sits are an old lady, children and a mother, as he is young and looks healthy I wanted people to ask why he is sitting. It's because he has spinal injuries, as well as PTSD, and can't stand for long. As he's now working for the National Trust, in the portrait he's looking to his future life, and so there's a little National Trust symbol. It's one of my favourites. It shows that as injuries aren't always visible it doesn't mean that people don't have them.

"Then there is the portrait of former Second World War Japanese prisoner of war, Bob Morrell who is pictured with his carer Imogen, who worked for Combat Stress. Bob still experiences PTSD and they're shown on the beach in Brighton where he lives.

"WARpaint may be the title of the project, but it's not really about war, it's about the people and what they're doing now. As a portrait artist I normally work by commission, but I've decided over the next few years to work on WARpaint alongside my commissioned work. It's a very meaningful and rewarding project for me that will hopefully raise a lot of money for charities and help those injured in war."

Caroline hopes the images speak for themselves and that they will draw people in, especially when you have sitters who have no visible injuries, as the portraits will provoke people to think 'Why is he or she on the wall?' 'Or 'What have they got to do with wounded service men and women?'

As someone who suffers from PTSD, and unless I have my white cane people don't automatically realise I'm blind, it's a very important message, and I congratulate Caroline.



Picture: Caroline's portrait of Second World War FEPOW Bob Morrell with his carer Imogen on the beach in Brighton. Bob's smile masks the PTSD that he still experiences, 70 years after the cessation of hostilities.

Caroline is still seeking people who would like to sit for *WARpaint*, both men and women, and she is keen to find someone who served in the Royal Navy who may have visible or non-visible injuries. You can contact Caroline at her *WARpaint* website. Equally if you would like to support *WARpaint* please do visit the website at www.warpaintexhibition.com

An immensely talented artist Caroline trained for three years in portraiture at the Charles H Cecil School in Florence in Italy. Since she graduated in 2008 Caroline has completed a number of high profile commissions.

In 2013 Caroline was given a dream commission by Halcyon Days to produce portraits of HM The Queen and HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh for their Coronation Portraits collection. An earlier, yet equally prestigious commission, also came from Halcyon Days to paint HRH The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Caroline was typically understated saying: "It's incredible to know that The Queen has one of the portraits that features on a small enamel pot. I've been quite lucky as people started to commission me as soon as I left Florence in 2008. I think that being in London helps a lot as you're out and about meeting people all the time and my business really works by word of mouth, and the more work you do the more people see it."

The *WARpaint* portraits aren't confined to Caroline's loft studio as they run throughout her house and as we sit in her living room I realise that Coops is watching us from his portrait at the far end of the room. Speaking of giving them up for exhibition Caroline said: "I'll miss these paintings when they go as they're very much a presence, being life size it feels like the sitters are in the room. There are so many people in this room and there's a story behind each person.

"Obviously painting Coops some of his injuries are very visible but I didn't want to draw attention to them, but equally you can't hide them. He lost his eye and he has his prosthetic eye in, but that's in the shadow, so it's not really the focus at all, and you might not know, so it's very much about him and the fact that he's walking. It's to show his achievements as he is wearing his 100K kit and is shown walking over London's Millennium Bridge.

"With each new person I'm stunned by how far people have got since they were injured and so impressed by that drive to really live your life. Having come so

close to death, or having seen death, the sitters have sought something positive to focus on and to grab to rebuild their lives. I painted Mark Harding who is now a paddle boat racer for the Great Britain team. He was shot through the neck and shoulder, and paralysed from the neck down he was told that he would never walk again.

"But now he just has an aid around his right knee and he has a button in his hand which makes the pads contract his muscles to help him walk a little better, he climbs stairs with apparent ease and you wouldn't really know that he had been wounded. Like all of my sitters I admire him greatly.

"I'm presently painting my first female sitter, Cathy, a criminal lawyer in the Army who developed PTSD as a result of her service in Afghanistan. It's one of the large canvases and she looks as though she's coming out of the darkness. She's wearing a smart black dress against a black background. It's all extremely, extremely black but then you see the light hitting her face on one side and a bit on her chest and arm. As she still experiences PTSD she's halfway out of the darkness."

To raise funds for charities Caroline has established a committee of 12 people. There are eight charities involved and the first four, The Lt Dougie Dalzell MC Memorial Trust, Walking With The Wounded, Combat Stress and Stoll will be supported by the 15 full length paintings that Caroline is presently working on, the life size portraits of her sitters. They will imminently be hung in corporate buildings on loan in return for a donation. At the same time the portraits will also raise important public awareness and support for the people who are shown in them and for the charities that are being supported.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, The Army Benevolent Fund, which is the Soldier's Charity, The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund and Blind Veterans UK will be supported through the sale of around 40 sketches through auction.

If you would like to find out more about *WARpaint* go to www.warpaintexhibition.com If you would like to find out more about Caroline de Peyrecave, and possibly commission a portrait, please go to www.carolinedepeyrecave.co.uk

Caroline is presently working on a portrait of Johnson Beharry VC that shows him relaxing at home.

Doing my bit. Colin Williamson interviews Stephen Percival.

Stephen Percival, from Hebburn in South Tyneside, joined the Royal Armoured Corps in January 1980 and after completing his Phase One training at Catterick Garrison went on to join the 9/12 Royal Lancers in Germany where they had taken up duties as the 1st Armoured Division Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment, equipped with the (then) new Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance family which included the Scimitar and Scorpion light tanks which Stephen learned to drive and command.

He went on to serve in Cyprus as part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force, Canada and Belize as a member of the Armoured Recce Troop, eventually leaving the Army in 1993 as a Corporal. After demob Stephen worked as a lorry driver and at a nursing home until his sight deteriorated due to his diabetes and he was forced to give up work.

Having been in employment since he left school, Stephen found it difficult to be out of work. This eventually led him to offer his services as a volunteer at his local Sight Service charity shop in South Shields as a retail assistant. Sight Service provides vision impaired people from the Gateshead and South Tyneside area with training, support and information and work diligently to promote greater public awareness of sight loss whilst working towards achieving better and more accessible public services for vision impaired people.

Stephen's easy going manner made it easy for him to adapt to his new role and his volunteering gave him something to get out of bed for in the mornings.

"I took to the job straight away" said Stephen. "I was well versed in good communications skills due to my time in the Army and I obviously had the ability to work as part of a team so it didn't take me long to fit in. I operated the cash register, did stocktaking, recorded purchases and generally made the customers feel welcome. The fact that I am vision impaired myself made me feel that I was doing something worthwhile that was actually benefitting other vision impaired people throughout South Tyneside. I was doing my bit!"

Unfortunately, due to a couple of family bereavements Stephen has had to take

some leave from working in the shop but now feels like it is time to return.

"I miss the routine" he says. "I used to really enjoy work and it gave me the opportunity to meet new people and to get out of the house. I will get back in touch with Sight Services shortly to let them know that I'm ready to return. I'd really recommend volunteering, whether it's for Blind Veterans UK or in your local community; it provides you with a sense of purpose and makes you feel good about yourself. I feel as if I'm contributing to society".

Stephen is also interested in participating on the LifeSkills Programme which will run at the Llandudno centre later in the year and he will contact the LifeSkills Programme Manager Sharon Williams to request some further information.



Picture: An Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment Scimitar on exercise on Salisbury Plain.

Blind veterans receive the Legion d'honneur.

On the 70th Anniversary of D-Day, the Government of France announced that it would recognise the selfless acts of heroism and determination displayed by all surviving veterans of the Normandy Landings, and of the wider campaigns to liberate France in 1944, by awarding them with the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur.

The application form was printed in the Review and many blind veterans applied to receive the prestigious award. In the space of a few months the Government received 3,000 applications from veterans throughout the UK. With such a high amount of applicants it took some time for the awards to be issued, but now, almost daily, blind veterans have received their Legion d'honneur. In recognition of their part to secure France's liberation during the Second World War, Doug Forester, Ted Ellard and Ken Godfrey are just three blind veterans who have this year been presented with the Legion d'honneur.



Picture: Doug Forester who served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946 displays his Legion d'Honneur. He was onboard HMS Diadem on D-Day, providing gunfire support to the Army. He was also part of the Arctic convoys on HMS Malaya and he was onboard HMS Malaya when he witnessed the sinking of HMS Ark Royal off Gibraltar.

Photo: Colin Forester.

In a moving ceremony that was hosted by the Dronfield Eye at Dronfield Hall Barn, blind veteran Ted Ellerton and Jim Manning from Dronfield were presented with the Legion d'honneur by the French Honorary Consul for the East Midlands, M Jean-Claud Lafontaine, who was assisted by the Mayor of Dronfield, Councillor Liz Blanchard.

Jean-Claude said that making the men a Chevalier or Knight of the Legion D'honneur, was an honour for him as so few veterans had received the decorations for their part in liberating France from the Nazis. He told them "I was part of the last generation to go into the Army. I can't imagine what it was like at the age you were then to go to make the ultimate sacrifice to save your French cousins even though you had never met them."

It was a proud day, in many proud days for the Mayor of Dronfield, Councillor Liz Blanchard as she thanked the men for their contribution on behalf of the town.

Dronfield Eye editor Mike Firth said the men were "two ordinary fellows who demonstrated extraordinary courage and bravery when they were called upon in World War II. We owe them everything."

The gathering observed a minute's silence following the Last Post in recognition of comrades who didn't make it home.

We would like to thank the Dronfield Eye's Deborah Wain for allowing us to use extracts from her article.



Picture: World War Two veteran James 'Jim' Manning, front left, and Ernest 'Ted' Ellerton, both from Dronfield in north Derbyshire who were presented with the Legion D'honneur in recognition of the roles they played in the D-Day Landings in 1944. Blind veteran Ted landed on D+4 with the Royal Army Service Corps. **Photo:** Dronfield Eye/ Andrew Eyley.



Picture: Former Colour Sergeant, Ken Godfrey from Long Eaton in Nottingham who served in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment was presented with the Legion d'honneur by Mme Josette Lebrat, Honorary Consul to the French Embassy. Blind veteran Ken served in North West Europe and took part in Operation Market Garden.

Doug, Ted and Ken were stoic saying that at the time they didn't think of it as brave or heroic, they were simply doing their jobs, just like everyone else they were fighting against tyranny.

Thank you so much for your fundraising.

Our grateful thanks go to Eric Radford who kindly held a fundraising event to celebrate his birthday. On the day Eric raised £256 which he added to from his own pocket, sending a cheque for £500. Much to the surprise of Alison Molloy, Eric's Welfare Office, she was asked to give a speech, which was very well received.



Picture: Eric Radford at his fundraising birthday party. **Photo:** Alison Molloy.



Our grateful thanks goes to John Hooper who presented his Welfare Officer Marie Thomas with a cheque for £600 that was raised by his efforts with his Buffalo Lodge.

Thank you so much John and our grateful thanks also go to your alumni at the Buffalo Lodge.

A highly successful Parliamentary Reception, but we would still value your help.

On 23rd February Blind Veterans UK's No One Alone campaign team held its second Parliamentary reception to meet with MPs, Peers, Local Authorities, Health Authorities and Councils. The aim was to highlight the charity's work to find the many veterans, who, although they have some form of sight loss, do not know that they are eligible to join Blind Veterans UK.

Organised by Lara King, Group Manager of the No One Alone campaign, it was an outstanding success. Established in 2012 No One Alone is the beneficiary recruitment programme that reaches out to new blind veterans who are eligible to receive our free services and support. Here we speak with Lara King.

Lara King: "I've been with the charity for two years and it's been a lovely experience as it's great to know that we're out there actively trying to reach and help more people. We recently held our second Parliamentary reception at the Terrace Pavilion at the House of Commons and the aim of the reception this time was to raise awareness of our services and the support that we provide. We were specifically looking to encourage Local Authorities to work in partnership with us so that they can identify and signpost any blind veterans to us earlier in their sight loss journey.

"Readers of the Review might remember that about 18 months ago we did a survey when we asked how long you had been living with sight loss before you came to Blind Veterans UK. As a result of your answers we know that almost a quarter of you were living with sight loss for six years or more before you came to us, which is a real shame as we're here and we want to help people as soon as we can.

"That is the message we took to Local Authorities to ask them to signpost people to us as soon as possible. We have also offered to work with them to make their job easier to identify people, as we can then step in to make sure that eligible veterans get the best possible services and support. There are lots of examples of good practice and on the night of the Parliamentary reception we launched a video about Barnsley Local Authority as they do a really good job in referring veterans to us.

"We were pleased with the event as we attracted more than 30 MPs and Peers which was really encouraging. It was also attended by people across the charity sector from both military and vision impaired organisations. There were representatives from Health and Local Authorities and we gained a very good show of support for Blind Veterans UK from the reception.

"Importantly in terms of the follow up a number of MPs have said that they would be willing to champion our cause and they will contact the Local Authority in their Constituency. They have also written letters to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to encourage all Local Authorities to work with us. It was a great outcome and we will keep you updated with progress through the Review.

"Speakers at the Parliamentary reception included Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive, Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB. The Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans Mark Lancaster spoke, as did Harold Bodmer, Vice President of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, and blind veteran Tony Harbour, who attended with his wife Michelle.



Picture: Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans Mark Lancaster and Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB.

"Each of them spoke incredibly well about Blind Veterans UK and how we want to work more with Local Authorities and that intention was really warmly received.



Picture: Mayor Donatus Anyanwu of Lambeth Council, blind veteran Tony Harbour who delivered one of the keynote speeches, Richard Swarbrick NHS and Michelle Harbour.

"We still need your help and would ask if you are in contact with your local Council to please tell them about us. We can provide you with posters and leaflets that you could send to your Local Authority. We could even set up a meeting with them as we know lots of Councils are doing good work. If you have an ongoing relationship with your Council or Local Authority please do tell them about us and let us know if we can help you."

If you would like to get involved please speak with Lara King, Group Manager, No One Alone on telephone: 020 7616 7964 or you can send an email to Lara at: lara.king@blindveterans.org.uk

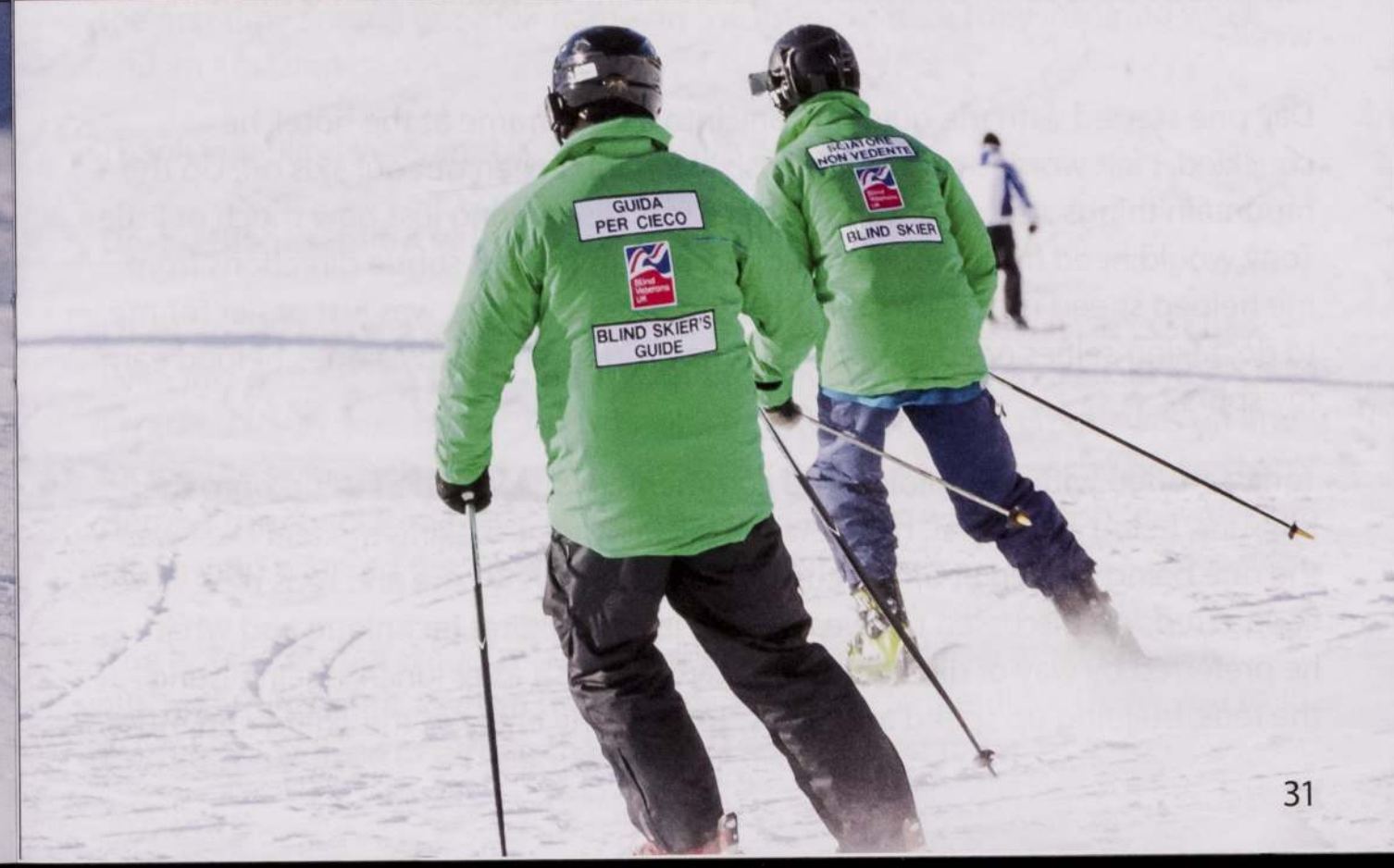


Picture: Harold Dodmer, Vice President of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, delivers his keynote speech.



Picture: Angela Rayner MP and blind veterans Gordon Timmins and Jack Hall.

Another great year on the slopes of Canazei for Blind Veterans UK Ski Club.



As is our tradition at the Review in April each year we bring you the annual report from Blind Veterans UK Ski Club of their time in the Italian ski resort of Canazei. As usual we're green with envy, in fact at the Review we're the same colour as the new jackets they sported for the first time this year. If, after reading this report, you're inspired to join them next year we will bring you details from organisers Mark Brewin and Carl Williamson in the May Review.

A newby guide's tale by Lee Cole.

My first real dealing with Blind Veterans UK was an email asking if I had any ailments or if I was on medication. I replied indicating that I was in good health and required no help staying alive. The reply back set the tone straight away — Not yet but you will do after. So I had volunteered and been accepted to help the Blind Veterans UK Ski Club and my adventure was about to begin.

Not sure what to expect, I headed to Gatwick, apprehensive but equally excited. After many reunions and welcomes for us new guides we carried out pain free admin courtesy of British Airways who provided a dedicated check in desk and excellent service.

During the coach trip to the hotel I was told that I would be guiding Tony Whitelaw, a competent skier which would ease me into the guiding world, but ex Navy! Introducing myself, I may have worried him with my tales of helicopter and skidoo rides off the ski slopes, I assured him we wouldn't need them this week.

Day one started with me guiding Tony into a door frame at the hotel, he chuckled, I felt worried and amateurish, we hadn't even put our skis on. Up the mountain things started getting better. I was discovering just how much or little Tony would need from me. He could put his skis on, but subtle directions from me helped speed up the process, locating dropped poles was just easier for me to do, taking selfies needed practice. A few runs on the baby slopes helped earn my spurs.

Tony, satisfied with my guiding and commentary style pushed us up onto the big runs. Being an old hat, he knew the hill fairly well, making me feel like I was the one being guided at times. Lunch came after a few blue and reds runs were conquered. We discussed my weaknesses in my guiding technique and what he preferred by way of directions and started afresh after lunch, again hitting the reds, building up speed and miles. Tony clearly enjoyed the skiing and must

have believed I'd keep him safe, so for the last run home he forced me on to the black, a bit steeper than I wanted on day one! I was nervous, for I could see the gradient, but never one to back down we headed off, committed, we started really well. Then the comms failed, we had run out of battery! Now this was getting fruity. I had to resort to Clear Loud Orders, military training style.

I will not lie, at the bottom I was a little emotional, proud and incredibly humbled, not only had Tony trusted me to guide him with no previous experience, he had felt comfortable enough to follow me down the steepest part of the hill, and with no radio! It was all I could do not to hug him so overwhelmed was I, but not being a sailor I stuck to the firm handshake and a well done.

A few refreshments followed that evening, debriefing the good and bad points of the day with the other blind veterans and their guides. The five new guides each telling of similar emotions and achievements.

I hope that I have the privilege to guide again, if not, this week has been one of the most rewarding of my life and will stay with me for a long, long time. I have met wonderful new friends, whom I hope also have fond memories of this trip. It's been an honour to meet so many people who refuse to allow their sight loss to be a reason to stop doing things they enjoy, or putting them off attempting new adventures. Blind veterans who are thinking about attending this trip for the first time should get their name on the list now; it's a truly inspiring week and an amazing party!

Thank you Blind Veterans UK, the pleasure was mine.

Daren Blanks, blind veteran and first time skier.

I have to say that the ski trip was one of the best experiences I have ever had. Even just getting the boots and skis on the first few times was a challenge. Once I cracked them and the bottom lifts which I did fall off a few times I was off and loving the skiing, moving from the green run to the blue run at the bowl. Then getting the chance at a red run, which was a fantastic way to finish the week off, along with winning the cowbell in my first week.

The hotel and staff were fantastic, as was the food and it's a great venue for the night-time antics, which there are far too many to mention. Thank you to everyone involved in setting the trip up. I had the best time.



Picture: Darren Blanks and his guide demonstrate their skiing prowess.

Sue Eyles, blind veteran.

I am slowly coming down to earth after the fantastic high from Blind Veterans UK's ski club week. To say thank you is an understatement, but one person whom I must thank is Danny Lee who finally persuaded/challenged me to give this skiing lark a go. But seriously a massive thank you to you all, firstly for letting me join you and for all the hard work you all put into organising such a trip, the logistics must be a nightmare!

I was really nervous about the trip and the fact that the only sighted person I knew was Lou Timms. So to realise that I was going to have to trust a complete stranger with my life, and do something so alien to me was massive. But you paired me up with the lovely Jim who had the patience of a saint, not to mention the skill to ski backwards. Jim was amazing as he knew when to push me a little harder, and when to ease off to boost my confidence, and every day I learnt so much and always ended on a high.

I have so much more to learn but the sad thing for you guys is that I now want to learn more and to improve, and hopefully Jim, if he were unfortunate enough to be my instructor again, would be able to ski frontwards!

It was the little things that you all did to make me feel so welcome, like the matching of guides, the room allocation, and for me having a single room really helped me settle in an evening. The group was formed of a lovely mix people, everyone was so welcoming and they always asked how my day was. If I wanted to go to bed early rather than stay up and chat that was ok with everyone too, as I was so tired and wanted to be fully alert for the next day.

Skiing with everyone gave me a sense of freedom, one of challenge, and the feeling of being free when gliding across the snow is indescribable.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of an amazing week and if possible please can I put my name down to come again next year?



Kate Surman, first time guide.

So being in the REME rugby fold (I can hear the groans now) and knowing fellow REME, and long-time ski guides Neil Graham and Cam well, and enjoying my skiing of course, led to a phone call a few weeks before the off asking if I would be a guide for the infamous Blind Veterans UK ski trip bonanza! Having been on sick leave for a while my immediate come back was 'Am I up to it? Am I good enough?' I was reassured in true Army style that I'd be 'al'rite' and that was me signed up and feeling a little nervous as to what lay ahead!

I spent the first few days shadowing the dream team; Cam and Sparky. After a gentle (?) start with a black run as a warm up I soon cottoned on to the fact that I would have to ski to my full potential with full sight to keep up! The trust and understanding that Cam and Sparky had for each other was incredible and taught me a lot.



Picture: Speed demons, the dream team of Sparky and Cam.

Had I known the initiation for the newbie ski guides was a blindfolded ski my motivation to get up the mountain might have been slightly different! What an incredible sensation!? Not very pleasant at all being unsure of whether I was moving or not or facing up or down the slope but certainly effective in giving me the empathy and understanding of how hard it must be for the blind veterans.

Despite the learning curve being very steep out on the mountain, and gleaning all the tips I could from different guides and their partners, there is nothing quite like being thrown in at the deep end and doing things yourself. Having

established a mutual interest early doors in going to the gym, I thought nothing of agreeing to take Rob Long on the second night. It was only really this experience that made me realise how clear my descriptions needed to be and how alert I needed to be and how difficult life was for a blind veteran. That said Rob astounded me with his coping mechanisms and abilities, particularly boxing with consecutive accurate punches onto pads that he could only sense were there.



Picture: Rob Long and Kate Surman.

What was clear from me, an outsider, was that Blind Veterans UK has got the trip so right with a group of fantastic characters who are so full of grit, determination and cracking banter on and off the slopes. Thank you very much for welcoming me and I hope to meet you all again.

Andy Quigg, another first time guide.

When I was first asked to join the Blind Veterans UK Ski Week I jumped at the chance without hesitation and it was only a few days later that I had so many questions. Is my skiing good enough? How do the skiers communicate? Do I need a big stick to keep the snowboarders away?

Meeting up with the group at Gatwick my nerves still hadn't settled, the skier's age ranging from mid 20s to early 80s, but the sense of humour and the independence they showed led me to believe I was going to be taught a few things during the week.

As a new guide I wasn't thrown in at the deep end and was allowed to shadow a blind veteran and his guide. This in itself is an eye opening experience, watching the two skiers go down the slope it would be hard for anyone to realise that the skier had a vision impairment. So they gave us a chance to see how it felt. Being blindfolded and on skis is rather scary, but it does give the guide the realisation of the trust that the blind veteran has in their guide.

As the week went on I got a few chances to be a guide. The sense of responsibility you feel for the blind veteran can be overwhelming. Trying to see all angles of other skiers on the slopes, ensuring there is enough space for turns, and preventing any incidents, it is always with a sigh of relief when the days skiing is done and the smile of the blind veteran and guide says it all.

My nerves disappeared during the week as I saw what someone can achieve when they want to, even though they may be at a disadvantage compared with the majority of skiers on the slopes. I would like to thank everyone who made my week skiing an absolute joy and an experience that I hope to repeat.

From Stevo.

As an ageing, greying, over-weight 50 something with a severe vision impairment and six right knee operations as a result of rugby injuries earlier in life, I could be forgiven for thinking that skiing was off the menu. That all changed in January when an offhand comment made six months ago was realised. It was at Camberley Rugby Club I was first introduced to a chap who claimed he was a ski instructor from the British Army who taught blind and partially sighted folk to ski. He reckoned he could teach anyone! Even me!

Lo and behold, Sir Michael of Shepley followed through on his claim and taught and guided me on my first ski trip with Blind Veterans UK's Ski Club — and it was epic! Like lots of things one does and regrets not doing them earlier, skiing is just that. I will resist writing a novel on the experience, but in short, my instruction was brilliant, one to one the whole week, both on the slopes and in the bar! The camaraderie and support of the group was terrific, from guides, blind skiers and family members who support us. The hotel, resort and ski slopes are beautiful with some stunning views and great Italian hospitality.

Suffice to say I really want to go next year, if they will have me! The crux for those who would like to try skiing but are lacking in confidence is to sign up and have a go. If I can do it anyone can and the help, experience, and support of the guides make it seem a lot easier than it looks.

My bones are healing very well and there is very little bruising left! Thanks to all.



Picture: Jedi ski guide Mick Shepley and Stevo. **Photos:** Paul 'Jacko' Jackson.

ROVI-IT Helpline tips.

To make your life easier and save you the trouble of phoning the ROVI-IT Helpline, the R&T Support Team has supplied a list of some of the most frequently asked questions to the ROVI-IT Helpline.

However, should you require assistance from a ROVI or IT Instructor that is not answered here please telephone the Helpline on 01273 391447. You can also send an email to rovi-it@blindveterans.org.uk

VIP Diaries and Calendars.

Should you need to obtain further VIP diaries and calendars please contact SLSB Enterprises Ltd on telephone 01539 726613.

Repairs and replacement batteries for talking watches.

Should you need to replace the battery in a talking watch that we have issued to you it may be best to send it to Cobalt or The Talking Watch Shop as we have found that jewellers who are not familiar with replacing batteries in talking watches can cause more damage as they try to be helpful. Cobalt or The Talking Watch Shop carry out repairs to a high standard and if the watch is beyond repair they will advise you.

You can contact Cobalt on telephone 01493 700172 and once you have spoken with them the address to send your talking watch to is The Old Mill House, Mill Road, Reedham, Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 3TL.

Alternatively you can contact the Talking Watch Shop on telephone 01253 361320 and once you have spoken with them the address to send your talking watch to is The Talking Watch Shop, Verbalise, Room 5 Business First, Amy Johnson Way, Blackpool FY4 2RP. Please ensure that you include your name and the address for the watch to be returned to

Booking holidays and themed weeks.

To book a holiday or themed week at the Brighton or Sheffield centre please telephone the Bookings Office on 01273 391500. To book a holiday or themed week at the Llandudno centre please telephone them direct on 01492 868741 or 01492 868740.

Cancellation of training.

Should you need to cancel training at the Brighton or Sheffield centre due to illness, or for any other reason, please telephone the bookings office on 01273 391500.

If you are feeling unwell.

If you are feeling unwell, perhaps you have early signs of D&V, we would ask that you do not travel to any of our centres as you will put your fellow blind veterans, their families and staff at risk of infection. If you are unsure please whether to travel please telephone the centres.

Equipment.

Following an introductory/training week you are asked to wait up to six weeks for any equipment that we haven't sent home with you to allow time for our Procurement Department to complete orders and send the equipment to you.

Returning equipment.

When returning any equipment it is important to send back any charging units and leads with the piece of equipment, as without them we are unable to repair, test, re-condition or re-issue the equipment.

Sending mobile phones in for repair.

Please ensure that you remove the SIM card from your mobile phone when you send the phone to us for repair.

If it is a talking phone the SD card should remain inside the phone, as that is the source of the software that enables the talking feature.

The Archery World of Blind Veterans UK. By John Cunnington.

The middle of November 2015 saw a group of seven archers, accompanied by our vital spotters, arrive in Norwich for the annual indoor shoot against The City of Norwich Archers. Hosted by Clickers Archery this battle for supremacy normally sees a mixture of styles; long bow, recurve (like a Cupid's bow) and the later compound bow (dare I say 'made by Meccano?') up against a team of sighted archers, many of whom are younger and fitter.

Sadly this year, without the long bow, we braced ourselves for the fray. A great day of shooting, good company, good food, and a good result, at least for Norwich that is. We lost by a tiny margin, just 17 points; 1661 to 1644! Beware Norwich, next year will see a return of form!

Christmas came and went; archer's bemoaned the weather, practiced indoors and prepared for our own indoor week of club archery. A great week of reuniting with friends and trying to improve on personal best scores.

Just to prove how addictive this sport can be three club members set off from our Brighton centre at the end of the indoor Archery Week and travelled to Deer Park Archers at Cheltenham. Deer Park Archers at Cheltenham who organise an annual inclusion shoot. In a splendid facility Blind Veterans UK Bowmen mixed with archers of all ages, all abilities and very mixed disabilities that included familiar faces from British Blind Sport Archery and new faces from British Wheelchair Archery. The day was very successful with two of our club members taking top honours in their respective categories. All in all, a pleasant indoor season.



Picture: The nearly winning team. John Cunnington, Graham Walker, Lord Paramount from Norwich Dave Long, Carol Davies and Denis Murphy.

Easter bonnets at the Llandudno centre.

Eugene Coffey and Lilian Derbyshire wear Easter bonnets they made during their stay at an Easter themed Llandudno centre.



Join Blind Veterans UK's Masonic Group and take part in the Masonic Weekend from the 22nd to 25th April.

In a 1929 issue of the Review an article asked for members who were Freemasons and gave names over the course of several issues. From that time, St Dunstan's Masonic group was founded.

Over the past 86 years, the group has gone through many changes, to name but a few the size of its membership and of course in recent times the name change of the charity.

An annual get together takes place at the Brighton centre each April. This year we will meet at the Brighton centre from 22nd to 25th April. The weekend is for men of like minds to practice Freemasonry, to rekindle friendships, and of course to contribute to raising money for several charities.

The members of Blind Veterans UK who are Freemasons are hosted by The Temple Lodge in Brighton. Temple Lodge has hosted us for many a year and this relationship has remained over the course of time as strong as ever.

We also host the members of the Temple Lodge and members of the Masonic province of Sussex at an annual dinner in the Winter Gardens at our Brighton centre when great food, wine and company are shared. It was at this event in April 2014 where The Freemasons Grand Charity gave a staggering £50,000 donation to Blind Veterans UK for essential refurbishment work at the centre.

The Masonic group welcome all members of the charity who are Freemasons to join with us in April each year to continue our friendships to practice our Freemasonry.

If you are a Freemason, and you are interested in becoming part of the group and if you would like to join us on 22nd to 25th April at our annual meeting at the Brighton centre please contact the group's Chairman & Secretary W.Bro Clive Jones.

You can telephone W.Bro Clive Jones on mobile: 07854 800256.

Or email him at: dragoneye67@sky.com

GOAL Group adventures from the Sheffield centre. By Chris Humphrys.

Six GOAL group members Diane Mountford, David Hazelgrove, John Cantwell, John Brice, Jeff Warn, and me, Chris Humphrey, met at the Sheffield centre on Monday 29th February. We should have been joined by Lindy Elliott, but unfortunately she had been injured and had to drop out at short notice. However, the show must go on, so after quick introductions and something to eat at the Sheffield centre Adrian Hambleton drove us to The Hollywood Bowl for 10 Pin Bowling. Some of us had not played for many years and it showed, however, John Cantwell, closely followed by Dave Hazelgrove, quickly emerged as the more experienced and talented bowlers. In an effort to boost their confidence, the other four of us let them win — or at least that's our story. After the 10 Pin Bowling we returned to the Sheffield centre where we spent the evening in the lounge to finalise certain aspects of the week's programme.

Tuesday. After breakfast, we were joined by support worker Tony Wilcox, and Adrian drove us to the Yorkshire Air Museum that's situated in the grounds of the Allied Forces and bomber base of ex-RAF Elvington, just north of York. There we were met by ex 'Snowdrop' and ex-Provost Marshall Harry who had volunteered to be our guide for the day.



Picture: Standing under the Halifax bomber Friday 13th at the Yorkshire air Museum. From left to right Guide Harry Welch, John Brice, Chris Humphrey, Jeff Warn, John Cantwell, Diane Mountford and Dave Hazelgrove

Harry first showed us around and told us the background of a large number of ex-military and some civilian aircraft that were on display around the airfield and in the large hangar, amongst which were a Victor Bomber, Nimrod, Harrier, Gannet, Hawker Hunter, Spitfire, De Havilland Vampire and the Halifax bomber.

Harry took us aboard a Douglas Dakota and told us about the aircraft's past service, and how Dakotas were adapted for differing roles. We were also shown around the Air Gunners collection that is believed to be the only memorial in the world that is dedicated to them. This contained many rear gunners turrets, uniforms, weapons and other equipment that made us all wonder how any survived against such hazardous conditions. We also saw other memorials, visited various exhibitions, including one on Barnes Wallace bouncing bomb, and we went into the control tower, an old barrack where we saw what had once been a familiar sight of the airman's bedding stacked for inspection. This was the only item throughout the entire day that had not impressed us, as we felt sure that they would not have got away with presenting their bedding in that standard in their day!

After a very enjoyable day we returned to the Sheffield centre for dinner followed by a Cheese and Wine evening that was organised by support worker Sam Ewart.

Wednesday. We were all off again, this time to the Royal Armoury in Leeds. The first thing on the agenda was a talk and handling session of some of the earliest form of guns and rifles that showed how over the years they had developed to become more accurate and give a greater range. The advantages of the more modern arms, better known to us as the Thompson machine gun, the AK, and of course the SLR, of which the familiarity evidently showed in our expressions and our keenness to handle them.

After that we were taken into the main museum, and shown how the very early arms and protective gear developed, the different types of armour, and why it all changed with the advent of the gun. After this session we broke into smaller groups where some saw demonstrations of knights dressing in armour and the different weaknesses some had. Some of the group listened to audio guides that explained how the bow and crossbow developed, while others went through sections about cavalry, artillery, past wars in Europe, India and South Africa, as well as more modern sections.



Picture: In the Armoury from left to right John Cantwell, Chris Humphrey, Jeff Warn, John Brice, Diane Mountford and David Hazelgrove.

When everyone had taken in everything they could we returned to Sheffield to try an evening at the cinema. Although a number of the original seven members had experienced audio description at the theatre, only one had tried it at the cinema. Seats had been reserved for comedy film *Grimsby*, mainly because the film's start time fitted in with our programme, and although the film was not to everyone's sense of humour, everybody was very impressed with the audio description. Unlike the TV where the synchronisation sometimes slips from the action on the screen, this was spot on, and all agreed that they would consider going to view an audio described film at the cinema again.

Thursday. As we had experienced snow and rain showers on the earlier days, we woke hoping for dry weather as a walk and talk about some of Sheffield's historic buildings had been programmed for the day. It was dry but cold when we met Darren, our guide outside the old Town Hall as he explained the reason for the features and ornate fittings and markings on the building. He also told us how the councillors of the time had fooled Queen Victoria into thinking the inner doors were electrically opened by inviting her to press a button, which indicated to others to pull the hidden ropes that actually opened the doors.

Knowing our place he showed us where the general public entered the

building. There was a door at the rear with disinfectant written over it where, in the past, people would be cleaned down to get rid of their lice prior to entering the chamber.



Picture: Tour guide Darren explains the story of the Town Hall in Sheffield to, from left to right, Chris Humphrey, John Cantwell, John Brice, Diane Mountford, David Hazelgrove and Jeff Warn.

We then moved on to various other buildings, one that is now occupied by a well-known building society, but which had once been a locally famous school where we heard of some of its scams, and the story of the ghost that haunts it. Then it was on to the old medical school behind where the library now stands. In order to get organs for its students grave robbers and people who had access to the dying were paid to carry out their macabre deed to bring the organs to the medical school. It was later burned down, most probably by another medical school who were not getting enough internal organs. We also went to the hotel that was bombed, and is now the site of The Crucible Theatre, now better known as the venue for the snooker championships.

On Thursday afternoon we visited the National Emergency Services Museum, which our guide John explained had in its past been both a Police Station and a Fire Station. Amongst the large number of Fire Service vehicles was a steam operated Fire tender that in its day was kept steaming and ready to go at all times.

Amongst the many police vehicles, as well as the old black Wolsey that many of us remembered, was the police dog van used in the television series Z Cars. They have many other vehicles used in TV and films, one of which was the ambulance they loaned for the TV series Call the Midwife. There were far too many vehicles to name and we were impressed to hear that as well as hiring out vehicles to both production companies and the public a large amount were used by the volunteers for educational project at schools and organisations around the North of England.

Upstairs were displays from the RNLI and the Mountain Rescue and more from the three primary Emergency Services. On completion of an enjoyable and informative visit we returned to the Sheffield centre before going to a local hostelry for a meal.

Friday. We were off again, this time to the Magna Complex in Rotherham, where once stood the Peach and Tozer Steelworks, for an introductory tour on how steel was made at this steelworks in its heyday. Although it was a cold wet morning with snow flurries, the first surprise was when our guide John advised us that it would be colder in the steelworks than it was outside. Until confronted with it, none of us had envisaged such a vast steel building, and this we were advised was only a third of the size of the original set up. John explained that it was an enormous recycling plant where they received approximately 120 thirty-ton lorries full of scrap metal everyday which was then craned into vast baskets prior to being melted down. Once melted the slag was taken off, and then the liquid craned into big ladles, then moulds. This was followed by an impressive computerised display. Called The Big Melt it showed how the large cranes and machinery worked as flames and sparks shot high into the upper reaches of the large building. Once this was over John walked us through the rest of the processes explaining where the liquid in its vast ladles was taken through other procedures to make it into large steel beams and cut to the size the customer had ordered.

That ended our tour and we went outside to find the snow had started to settle. On our way back to the Sheffield centre we heard on the radio that the snake pass and other roads in the area had been closed due to snow. So immediately after lunch it was decided to head for the station where we said our cheerios until the next GOAL event. If you are aged between 60 and 76 and would like to join us on a future GOAL event, please contact me Chris Humphrey on 01603 701402 or Carol Davies on 01754 450232 and we can tell you more.

Keepsakes to remember our centenary year by.

Collectible Centenary Medal.

2015 was a remarkable year for our charity when from 29th January we started our year long centenary celebrations. To mark this landmark date in our history we commissioned a very special keepsake, a medal that is truly unique to Blind Veterans UK, but one that also shows our proud history as St Dunstan's.

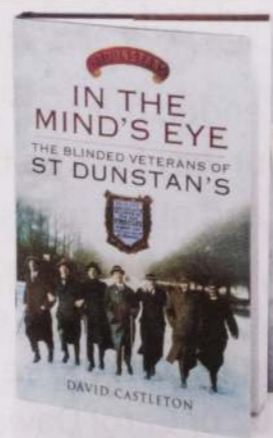
The front features the Blind Veterans UK Centenary logo and on the reverse the St Dunstan's Torch. We hope you will agree that there is no better way to commemorate our centenary but to buy this prestigious collectable medal.

The medal is 50mm x 45mm in size, and, fashioned from gold plated brass metal, it comes in a gilded presentation case as shown in the photograph below. It costs £17 and the product code to quote is: BV1178.



In The Mind's Eye. By David Castleton.

This is our editor's choice of the most recent books about our charity as, written by someone who knew them, it tells the story of the men and the women of St Dunstan's. Just like Call The Midwife we think that it should be a television serialisation. Priced at £8.33 the product code to quote is: BV1176.



Blind Veterans UK tie pin.

A tie pin is a great way to show your support in a smart and sophisticated way and it also looks great with one of our centenary ties! Priced at £4 the product code to quote is BV1234.



Blind Veterans UK Blazer Badge

Wear your Blind Veterans UK centenary blazer badge with pride. The fully embroidered badge is in red, blue, white and gold with black lettering. It has a 100% full stitch count and is cut to a chevron shape. Measuring 58mm x 100mm it is priced at £10 and the product code to quote is BV1235.



Blind Veterans UK lapel badge.

Or you may prefer to show your support for Blind Veterans UK by wearing a lapel badge. The lapel badge is priced at £3 and the product code to quote is BV1233.





One Amazing Day Buckingham Palace DVD.

Through One Amazing Day relive our glorious 4th June 2015 Centenary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

Priced at £2.50 the product code to quote is SO1510.

Westminster Abbey Centenary Service of Thanksgiving DVD.

You can once again hear Place Your Hand On My Shoulder, an original and moving composition by violinist Alasdair Caplin, listen to a host of wonderful speakers that included Dean of Westminster The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, R&T Support Worker (Llandudno) Billy Baxter, Dame Barbara Windsor DBE, David Dimbleby and our Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB.

Priced at £2.50 please quote product code BV1248.

How to order.

To place your debit or credit card orders please telephone our friendly and helpful customer service team on 0300 111 0440 and please do also quote Review when you place your order.

Alternatively you can place your orders online at:

<http://shop.blindveterans.org.uk>

Family News.

Congratulations to:

Births:

Joe Bennett, who became a Great Great Grandfather in January following the arrival of Amelia McFaull.

Gordon Timmins on the birth of his Great Granddaughter, Scarlet Freya, who was born to his Granddaughter Emma and her partner Gareth on St Patrick's Day.



Photo:
Proud Great Grandfather Gordon Timmins with his family that now includes baby Scarlet Freya.

Birthdays:

Dick Richard who celebrated his 104th birthday on 20th April.

James Edwards who celebrated his 103rd birthday on 13th April.

Trevor Wigmore who celebrated his 101st birthday on 10th April.

Alfred Morley who celebrated his 101st birthday on 16th April.

Bert French who celebrated his 100th birthday on 1st April.

Frederick Tree who celebrated his 100th birthday on 25th April.

Ronald Foreman who celebrated his 100th birthday on 26th April.

Anniversaries:

Diamond Gold (75th):

Bob & Nora Reynolds of Wombourne, Wolverhampton on 3rd April.

Platinum (70th):

Theodora & Colin Morris of Portslade, Brighton on 22nd April.

Blue Sapphire (65th):

Frederick & Betty Doyle of Thetford, Norfolk on 14th April.

Pearl (30th):

Edward & Susan Taylor of Belsize Park, London on 11th April.

Silver (25th):

Bernard & Wendy Meehan of St Helen's, Merseyside on 19th April.

Eddie & Sue Clark of Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire on 20th 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.

Doreen Berry who died on 25th February 2016. She was the widow of the late Ronald Berry.

William Charnley who died on 21st February 2006. He was the husband of Marjorie Charnley.

Edith Edwards who died on 1st March 2016. She was the wife of Neville Edwards.

Peggy Hobbs who died on 21st February 2016. She was the widow of the late Leonard Hobbs.

Lucy Mann who died on 20th February 2016. She was the widow of the late John Mann.

Dorothy Masters who was the widow of the late Eric Masters.

Eileen Murphy who died on 4th January 2016. She was the widow of the late Vincent Murphy.

Feliks Musiol who died on 29th February aged 89. He worked as an Orderly at our Brighton centre from January 1955 until May 1991 when he retired.

Margaret Owen who died on 20th January 2016. She was the wife of Colin Owen.

Muriel 'Joan' Revis who died on 4th March 2016. She was the widow of World War Two blinded bomb disposal expert Ken Revis.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

George Allen of Northampton served in the Northamptonshire Regiment from 1940 to 1946.

Aubrey Bailey-Styles of Fleet, Hampshire served in the General Service Corps, the Army Air Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1942 to 1947.

William Ball of Walsall, West Midlands served in the Royal Artillery from 1957 to 1963.

Michael Barthorp of St Ouen, Jersey served in the Northamptonshire Regiment from 1946 to 1968.

George Barton of Ormskirk, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Alfred Batham of Epsom, Surrey served in the Royal Signals from 1951 to 1954.

James Brodie of Great Baddow, Essex served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1953.

Malcolm Bryant of Hull served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1972 to 1978.

Thomas Burton of Redditch, Worcestershire served in the General Service Corps, Rifle Brigade and the King's Royal Rifle Corps from 1945 to 1948.

Norman 'Peter' Chappell of Seaton, Aberdeen served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1954.

Alan Clark of Wigan, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Gordon Clark of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1954 to 1960.

Ivor Coats of Clapham, London served in the 12th Royal Lancers from 1940 to 1948.

Nora Coates née Bell of Alston, Cumbria served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

Phyllis Collins of Hailsham, East Sussex served in the Territorial Army Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1947.

Gordon Coombe of Barrow In Furness, Cumbria served in the Royal Army Educational Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1953 to 1955.

George Cowell of Washington, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

Albert Cox of Long Eaton, Nottingham served in the Northamptonshire Regiment from 1955 to 1958.

Ronald Crapper-Bovey of Plympton, Plymouth served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Hazel Cresser of Penzance, Cornwall served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1947.

Victor Crompton of Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949.

Joanne Cubbins of St Helen's, Merseyside served in the Irish Guards from 1991 to 1996.

Robert Denman of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Signals from 1958 to 1960.

John Dinsdale of Clitheroe, Lancashire served in the West Yorkshire Regiment and the King's Own Royal Regiment from 1951 to 1957.

Robert 'Bob' Dobson of Telford, Shropshire served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1953 to 1957.

Audrey Duncan of Skegness, Lincolnshire served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1944.

John Evans of Wantage, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1978.

Ian Ferguson of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

Diana Firmston-Williams née Collett of Godalming, Surrey served in the Women's Royal Naval Reserve from 1943 to 1946.

Thomas Ford of Colchester, Essex served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1944 to 1949.

Arthur Freathy of Yate, Bristol served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Ian Garvie of Shaftesbury, Dorset served in the Royal Engineers from 1953 to 1958.

Hugh Gillan of Neath, West Glamorgan served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1950 to 1955.

Robert Gleed of Carmarthen, Dyfed served in the Merchant Navy from 1941 to 1951.

Stuart Gordon of Castlegate, Berwick Upon Tweed served in the Royal Signals from 1983 to 1990.

Frederick Grimmer of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1939 to 1976.

Eric Handy of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1956.

Edward Harris of Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1949.

William Harvey of Newton Abbot, Devon served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1952 to 1954.

Leslie Healey of Bilston, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

Gordon Henry of Wallasey, Merseyside served in the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1949.

Daphne Hinton of Warwick, Warwickshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Reserve from 1943 to 1946.

Graham Hinton of Dorchester, Dorset served in the Royal Tank Corps from 1943 to 1947.

Arthur Holtum of Wirral, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1939 to 1946.

Keith Homewood of Tonbridge, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1958.

Daisy 'Thelma' Hughes née Wells from Rhyl, Clwyd served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

Edmund Jackson of Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1954.

Lily Jepson née Hodgson of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

William 'Alun' Jones of Bangor, Gwynedd served in the Royal Artillery from 1943 to 1962.

Denis Kay of Pontefract, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1957.

David Kelland of Farmoor, Oxford served in the Merchant Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Terence Kelly of Henfield, West Sussex served in the Royal Engineers from 1948 to 1953.

William Laidlaw of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Engineers from 1958 to 1960.

Geoffrey Large of Eastleigh, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Thomas Lloyd of Llanymynech, Powys served in the Royal Artillery from 1951 to 1956.

Alice Mann of Romford, Essex served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Robert Mannall of Tonbridge, Kent served in the Rifle Brigade from 1951 to 1956.

Matthew Metcalf of Nookside, Sunderland served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

Brian Miller of Steyning, West Sussex served in the Intelligence Corps from 1947 to 1949.

Ian Mitchell of Peacehaven, East Sussex served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1959 to 1962.

Emlyn Morgan of Wellesbourne, Warwick served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1943 to 1947.

John Morris of Ramsey, Isle Of Man served in the Royal Engineers from 1954 to 1960.

Andrew Mullen of Scunthorpe, South Humberside served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1946 to 1948.

Peter Murphy of Ammanford, Dyfed served in the Royal Artillery from 1959 to 1981.

Brian Nash of Barry, South Glamorgan served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1953 to 1955.

William Norvell of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1956 to 1959.

Kenneth Orford of Cambridge served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1974.

Ronald Porter of Stamford, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1947.

Harry Price of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Signals from 1957 to 1962.

Derek Rae of Metherringham, Lincoln served in the Royal Air Force from 1957 to 1968.

Sydney Raine of Bishop Auckland, County Durham served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

David Roberts of Tunbridge Wells, Kent served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1947 to 1949.

Roland Robinson of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Thomas Robinson of Darlington, County Durham served in the Royal Artillery from 1942 to 1946.

John Rooms of Grantham, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1947.

Roy Sands of Bournemouth served in the Royal Signals from 1950 to 1952.

Marguerita 'Rita' Scarratt of Brandon, Suffolk served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1951 to 1955.

Brian Scott of Walsall served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1949 to 1954.

Colin Sharpley of Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1944 to 1969.

Anthony Steel of Portland, Dorset served in the Royal Navy from 1972 to 1994.

Dennis Thatcher of Camberley, Surrey served in the Hampshire Regiment and the Highland Light Infantry from 1944 to 1948.

Basil Watkins of Cowbridge, South Glamorgan served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1949.

Robert Watt of Penicuik, Midlothian served in the Royal Scots from 1951 to 1953.

Alma White née Greenwood of Great Horwood, Milton Keynes served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1945.

William Wild of Bath served in the Royal Navy from 1934 to 1948.

David Williams of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

Huw Williams of Swansea, West Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1945.

Charles Willmott of Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

Dorothy Wilson of Onchan, Isle Of Man served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1944.

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.

James 'Eddie' Alder of Northampton, Northamptonshire died on 13th February 2016, aged 85. He joined the Royal Air Force for National Service in 1948. Trained at RAF Bridgnorth he served in the UK before being posted to Singapore for 11 months. He was discharged as a Leading Aircraftman First class in 1950.

Stanley Baldwin of Crowborough, East Sussex died on 6th February 2016, aged 91. He joined the General Service Corps in December 1942 and transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps on January 1943. He went to France on D+2 and was involved in the fight through France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Germany, ending in Berlin. He was discharged as a Private in 1947.

Kenneth Brown of Hornchurch, Essex died on 7th March 2016, aged 93. Aged 17 he joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and qualified as an Airframe Fitter. He was attached to the Army and later the Fleet Air Arm. He completed tours of duty at Luneberg, Gutersloh and Celle. He was discharged in 1952.

Michael Brown of Hove, East Sussex died on 2nd February 2016, aged 87. He joined the Royal Navy in 1946 as a Telegraphist and served in HMS Rotherham in UK waters. He was discharged in 1948 as an Ordinary Telegrapher.

Arthur Buckley of Stoke On Trent, Staffordshire died on 11th February 2016, aged 93. He joined the Royal Air Force as an airframe fitter in 1941 and served at various UK air stations and in the Middle East. He was given compassionate release in 1946.

John 'Jock' Carr of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 2nd February 2016, aged 87. He joined the General Service Corps in June 1946 for initial training. Transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps a month later he served in the Suez Canal zone and Palestine. He was discharged as a Private in 1948.

Reginald 'Reg' Cook of Hove, East Sussex died on 16th November 2015, aged 90. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and qualified as an air gunner. He served with Bomber Command at air stations in Lincolnshire and was discharged as a Flight Sergeant in 1947.

Ernest 'Eddie' Cooper of Hackney, London died on 6th February 2016, aged 95. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1940 and after training was posted to North Africa and attached to a heavy artillery regiment. He took part in the Invasion of Italy at Salerno and advanced up the Western Side via Casino. He was briefly deployed to Greece before discharge in 1946 as a Gunner.

William 'Bill' Corless of Codsall, Wolverhampton died on 6th March 2016, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1939 and qualified as a wireless operator mechanic served as aircrew with Coastal Command. He was posted in the UK, West Africa and Middle East and discharged as a Sergeant in 1950.

Yvonne Doherty née Swarbrick of Warrington, Cheshire died on 27th January 2016, aged 90. She enrolled with her twin sister into the Voluntary Aid Detachment in January 1945 at the Military Hospital in York. She trained as a nurse and served with No 90 West Lancashire Detachment and the Royal Army Medical Corps. In 1947 she was posted to BAOR and later discharged that year.

Daniel Driscoll of Cardiff died on 4th March 2016, aged 94. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 where he served as an engine mechanic on 266 Squadron (Spitfires and Typhoons) and was discharged as a Leading Aircraftman in 1946.

Thomas Ellison of Southport, Merseyside died on 3rd March 2016, aged 88. He enlisted in the Green Howards in 1947 and served in the UK, Germany, Malaysia, Korea and Gibraltar, discharging in 1954 as a Private.

Brian Evans of Saltash, Cornwall died on 5th March 2016, aged 87. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1947 and served at RAF Biggin Hill and Hornchurch until discharge as a Corporal in 1949.

William 'Bill' Finney of Wrexham, Clwyd died on 3rd March 2016, aged 94. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1941 and was later sent to Burma via India where he joined the Air OP Squadron, spotting for the Artillery in the Burma Offensive in Auster Aircraft prior to discharge as a Gunner in 1946.

Norman Fox of Ipswich died on 6th January 2016, aged 93. He enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1941 where he served as an Engine Fitter in the UK with the Pathfinders ground crew. He was discharged in 1946 as a Leading Aircraftman.

Joseph Goodman of Hornchurch, Essex died on 1st February 2016, aged 93. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1941 and served in the UK, India, Burma, Ceylon, Germany, Malaya and Borneo. He was discharged in 1950 but re-enlisted and served in the Royal Corps of Transport until 1967.

Maurice Green of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 13th February 2016, aged 96. Called up in 1940 to join the Royal Marines he served in the UK, Africa and Germany. He transferred to the Fleet Air Arm in 1944 and was commissioned, qualifying as a pilot in Canada. He was discharged in 1946 as a Temporary Sub Lieutenant.

Donald Hall of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk died on 28th February 2016, aged 92. He joined the General Service Corps in December 1944, transferred to the Royal Norfolk Regiment a month later and in 1945 to the Royal Leicestershire Regiment. He served in the UK and India until discharge as a War Sergeant in 1948.

Thomas 'Tony' Haspey of Neston, Wirral died on 3rd February 2016, aged 94. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and initially serving as a fitter he remustered as aircrew in India and the UK. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1946.

William 'Bill' Heard of Slough, Berkshire died on 22nd February 2016, aged 88. He was called up for National Service in 1947 and joined the Royal Air Force. He was posted to a variety of locations, finishing his service at RAF Northolt. He was discharged in 1949.

Joan Hill of Poole, Dorset died on 11th March 2016, aged 93. In 1942, aged 17, she joined the Red Cross to train as a Nurse. She then became a mobile VAD working with the Royal Army Medical Corps at a variety of locations across the UK before she was discharged in 1945.

Joseph 'Joe' Houghton of Attleborough, Norfolk died on 10th February 2016, aged 87. Called up for National Service he served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1947 and following service at Kidderminster, Bracknell and Stratford-upon-Avon he was discharged as a Lance Corporal in 1949.

Edward 'Allan' Jones of Rotherham, South Yorkshire died in February 2016, aged 79. He joined the Royal Air Force for National Service in 1957, trained at RAF Wilmslow and served at both Hereford and with 16 MU Stafford. He was discharged as a Senior Aircraftman in 1959.

Kenneth 'Ken' Last of Stowmarket, Suffolk died on 6th March 2016, aged 86. He joined the Suffolk Regiment for National Service in 1947 and served in the UK and Austria. He looked after motor bikes and transferred to the Northumberland Regiment in 1948 before discharge as a Private in 1949.

Kenneth Leighton of Louth, Lincolnshire died on 7th February 2016, aged 79. He enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1954. Serving mainly in the Middle East, he was a Leading Seaman on his discharge in 1966.

Bertram 'Bert' Morris of Slough, Berkshire died on 10th February 2016, aged 92. Having joined the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in 1944, he was in Berlin when the war ended and was subsequently deployed to Italy. He was discharged as a Private in 1947.

Thomas Morris-Francis of Street, Somerset died on 9th February 2016, aged 91. He joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1943 and was sent to North Africa followed by Italy, serving in Churchill tanks. He was in Italy when the war ended and returned to the UK. He then went with the 8th Royal Tank Regiment to Austria before returning to the UK for discharge as a Lance Corporal in 1954.

Alwyn Morton of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 9th February 2016, aged 97. In January 1940 he carried out his basic training and joined the Sherwood Foresters. He served in Delhi and Bhopal as a Jungle Warfare Instructor for two years followed by a posting to Bihar State after which he was discharged as a Company Quartermaster Sergeant in 1946.

Margaret Oversby of Dore, Sheffield died on 18th February 2016, aged 96. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941, where she worked in the radar cabin relaying information to an Anti-Aircraft Battery. She was discharged as a Private in 1946.

Colin Owen of Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 5th February 2016, aged 96. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1940 and served in the British Expeditionary Force in North Africa, Italy and the Middle East before being discharged as a Sapper in 1945.

Ernest Parker of Tunbridge Wells, Kent died on 8th February 2016, aged 92. He joined the East Surrey Regiment in 1942 and fought in El Alamein and Sicily before landing at Salerno, he took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino. He was discharged in 1947 as a Lance Corporal.

Gordon Pettinger of Rochester, Kent died on 17th February 2016, aged 81. He was called up for National Service and joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1952. He served in the UK and was discharged as a Private in 1954, remaining on reserve until June 1958.

David Rees of Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire died on 16th November 2016, aged 91. Called up in 1942 he joined the Royal Navy and served in a Devonport based aircraft carrier. He was in India and later in France during the D-Day Landings before moving to Singapore where he took part in the RN No1 landing party. He was discharged in 1946 as an Acting Able Seaman.

Ruby Ricketts of Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire died on 11th March 2016, aged 94. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942 and trained in Leicester. She was posted to Strathpetter, north of Inverness, and later served with the searchlight unit at RAF Wittering near Stamford before discharge in 1943.

Frederick Roberts of Wakefield, West Yorkshire died on 25th February 2016, aged 89. He joined the West Yorkshire Regiment, his father's Regiment, in 1950, trained at Strensall with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, served in Austria and was discharged as a Private in 1951.

Norman Robinson of Blackburn, Lancashire died in 2015, aged 84. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1952, training at Honiton in Devon and serving in Malvern. He was medically discharged due to hearing problems in 1953.

Ronald Sharples of Blackpool, Lancashire died on 22nd February 2016, aged 91. He joined the General Service Corps in 1942, transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps in 1943 and following service in India and Burma he was discharged as a Corporal in 1947.

John Short of Rye, East Sussex died on 25th February 2016, aged 85. Called up for National Service he joined the Royal Air Force in 1950. He trained as a Wireless Operator and was posted to RAF Tengah in Singapore. He later moved to RAF Sek Kong in Hong Kong. He was discharged in 1955.

Leslie Simon of Llanelli, Dyfed died on 24th February 2016, aged 94. He served in the Royal Artillery in 1941 and 1942.

George Simpson of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 20th February 2016, aged 99. He joined the Royal Navy in 1936 and served in Malta, on the Atlantic convoys and in the Pacific before being discharged in 1946 as an Able Seaman.

Cecil Smiley of Bedale, North Yorkshire died on 7th February 2016, aged 91. He joined the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1946 and served in Palestine and Korea before discharge in 1958.

Kenneth 'Ken' Smith of Cirencester, Gloucestershire died on 2nd December 2015, aged 88. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1945 and served in the UK. He was discharged in 1948 but, having enjoyed the Army, joined the TA in Bristol for a further two years.

Julian Tallents of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire died on 5th March 2016, aged 86. He joined the Fleet Air Arm branch of the Royal Navy in 1947. He was posted to Malta and the UK before discharging as an Acting Radio Electrician in 1954.

Albert 'John' Tanner of Weston Super Mare, Avon died on 4th February 2016, aged 98. He joined the Royal Navy in 1942 and qualified as a Sick Berth Attendant, serving in the UK, Middle East and the Far East before discharge in 1946.

Frank Thompson-Platt of Burnley, Lancashire died on 5th March 2016, aged 63. He joined the Coldstream Guards in 1972 serving in Northern Ireland and Germany. He thoroughly enjoyed his time in the Army but lost a kneecap and was medically discharged in 1984 as a Lance Sergeant.

Arthur 'George' Tompsett of Brighton, East Sussex died on 22nd February 2016, aged 100. He joined the Royal Artillery in April 1939 and he was evacuated from Dunkirk with the British Expeditionary Force. Serving in the UK he was then deployed to North Africa where he fought at El Alamein. He returned to the UK and trained for the Normandy landings, taking the first medium guns to France after D-Day. He fought at Arnhem and went on to neutralise the V1 rocket bases before his demobilisation in 1946 as a Sergeant.

Frank Walker of Matlock, Derbyshire died on 25th November 2015, aged 90. Already serving in the Home Guard he joined the General Service Corps in July 1943 and transferred to the Royal Engineers a month later. He served in Holland, Belgium and Germany and also did 'Z' training in preparation for the Suez Crisis. He was discharged as a Sergeant in 1947.

John Walkinshaw of Colchester, Essex died on 13th February 2016, aged 97. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 and after training he served in England and then North Africa. He returned to England before going to Normandy just after D-Day and fighting through to Germany. He was discharged as a Lance Sergeant in 1946.

Noel Walsh of Derby, Derbyshire died on 20th February 2016, aged 81. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955 when he was stationed at RAF Horsham St Faith in Norfolk on general duties.

William Watson of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear died on 26th February 2016, aged 93. He joined the 51st Highland Division, a reconnaissance unit, in 1942 and was sent to North Africa as part of the 8th Army. He took part in the invasion of Sicily and also spent time with the Highland Light Infantry, the 5th Bn Seaforth Highlanders and the Ulster Rifles. He served in Palestine, Belgium, Holland, Germany and France (Normandy D+1) where he was wounded. He was discharged in 1946.

Frederick 'Harold' Westlake of Bodmin, Cornwall died on 2nd March 2016, aged 93. He joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1943, where he served in France and Belgium. He was discharged as a Lance Corporal in 1946.

Margery Williams of Ruthin, Clwyd died on 27th February 2016, aged 103. She volunteered to join the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1941 and trained at Greenwich and Scotland as a driver. She spent her service in the UK and was later commissioned as an Officer. She was posted to Lee-on-Solent before discharge in 1945.

Peter Woolls of Woolverstone, Ipswich died on 15th February 2016, aged 90. He undertook flying training while at school with the Air Training Corps. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and trained at Inverness Airport where he learnt to fly Wellington and Lancaster Bombers. He was based a Lincoln and completed his service as a Flight Sergeant in 1947.

