

October 2016

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: Blind veteran and former WRN Fanny Hugill is shown wearing her service medals and the star of the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur. You can read the full story on pages 14 and 15.

Back page: Fanny in uniform during her Service in the WRNS.

Photos: Mark Wheeler, Blind Veterans UK's PR Manager.



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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 for the Brighton and Sheffield centres: To book accommodation at the Brighton and Sheffield centres telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please first contact your Welfare Officer.

The Booking Office for the Llandudno centre: To book accommodation at the Llandudno centre please telephone 01492 868700 and ask for the Booking Office. If you have care needs please first contact your Welfare Officer.

ROVI IT Helpline: If you need to speak with the ROVI 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.

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Activities from the Brighton centre.

October.

Amateur Radio Club 16th to 22nd.

October/November.

Bowling Club 23rd October to 5th November.

Activities from the Llandudno centre.

October.

Walking Week 10th to 14th.

Photography Week 24th to 28th.

November.

Military Week 7th to 13th.

March 2017.

Health and Well Being Week 6th to 10th.

Shooting and Archery Week 19th to 25th.

Activities from the Sheffield centre.

December.

Christmas Week 12th to 16th.

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 first speak with your Welfare Officer.

To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Llandudno centre.

For further information or to book your place please telephone: 01492 868741 or 01492 868740. If you have care needs please first speak with your Welfare Officer.

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From the Chairman.

Your message from Tim Davis.

One hundred years on from the Somme Offensive, this edition of the Review, contains a moving poem entitled 'The Eve of Call Up'. It's a reminder of our history, and as I have found personally, remembering our history helps inspire, commemorate and provide learning for us all; now and for the future. I'm also delighted to read a number of other accounts from those in the Blind Veterans UK family. For those who have authored them; thank you very much for sharing them with us all. I encourage others who may also have a story to tell, or news or observations to share, to write to our Editor and let her know.

I'd like to share with you a little of our own story as a charity, and some of the opportunities for the coming years. From the tragic consequences of the First World War came the need and desire to help those blinded veterans, many at the start of their adult lives, back to independence and a fulfilling life. Over the years, the work done by those in the charity, has generated new and breakthrough ways of helping others. A group of blinded veterans trained as masseurs massaged injured soldiers back to mobility, and from these humble beginnings helped to inspire the modern practice of physiotherapy. There have been many other innovations and triumphs that have added to the rich history of Blind Veterans UK.

With continual improving life expectancy, came a growing but different form of vision impairment to our veteran population; caused by the effects of age. In recognition of this and from the turn of this century, Blind Veterans UK broadened its scope and provided help and support to all veterans impacted by vision impairment whether from conflict or other cause. Whilst Blind Veterans UK as its highest priority will always be there for life for those blinded through war, it will be no surprise to us all that the average age of our veterans is rapidly climbing. The challenge for many now combines vision impairment and other physical and mental conditions; for the young or elder veterans, this could be injury or illness to limbs or the brain.

Looking forward Blind Veterans UK, keeping to its best traditions and core values will stay focused on helping veterans overcome the effects of vision impairment; not just surviving but gaining 'Victory over Blindness'. To do so

will mean complementing what we do today, by bringing our resources and services closer to the homes of all our veterans across the country.

We will also need to partner more with other organisations to coordinate and apply more holistic support. The centres we have will be added to in the future, as proximity of service also needs to be complemented by the benefits of social connection specialised facilities bring. As the age range of our veterans diversifies, we will also need to step up to the very different needs and challenges our veterans face. Two examples include increasing the transport we provide to make us more accessible, as well as investing significantly in new facilities such as our Life Skills Centre at our Llandudno centre, enabling veterans of working age to get the necessary opportunities and support to help bring up their families or develop meaningful careers. Significant challenges with greater opportunities to overcome!

Please enjoy this month's Review and best wishes to you all.



Picture: Tim Davis, Chairman of Blind Veterans UK.

Tim Davis, Chairman of Blind Veterans UK, answers the Review's 10 Questions.

1. You do a great job as Chairman of Blind Veterans UK, giving up so much of your time to lead the charity, but what's your main job outside that very important voluntary role?

My main job is leading and growing a Management Consulting and Research business to assist other businesses perform better and develop competitive edge. Following more than 20 years in major global corporations and most recently on the management board of Hilton Hotels, I have helped transform businesses to embrace and make the most of disruptive changes normally triggered by innovations in technology or changes in consumer needs. I love the variety of challenge and the pleasure of engaging and meeting so many different people and cultures around the world.

2. As a child did you dream of doing something that you have achieved as an adult?

Very much so, my passion and fascination was to learn to fly. My father did in a Tiger Moth, and I now do in a Cirrus SR22 Turbo. The most wonderful release and pleasure I've been fortunate enough to experience.

3. What's your favourite memory?

Family times together, whether at Christmas, having dinner together or going on holiday, as a boy and now as a father. My warmest memories have always been with family.

4. What's your favourite piece of music?

Toccata in D Minor by Widor, ideally played on a large Church Organ by Jane Parker Smith. I was first introduced to it, at school when I was 7. It moved and inspired me, and left me feeling anything is possible. I got married to it playing, and it's always put a spring in my step! I recommend it played loudly at the beginning of every day!

5. What's the most important lesson life has taught you?

"Swing with a straight bat" always be true and think first of who you belong to or who depend on you, whether at work or in your personal life. Be motivated by their cause and do the very best to help them fulfil their cause. Why this? You can take risks and make mistakes in life, but you will never go far wrong if your motivations are rooted in integrity and helping others.

6. How do you unwind?

Social engagement, there is nothing better than engaging and laughing with friends and family.

7. What qualities do you admire in others?

Integrity, kindness and the desire to help. They speak for themselves.

8. What's the meaning of life?

I don't know I can really answer this. It's a really big question to think about, and I disappear down all kinds of paths when I think about it. What has meaning to me about life, is being able to contribute and make a mark on anything that benefits others in some way. Ironically from a selfish perspective this gives me the greatest fulfilment and reward.

9. Where is your favourite place?

Well it used to be Naples, Italy where I grew up for a period, the views, the culture and the impression this makes on a young man. More recently many of our National Parks as the preservation of our ancient woodland, buildings and countryside, mean we have many places across the country where it is like stepping into a good Dickens book. Quite magical.

10. What makes you happy?

Put simply the enthusiasm, humour and good nature of others. In this great world of innovation and change, nothing that I can imagine can truly replace the happiness gained from engaging with others.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Blind Veterans UK London Christmas Carol Concert Tuesday 6th December.

Please come and join us on Tuesday 6th December for a festive evening at St Marylebone Parish Church in London when we will celebrate Christmas with our annual Carol Concert. It will be an evening of joyous celebration as you sing carols and listen to the church choir and orchestra in a beautiful setting. During the Carol Concert there will be special readings from Blind Veterans UK's ambassadors and celebrity supporters and you can enjoy mulled wine and mince pies as you leave the church at the end of the Carol Concert.

For more than a century our charity has been associated with St Marylebone Parish Church as it is where the First World War blinded veterans were married and where their children were Christened.

Doors open at 6.15pm and the concert starts at 7pm. Tickets are priced at £10 for members of Blind Veterans UK and £15 for non-members. You can purchase tickets online at www.blindveterans.org.uk/carolconcert or telephone Vicky Wong in the Blind Veterans UK events team on 020 7616 7959.



Wear our Blind Veterans UK bow-tie to truly dazzle this Christmas.

If, like blind veteran Bob Strickland, you prefer to wear a bow tie or would like to dress to impress on formal occasions, whilst you also promote our great charity, the perfect item of clothing is now available for you, as Blind Veterans UK has launched its first bow tie (self-tie) with hook fastening.

To order this wonderful branded bow-tie that is priced at £12 please do call our friendly staff at the Call Centre on telephone 0300 111 0440 and quote product code BV1249. Or if you prefer to shop online visit www.shop.blindveterans.org.uk

Dress to impress for those formal occasions and promote Blind Veterans UK by wearing this branded bow-tie.



Picture: A rather snazzy Blind Veterans UK branded bow tie.

Time to nominate for the 2017 Founder's Day Awards.

The Founder's Day Awards are a time for us to celebrate our charity and all that is great about it, but to truly be able to celebrate, we need you to nominate those whom you feel deserve one of these highly prized Awards.

Historically the Founder's Day Awards are held annually on 26th March, the date in 1915 when the first 16 war blinded veterans entered the new training centre at St Dunstan's Lodge in London's Regent's Park. However, as that day falls on a Sunday Founder's Day will take place on Wednesday 29th March 2017 at the Llandudno centre.

The winners of the 2016 Founder's Day Awards featured in the May Review, and if you know of someone you think has excelled, and is eligible to be a recipient of a Founder's Day Award in 2017, please do nominate them.

The categories for the 2017 Founder's Day Awards are:

1) Community Award. This award is for the best contribution to their local community or the family of Blind Veterans UK. The Community Award is open to members, spouses, widows and widowers.

2) Training Achievement Award. This award is given to the best novice who has shown great ability or perseverance as they learn new skills. It is only open to members.

3) Creative Art Award. This award recognises endeavour in a creative activity and encompasses art, handicrafts, sculpture and music. If practical, an example should be sent with the proposal form. If this is not practical, then please do send a photograph. This award is only open to members.

4) Sports Person of the Year Award. Open to members only, this celebrates an exceptional sporting achievement or achievements during the award year.

5) Outstanding Achievement Award. This is for a member who has achieved an outstanding level of independence via their participation in activities promoted or provided through and by Blind Veterans UK. This award is only open to members.

6) Innovator of the Year Award. This award is given to a person or organisation who successfully introduced a good idea or device to Blind Veterans UK.

For guidelines and a proposal form, please contact Hayley Goldsmith-Williams. Or you can write to Hayley at Blind Veterans UK, Queens Road, Llandudno LL30 1PT. Or, if you prefer, telephone Hayley on 01492 868746 or email her at Hayley.Goldsmith-Williams@blindveterans.org.uk

Nominations are treated in confidence and will be discussed by a Selection Committee in January 2017 so please submit your entry by 12th December 2016. Nominees are not informed that they have been nominated until the Selection Committee has reached their decision.



Picture: Welfare Officer Amanda O'Carroll and Kelly Ganfield proudly display Kelly's Sports Person of the Year Founder's Day Award. Amanda nominated Kelly for the Sports Person of the Year Award and Kelly very humbly credited her achievements to Amanda's incredible support.

Invitation to blind veterans to join Mawdesley Cricket Club.

Mawdesley Cricket Club in Lancashire has teamed up with Galloways Society for the Blind in Preston to start a cricket section for those with disabilities and, or, vision impairment. Ranging from B1's to B4's, anyone with a vision impairment can play the game and the Club is keen to attract young athletic players, such as ex-servicemen who have a vision impairment, to join their team for the 2017 season. On some Saturdays over the winter months the Club run a series of indoor coaching and training sessions in Ormskirk. These sessions will present a great opportunity for those who live in the West Lancashire, Preston, South Ribble, Chorley and Sefton areas and who would like to start playing the sport to come along and get involved. From Spring 2017 outdoor sessions will take place on Monday afternoon in Mawdesley.

This season's final game was played against the Cheshire Cobras VI cricket team in glorious sunshine at Rectory Field, Mawdesley when the home team won the toss and elected to bat. The Mawdesley Team, made up of the Club's VI coaches and players from Galloways Society for the Blind, made 149 runs from their 30 overs and then bowled well to put pressure on the classy Cheshire Cobras who were never able to get comfortably ahead of the run rate as the game went into the last nail-biting over. The Cheshire Cobras won a great contest with the penultimate ball of the game. The game was played in great spirit and demonstrated that disability and, or, vision impairment are no barrier to fully enjoying the sport.

The Club is keen to encourage more vision impaired and disabled players to get involved for the 2017 season and plan to run some indoor coaching sessions over the winter months.

For more information check out Mawdesley Cricket Club's website at mawdesley.play-cricket.com or Galloway's at www.galloways.org.uk

Or you may prefer to contact Martin Trengove at Mawdesley Cricket Club on telephone 01704 821023 or to speak with James Coulton at Galloways on telephone 01772 744148.

You can view a short You Tube film that shows the work done at Mawdesley with Galloways at www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrzLkR7Z9eU



Picture: A happy group. The players after a highly competitive, but fun, match.

Order your 2017 VIP large print diaries.

As we approach 2017 you can now place your orders for VIP calendars, diaries and address and telephone books.

- A 2017 A3 Calendar is priced at £5.75.
- A 2017 A4 Desk Diary is priced at £8.99.
- A 2017 A6 Pocket Diary is priced at £5.35.
- A VIP Address Book is priced at £9.25.
- A VIP Telephone Book is priced at £9.25.

To place your order please telephone Nathan Clements in the Procurement Office at the Brighton centre on telephone: 01273 391441.

Blind veterans set for a swinging time. By Colin Williamson, Contributing Editor.

The Sports and Recreation departments at the Brighton and Llandudno centres have been presented with a set of golf clubs each, courtesy of Durham Freemasons so that our members can get involved in the sport once again despite their sight loss.

Mr. Paul O'Doherty, Deputy Communications Officer for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham is pictured handing over one of the sets after Freemasons responded to a plea put out by him for anyone who had a spare set to donate them to the charity.

Mr. O'Doherty, himself a keen golfer, tells The Review "There's no better way to spend a few hours on a nice sunny day than playing a round of golf and I was amazed when I heard that blind and vision impaired people actually participated in the sport. As a sighted golfer I know only too well how difficult the game can be, so to be able to play with sight loss is quite remarkable and I applaud those who do!"

Another set was donated by former Royal Artillery Staff Sergeant Ken Cummins from Manchester who heard about beneficiary Mick Scanlan's delight in finding out that he could still enjoy the game despite his sight loss after playing a round over in Chicago on the recent Project Gemini exchange.

Ken, who served in the same regiment as me, told The Review "I'm glad that I could help Mick out with a set of clubs. I'm obsessed with the game and I hope that Mick gets the same amount of pleasure from playing that I do".

Many thanks to the individuals concerned for their donation and thanks to our transport department for arranging the pickup and distribution of the golf clubs.



Picture: Paul O'Doherty, Deputy Communications Officer for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham is shown handing the golf clubs to blind veteran Colin Williamson, the Review's Contributing Editor.

Fanny Hugill awarded the Legion D'Honneur. By Mark Wheeler, PR Manager.

A Second World War veteran from Gloucestershire received the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur for her part in the liberation of France. Fanny Hugill, 93 and from Fairford, was presented with the honour by Madame Josette Lebrat from the French Consulate in a special ceremony on 7th September 2016 during a lunch organised by Blind Veterans UK in Bristol. Fanny's daughter Victoria and representatives from Blind Veterans UK were in attendance.

Fanny says: "I was much more emotional during the presentation than I thought I would be and am so grateful to Blind Veterans UK who organised the whole event. I appreciate Madame Lebrat coming to Bristol to present the medal and would like to thank the French Government for this very special award."

Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB says: "We're so proud of all of our veterans like Fanny and we are delighted that her Service has been recognised with this prestigious French medal."

Fanny Hugill joined the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) in 1942, working initially as a typist and then as a plotter.

She says: "As a plotter it was my job to chart and plot the routes of everything that went through the English Channel. We ran up and down ladders and plotted the courses on a large map with Chinagraph pencils."

Fanny was commissioned as a 3rd Officer, becoming a personal assistant to Admiral Bill Tennant. Assisting Admiral Tennant, Fanny was part of the team that planned the Normandy Landings before returning to her duties as a Plotting Officer. She was in the Ops Room at Southwick Park on the night of the 5th morning of the 6th of June — D-Day.

She adds: "We did know how momentous a day it was but, of course, all the planning had already been done so no one was nervous. We all had our job to do."

She landed in Normandy in September 1944 and then transferred to just outside Paris where she worked as a Junior Duty Staff Officer and was there for nine months. She left the WRNS in 1946, married, had four children, and

amongst other things, went on to manage a Citizens' Advice Bureau for 11 years. Fanny was diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration in 2012 and learned about Blind Veterans UK after reading an article in The Wren Magazine. Fanny started to receive help and support from Blind Veterans UK in 2015 and has received equipment to enable her to live independently with sight loss.

She says: "To begin with the sight loss was very gradual but slowly I realised I was no longer able to do certain things like driving and sewing. My eyesight has continued to deteriorate since then, and Blind Veterans UK has been absolutely fantastic, as such equipment as the talking books and a magnifier have made a huge difference. I am so glad that I read about Blind Veterans UK in The Wren. It would never have occurred to me that the charity was there for me and I would definitely recommend anyone who has Served and lost their sight to get in touch."



Picture: Fanny Hugill with Madame Josette Lebrat from the French Consulate. **Photo:** Mark Wheeler Blind Veterans UK's PR Manager.

The Defence of Hong Kong. By Ron Freer.

This article was penned by Ron Freer who joined Blind Veterans UK, then St Dunstan's, in October 1946. Ron wrote it as the Review had not reported on those who were stationed in Hong Kong during the attack on the British Colony by the Japanese during the Second World War, and who subsequently became the first Prisoners of War at the end of 1941. It is Ron's account of his capture and time as a Prisoner of War. A career soldier Ron served in the Royal Artillery from 1931 until 1946 when he held the rank of Sergeant.

Ron begins:

Two RAF reconnaissance planes were shot down on the first day of hostilities. From the Royal Navy HMS Dainty and HMS Diana, two old Destroyers, never went into action as they were damaged by enemy bombers and both were finally sunk. Three torpedo boats escaped by sea when the Colony surrendered, each took 30 of our troops and headed north to the mainland for the remainder of the war. They raided the Japanese supply depot for food.

There were three Battalions of our troops and a Battalion of Canadian troops. Three Coastal Batteries, an RAMC Unit and about 300 Hong Kong volunteers. In total we had 6,000 to defend the Colony. It was estimated that the Japanese had 40,000 men supported by aircraft.

The Prisoners of War.

It was in the latter part of 1941 when the Allies declared war on the Japanese as a result of the destruction of the American Naval Fleet at Pearl Harbour. I was stationed on the Peninsular known as Fort Stanley in Hong Kong where I was in charge of the Plotting table and Table Fire Director that is very similar to that used on a battle cruiser.

Much later I was sent to replace a Sergeant on one of the guns when he was injured. At that time we saw many Junks filled with Japanese troops as they were towed by a ship heading towards Canton. It was thought at first that the Japanese were re-enforcing their troops in the fight against the Chinese which had taken place for over five years. It turned out that this was a co-ordinated plan to gain domination of the Eastern Block, prior to an attack on Burma and India.

Two weeks later the Japanese attacked the British Colony of Hong Kong from the mainland. It was always thought that any attack on the Colony would come from the sea as there were three Coastal Stations, each with three 9.2" guns with APC shells, which are only suitable to fire at enemy battle ships.

During the early fighting the Japanese gained a foothold on the island close to the village of Lymun. Our troops had to retreat due to overwhelming odds and it was in this area that the Japanese captured 20 of our men. As night drew in the Japanese tied us up. The next morning one survivor said 'The Japanese lined us up with our back to our captors. A Japanese Officer then started cutting us down with his sword. The sword missed my neck and struck my collar bone which felled me to the ground. I lay there until the Japanese had left the area. I got to my feet and the scene made me feel sick for many of the men lay on the ground with their heads partly severed from their bodies. I managed to get to an empty house where I remained until the evening. I then went in search of those who had managed to escape capture. I found a few of them and they tended to my wounds and gave me a drink of water. I was then able to tell them what happened.'

Towards the end of the conflict another incident took place at the bottom of our Peninsular which led to Fort Stanley where there was a school building that had been turned into a hospital by the Medical Corps. When our defending troops had to retreat the Japanese entered the hospital and killed all of the patients, doctors and nurses and many of the medical staff. A few of the staff managed to lock themselves in a small room where they remained until the surrender had been established.

Two days passed without seeing any Japanese troops but we could smell fumes coming from the village which suggested the Japanese were burning their dead. On the morning of that day I was told to take four men to the main gates of the Fort to await the arrival of the Japanese Commander. He was standing up in an open car with a white flag tied to its side and I told my men to enter the gates to allow him to enter. A Japanese interpreter came over to me and in perfect English said 'My Commander wants to see your Commander.' I told him it was a quarter of a mile up the road.

He told me that he had been fighting in China for the last five years and had not seen his wife since then. He continued saying 'I do not want to fight you'. I

replied 'In that case what are you doing here?'

The next day the Japanese staged a victory flight with about 100 planes flying over the Colony. A day later we were marched to the Fort by Japanese guards and taken to some huts near the harbour where we remained for three days before we were taken by ferry to the mainland. On the mainland we were taken another two miles to where the others had been imprisoned before the war. I had read about the atrocities and cruelty inflicted on the Chinese during the five year war and I considered our future very bleak. And so it proved to be.

Our Commander informed us that the Japanese could kill every one of us and we had to live with that threat during the whole of our captivity, for we were sure that before their surrender they would kill all Prisoners of War. It was only when the Emperor of Japan ordered his armed forces to surrender that this threat would not be made, for they dare not disobey their Emperor.

The place where the Japanese took us had some five years before been an Infantry Camp, but was considered unsuitable for future use, and was never used until now (our arrival). The local Chinese had taken every item of value, including windows and doors. The camp was situated on the edge of the harbour, with high fences round the whole of the camp. There were only two buildings, a large block of flats and a Chapel, and at the entrance were two iron gates.

The Japanese brought in a bag of rice for each unit, but only enough for one meal a day for each person. They also brought a block of wood, which we had to try to cut up with iron bars that we had sharpened on stone. There were several empty oil drums and we managed to cut one in two so that we could use the bottom part as a boiling pot for rice. There was plenty of water, and after cleaning out the half drum, water was boiled before it was poured onto the rice, and when it had cooked each man was given a scoop. Many were unable to eat it and the result was that they starved to death. After eating the rice one still felt hungry for there is nothing in rice but 5% starch and the rest water. In addition our rice included plenty of mice droppings and insects. Disease soon broke out as there were no medical supplies to prevent them and that resulted in the deaths of many men.

We began to do some exercise in order to keep fit, but after a week we had

to abandon the exercise as we began to feel very weak. The rice diet was just enough to keep us alive. As many more men died we started to bury the dead in the camp, but as the Japanese did not like this they brought in wooden boxes that were about five and a half feet in length. If the dead man was taller their legs were broken to fit into the box. Four men were detailed to take the corpse in a lorry to a location selected by the Japanese sentry to bury the corpse. The four men would then dig a grave and when they had dug to about four feet the sentry would indicate that this was sufficient, which meant that there was only six inches of earth on top of the grave. Day, after day, this became our routine as hundreds of men died of starvation or disease.

When the camp had been discarded prior to the outbreak of war hundreds of iron beds were left behind as they were of no use to the Chinese. In 1943 the Japanese collected these and shipped them to Japan as they were in desperate need of steel. As that time we started to make use of the empty rice sacks, filling them with grass as they made good mattresses, rather than sleeping on the bare ground. Also in 1943 a Japanese general came to the camp, he stood on a box and informed us that we were to be taken to a beautiful country. His speech met with some rather nasty remarks and if he had heard what we said we would have been shot.

Two months later, 2,000 of our men were drafted on-board a ship called The Lisbon, their destination — Japan and the coal mines. It was at that time that diphtheria broke out. I caught it and was placed in a hut, isolated with others who were also suffering from this infection. During the night I heard a man call for his Mother. It hurt me terribly to hear another human being call out in such despair, in absolute extremis. Much later a man's voice said 'Turn over Sergeant.' I did and was injected and he said 'You are very lucky.' It was the Medical Officer who told me that the civilian Japanese Doctor had smuggled in anti-diphtheria vaccinations. That Doctor saved my life as I would not be writing this account without that vaccination.

Three months later I lost both my eyesight and my hearing. I was placed in a hut that was referred to as the camp hospital, but it was just a hut that was out of the way of the Japanese guards. It was there I was taught sign language for people who could not see or hear. It was the only way they could communicate with me and I remained in that hut until the end of the war.

Some of my hearing returned, which was a blessing, along with some of my sight. I, with others, was taken to the Philippines where I met one man who had been on The Lisbon, the ill-fated ship. He told me how the Japanese had placed 500 of our men in each of the four holds. Two of the holds had wooden coverings, the other two tarpaulin coverings. On the morning of the third day at sea they heard a great explosion and had no idea what it was until water started to pour into the holds and they knew that the ship had been hit by a torpedo.

The Captain of the ship ordered the holds to be closed down, thereby preventing the men from escaping. The man I spoke with told me that he was in one of the holds that was covered by the tarpaulin and he watched as one of the men put his head out of the hold. As soon as he raised his head through the tarpaulin he was shot by the Japanese. The remainder of the men waited until the Japanese had taken to their lifeboats before they jumped overboard and swam for the shore. As they were half a mile from shore and weak from the extreme lack of food and malnutrition some men drowned. I asked what his experience had been and he told me that he was in the bottom of the hold with some of the men were too weak to climb the iron ladder. When the ship sunk he was still breathing air as he was enclosed in an air bubble which took him into clear water. Chinese fishermen took him to the shore and our men who had managed to get ashore were rounded up by the Japanese and later taken to Japan to work in the coal mine.

There were only 400 survivors from the 2,000 men. Many of the men who had survived died when they reached Japan and the climate changed from that of Hong Kong.

I, with others, was taken to New Zealand where we remained for four months. We were given lots of lovely food, but after nearly four years of nothing but rice our stomachs were unable contain it. It was quite a while before we were able to eat an English meal. After four months we were taken by hospital ship to Southampton, then by hospital train to Chester, where I remained for a month.

I was then taken to St Dunstan's where I learnt Braille. I married and together we opened a new Post Office which we continued to work in for 25 years until we retired. Sadly after six years my wife passed away. I now live with my daughter and her husband. With the training I received from St Dunstan's, I am able to write stories on my computer.

I still think of those I knew in Hong Kong where there are many unknown graves of our men who died under terrible conditions.



Picture: We Remember. Ron Freer, above seated, before he placed the wreath at the Cenotaph for Blind Veterans UK during the Remembrance Sunday Parade to the Cenotaph in 2015.

Blind Veterans UK Gun Club (Ovingdean). By Roger McMullan.

The Gun Club hosted the Gun Club from Felixstowe from Monday 1st August until Thursday 4th August at the Brighton centre, Ovingdean. It was lovely to see all the familiar faces of the shooters and partake in the friendly rivalry; a great time was had by all.

The Team Competition was on Wednesday when all shooters had 10 shots; unfortunately Felixstowe took the Team Shield home with them.

The results were:

Felixstowe	Mark Maidment	92
	Lorraine Ward	91
	Hannah Young	89
	Total	272

Blind Veterans UK	Connie Appletree	85
	Bill Godden	83
	Nigel Whitely	82
	Total	250

The Thursday morning saw the individual prizes go to:

Mark Maidment	Felixstowe	85 won on Wednesday's score
Nigel Whitely	Blind Veterans UK	85
Lorraine Ward	Felixstowe	84

On Thursday lunchtime we all went to the Saltdean Tavern and after the meal the prizes were presented by the Felixstowe driver Ian. We said our goodbyes with a promise that we would meet at Felixstowe in June 2017, when we hope to reclaim the shield!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making the four days a great success — the Felixstowe team didn't want to go home.



Picture: Ian from the Felixstowe team, left, presents the Trophy to blind veteran Nigel Whiteley.



Picture: From left to right: Lorraine, Ian, Hannah and Mark of The Felixstowe Team.

Richard Davies's Dunkirk.

Richard Davies died on 24th November 2015 before we were able to publish this account of his time serving with the British Expeditionary Force in France. This is published for Richard and with the agreement of his daughter Glynnis. It contains references that some may find disturbing to read. A kind and caring man this story reflects the brutality of war as Richard became hardened to death, even the death of his close friends, as they swam from the beaches of Dunkirk. He never forgot his friends and would often speak of them and the senseless loss of life. Richard served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1939 to 1946 in France and North Africa leaving as a Quartermaster Sergeant.

The youngest of 10 children, Richard Davies from Swansea was 14 when he left school. The following week he entered employment six days a week at a rate of 7s 6d. At the age of 17 a friend asked him to join the Territorial Army, which Richard didn't initially want to, but later agreed to. His brother had been in the Royal Navy for 15 years and Richard had already decided that if war was declared he would join the Navy.

He joined the Territorial Army with his friend and went to camp for what he thought would only be a fortnight. However, on the last day their route march was cut short and they were taken back to the camp where they stood to attention as an Officer informed them that war had been declared and they were no longer Territorial's, but full Army men and they wouldn't be going home that day. Richard's first thought was that he'd lost his place in the Royal Navy and that he was in the Army and couldn't get out of it.

Speaking about that time Richard recalled: "We did some training, but not a lot, and by November 1939 we sailed for France. We were untrained territorial's, teenagers with no idea of the reality of war. We landed in France where we spent our first night sleeping on a dirt floor in one of the dockside buildings.

"One afternoon the Sergeant asked if anyone could ride a motorbike and I put my hand up before he'd finished talking. He told me to get on the bike. I'd never ridden one before, but I thought if I kept in the same gear he wouldn't know. He said I'd do and that's when I became a dispatch rider. It was an awful winter in France with snow and ice everywhere and we were to move some 300 miles to Northern France. It took three days as we travelled by day and slept on route

in sheds at night. We eventually moved up to the Belgium border and started carrying troops further into Belgium to meet the Germans. We were stationed about 1½ miles from the forest next to the Maginot line. The Government that sent us to war decided that the Germans had no chance of coming through that forest, but of course they did. They came through the forest and they smashed the French and Belgium Armies. We were isolated with no cover at all.

"My first encounter with the war was travelling along a B Road when I thought there was something wrong ahead of us. I stopped the convoy and travelled ahead where I found five blood soaked bodies, three women and two children, lying in the road. I avoided looking at their faces as I gently dragged the bodies of the women on to the grass verge. I picked the children up and put them in the arms of the women. I got back on my motorbike to return to my convoy and cried until I reached my destination. That was my first encounter with the war.

"When the war started in earnest we were faced with 300 or 400 tanks coming at us and dive bombers. Within a couple of days we realised that the British Army in France faced the finest military force the world had ever seen. We were sent there with a rifle and 50 rounds of ammunition. We didn't have one tank, plane or artillery. How can you stop a few hundred tanks with a rifle? This is where we started our retreat. I don't think anyone in the country knew why we retreated. It's impossible for any Army to face the Germans with just a rifle. We were sent to our deaths, not to war. All we could do was go back, back and back.

"On another occasion as I took the troops back and forth I was instructed to go back a quarter of a mile. It was approaching dusk as I turned into a field to stand the lorries down. The field was flat before going into a sharp incline and you couldn't see the top of the field. When I got off my bike I went for a walk as I would be fairly sore from the knees up. Half way up the incline I heard voices and wondered who could be in the field at this time. I carried on up until I reached the flat part where I could see the hedge and the outline against the sky and saw that the field was full of tanks, and knew that as we didn't have any they were German tanks.

"I ran down the field as fast as I could to stop our lads lighting a fire to mash up. They had lit a fire but we soon extinguished it when I told them of the German tanks. I instructed the first driver to go down the road for half a mile and stay

on the main road and wait until my return. I turned and went back to the front line to tell the Captain there was a Squadron of German tanks behind him. I left it at that and carried on down to the convoy and waited there for further instructions.

"That is what we were doing all the time. There were tanks everywhere. You could hardly move a mile before you ran into them. It wasn't very pleasant I suppose, but we did what we could to get by and it was very difficult with the tanks and the planes. We didn't stand a cat in hell's chance as we were battered day in and day out. It was a case of trying to live and save our lives rather than attack an enemy, which would have been impossible as we didn't have the equipment.

"One afternoon as we sat on a grass verge the Sergeant came to us and said 'I'm going to tell you something which you may not understand but I'll explain it clearly. If any man here wants to leave this unit and go wherever he wants to go, he's at liberty to do so. There will be no punishment. You can go where you want and do what you want.' He went on to say that a Welsh company a quarter of a mile away were fighting a retreat and if we weren't around when they reached us they would be very disappointed, but we were at liberty to leave.

"There were 35 or 40 of us and no-one moved, we all stayed where we were. He left and came back 10 minutes later and said 'I'm going to tell you something else which you'll understand. It's every man for himself. You are no longer in the British Army. You are now civilians and you can go where you want, do what you want and say what you want. If you go to the main road it will take you to Dunkirk where there will be ships to take you back to England'.

"We didn't know what to say or what to do. We were in a foreign country that the Army had taken us to and if we were no longer in the Army where the hell should we go and what should we do? So we all ambled off in groups of two and three towards where we thought the main road could be. We found it, and we also found that the road was completely blocked with traffic. Apparently anyone who took a vehicle on to the Dunkirk road was to smash it so that the Germans couldn't use it. The signpost told us Dunkirk was seven miles away and all we could see was smashed vehicles all the way to Dunkirk.

"In the fields beside the Dunkirk road there were no walking paths so most of the time we had to clamber over the traffic as best we could. It took us a long,

long, long time and most had trouble getting through that road, but we did eventually reach Dunkirk, and when we did, it was on fire. There were flames everywhere. We managed to get through at least half of the city and onto a big square where there were no raging fires as there were no buildings on the square. I was with two of my mates when I spotted a jeep further down the square that had tin cans on the floor and as we had no food I went to investigate. They were small tins of mixed fruit and I loaded myself with as many as I could carry and took them back to my two mates and we divided the tins between us. We stayed in the square for some time before we eventually managed to get through Dunkirk and on to the beach.

"The sight that met us was shocking. The beach was stacked with hundreds of soldiers, soldiers stacked under a soldier, under a soldier, under a soldier, all along the length of the beach and hundreds more soldiers standing.

"My first thought was, I'm not going up there, it's right in the middle, it's wide open and there's no defence of any sort. The Captain called us and said 'Fall in here lads.' I said 'No thanks we'll find our own place'. We went further up the sand towards the road. On the sand side of the road there were no houses. The other side of the road was lined with hotels and they were all on fire. We settled down in the sand and we built three short trenches to give us some cover and we buried our tins of fruit in the sand and we stayed there. The Pier at Dunkirk was very long and by the bridge was an ambulance and a Destroyer. We heard an Officer shout 'The next man to stand on this boat I will shoot!' They eventually pulled off the pier around mid afternoon and as they started to move out to sea the Germans decided to blow them to pieces.

"All we could see was two ships going down, 500 or 600 men going down with the ships. All we thought was — why didn't the silly buggers wait until it was dark. Nothing to do with the 600 soldiers who had gone, that's how hardened we had become. Day after day we lay in our trenches and listened to the screams of soldiers as they were hit by bullets, and the screams of the soldiers as they were blown to pieces. The Luftwaffe was over those beaches every minute of the day firing and bombing. There were no ships to take us to England. After a period of seven or eight days I decided quite coolly, quite calmly, that I would commit suicide. I could no longer stay in this awful space and listen to the screams. We would be blown to pieces, shot to pieces or taken prisoner of war. I didn't want any of that.

"I decided quite calmly to take my own life. I was only 18½ years old. I told my two mates my intention and that I was quite serious about it as I could no longer stand to be there and listen to the screams. The following morning as I sat and smoked a fag I saw a small sail boat come round the end of the pier. It pulled away from the pier for a distance and it stopped. I watched it for a quarter of an hour and as I knew a little about ships from my home town of Swansea decided he was shell fishing and that he'd be there for a couple of hours. I decided to swim out to that boat, and if I didn't reach it I would sink, and that was my way out. I said to my two mates 'I'm going to swim for that ship. I don't want you to come with me as it's too dangerous. If I don't reach it I'll drown, but I'd rather accept that than what I'm facing here'.

"The reason I decided to commit suicide was not because I was afraid of the Germans. What shattered me was sitting on the beach for eight days listening to the thud of bullets as they entered bodies and then the screams after the thuds from the bullets and there was nothing we could do about it. That's what got to me and why I decided to swim out.

"I removed my boots, put them around my neck, entered the water and started to swim. I swam for a while and then floated and looked back for my two mates who were both in the water as they swam behind me. I had a bit of a smile to myself. I was a strong swimmer as I lived only 10 minutes from the beaches in Swansea and swam a lot, but never for any distance, it was always just mucking about in the sea. I turned back and started to swim again and each time I looked back they seemed to get further and further away, and at one point I was floating and watching them. There were no waves as the sea was calm apart from small ripples. As I watched them swim a dive bomber came over and blew them to pieces with machine gun fire and that was the end of my two mates.

"I had become so brutalised by then that at the time it didn't bother me, tough luck. I just turned and resumed swimming. And eventually I did get to that little boat and I grabbed it with all my strength. There were two Frenchmen on it, that was all, and they pulled me into the boat and dragged me on to the deck. I lay there gasping for breath. I heard them shouting and lifted my head as a Destroyer came towards us and they shouted at it to stop. I got the two Frenchmen to understand that I wanted to stand up to let the personnel in the Destroyer see my uniform. It stopped, dropped a rope ladder over the side that I climbed up and was given a cup of tea as we sailed home to England.

"In my opinion the Government of the time should have been declared war criminals as they sent men to their deaths, not to war. Men who had no means to defend themselves. How can you stop hundreds of tanks with rifles? And that's how we retreated in France. We had to. We had no option but to keep going back, going back and struggling to keep alive. The Government sent untrained Territorial's with a rifle and 50 rounds of ammunition. The films you see with actors portraying the soldiers as they return from Dunkirk and show them waving to everyone are pure fiction not fact. We were exhausted. No one waved. Not one single man.

"When I got back to England we went on to the North East coast to cover the potential invasion. Nothing did happen, but on the way back into town I met a nurse who worked at Rampton State Institution and I saw her every night for about a month. She didn't like working there as it was a bad place to be so she joined the WAAF and was posted to Cardiff, but we kept seeing each other.

"After a while I was issued with overseas kit, shorts, pith helmet, puttees and it looked as though I was going to a hot place which meant I wouldn't be home for a while. I phoned my girlfriend in Cardiff and asked her to go to my aunt's in Swansea. She arrived there on the Wednesday and I arrived the following day. By then I was a Sergeant as I'd been promoted for of my work in France. I told my girlfriend that if we married she would have another week's allowance, which was the equivalent of her pay, and that if I went overseas it would be a bigger allowance. I asked her what she thought and she said — let's get married then.

"I went to get a wedding license as we intended to marry on the Saturday morning, but found that we were too young and would need our parents with us. I managed to get over the need for our parents' consent by changing the dates of our births on our identity cards to make us over 21. We married on Saturday morning and she went back to Cardiff and I went to Glasgow. That was in 1941.

"I was posted to North Africa for five years. We were married for one day and I came home in 1946. She died on what would have been our 65th wedding anniversary. So we didn't do bad considering we'd only been married for one day before we parted for five years.

"I want to say about our lads retreat in France — don't take any notice of what you see in the films or on television. The true story of our retreat is that we were unarmed soldiers fighting the finest military force the world had ever seen. I've never had the courage to go back to Dunkirk and have often wondered with all the horrors one went through in France and on the beaches of Dunkirk, and in North Africa and in Burma, why we should be given medals to remind us of such horrors. I did six and a half years in the Forces and don't have a medal and don't want any medals. I don't want to be reminded of that hell.

"Life can be cruel and so many have their horrific experiences of war. The ones I feel for are the Far East Prisoners of War as they went through hell.

"I am grateful for my family and to Blind Veterans UK. I enjoy the Llandudno centre, and it was something so different to do the zip wire when my daughter Glynnis and I stayed there. Everyone is so kind and it's a very special place."



Picture: The late Richard Davies as he prepared to set off on the Zip Wire during his stay at the Llandudno centre.

Colin Williamson's Beer of the Month.

This Blond Ale from the Castle Brewery Van Honsbrouck in Belgium is a light, golden beer with a relatively modest alcohol content, weighing in at 5.2 which is quite unusual for a beer from this brewery.

The label reads 'When opening a bottle of Passchendaele please hold a minute of silence in commemoration of those who fell on the battlefield' and shows a silhouette of a section of soldiers walking across the battlefield carrying their weapons and equipment and with a poppy prominent on the label and neck.

Not one of the best Belgian Blond Ales but I purchased it for its historical significance and the beautiful glass that accompanied it.



The Eve of Call Up. By RJV.

How lovely is the night; this final night
Of free resolve and clear, unfettered thought;
These precious hours are mine in lone delight
To pleasure joyful memories life has brought.
The night is mine; those silver stars that shine
Shattering the dark despondency above,
Will shine with steadfast light in days to be
When all my soul shall crave one spark of love;
And the friendly moon shall I see
Full and serene, spreading a glorious sheen
Over the heaving bosom of the sea —
A glittering chain of restless, golden light;
While sea-borne airs will gently breathe
Into my heart caresses of the night.

These are my friends; each in its fashion lends
A lasting gift of lovely memories —
And other friends there be whom I revere
Whose goodly company will grant release
From life's insistent tumult pressing near.
So shall I know, wherever I may go,
To what far distant land my fortune leads,
In lonely, quivering nights and hideous days,
And fighting, fight again with desperate deeds
Till blind endurance fail and judgment cease,
When faith burns low and hope has lost its glow,
And in the days to come when sordid ease
Would seek to undermine my very soul,
When evil men and women vainly please,
Who sear the flesh, yet leave the spirit whole —
Then shall I know the beauty of this hour
So close will I enfold it to my breast;
And friends shall crowd my thoughts with pleasant fare,
Firming resolve and granting perfect rest —
The night is mine, its beauty is my power.

RJV.

As we continue to commemorate the centenary of The Battle of the Somme this hauntingly beautiful poem is one of many that we believe was written by Richard Vine.

Born in August 1893 he enlisted on 4th September 1914 and as Vine, L/Cpl Richard J. No 13282, 10th West Yorkshire Regiment, he was blinded in Fricourt on 1st July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme. The 10th (Service) Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) suffered 710 casualties that day when 11 Officers and 300 men were killed.

A draughtsman before the war he trained at St Dunstan's from 24th August 1916 to 11th April 1917. He initially retrained as a basket maker and worked from home in Ewhurst, Surrey. He later worked as a telephonist at Messrs Bullivant and Co, Mark Lane in East London and later at Rose Taylor Milliners at 60 Grosvenor Street in West London.

Richard Vine sang tenor in the Ewhurst Choral Society and in the Church choir, and we believe that he played the violin.

He was married and had two sons who fought in the Second World War, both of whom returned home safe and uninjured. Richard Vine died on 23rd May 1951 and his wife died in 1982.

If you know anything more about Richard Vine please do get in touch with Catherine Goodier, Review Editor at revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk or leave a message on telephone 020 7616 8367.

**John Cockcroft, Conservative MP for Nantwich
February 1974 — 1979 and a former journalist for the
Financial Times and the Daily and Sunday Telegraph,
remembers with fondness characters from that
fascinating parliament. From Order, Order!**

As those far off days of the 1970s' parliaments fade into history it is worth recalling some of the notable MPs of the time.

There is of course a long tradition of such diary-type sketches, from Samuel Pepys, to 'Chips' Channon, Duff Cooper, Alan Clark and Chris Mullin. These memories are the basis of my forthcoming Memoirs.

The Commons backcloth was of course very different from that of today. Business did not start until 2.30pm. PMQs were twice a week and less rowdy. No Confidence debates were frequent and so were running three line whips far into the night. Most MPs dictated letters perched in corridors. The secretarial allowance purchased half a secretary. There were however many happy times and much camaraderie, even across parties. For example Prime Minister Callaghan summoned me to behind the Speaker's Chair:

"I want you to know that your bother in law Tim Lankester is doing a splendid job for me in my private office."

My regular pair was Jo Richardson, MP for Barking and former head girl of a Southend grammar school. She was clever, witty and empathetic. Her close friend Ian Mikado, veteran MP for Tower Hamlets, regaled me in the Tea Room with tales of Labour times past, notably Clement Atlee's insistence behind the scenes to his MPs at the May 1940 Labour Party Conference that they should only serve in a wartime coalition under Churchill, the once hated villain of the Dardanelles, the General Strike and the India Act.

My favourite Labour MP was Russell Kerr, longstanding Labour MP for Hounslow. Overweight, witty, lazy and well-liked, he presided as Chairman of the Nationalised Industries Select Committee. It was an important job since there were few committees until 1979. As a member of a Select Committee subcommittee (Transport) I travelled widely in Europe with our other members. Russell tended to nod off after lunch only to be wakened by an ever-anxious junior clerk, Charlie Winniffrith, one of whose functions was to dole out our daily cash allowance of £30.

Bob Bean MP for Chatham would speculate on our long term journeys, "how could such a kind and intelligent man possibly be a Conservative MP?" Understandably the Tory Whips warned me against being too friendly with Labour MPs.

But my friendships with other Conservative MPs were far more long-lasting. Airey Neave was the most charismatic. His campaign to see Edward Heath replaced as Conservative Leader was brilliant. Sir Keith Joseph's abrupt withdrawal from the race led Airey to back Margaret Thatcher. He believed strongly that several U-turns on incomes policy and mishandling of the 1974 miners' strike were unacceptable. Yet I had been captivated by Heath's and Francis Pym's historic 1972 vote to accede to the Treaty of Rome. I knew Heath from the European Movement much better than Thatcher.

A disastrous dinner party at the home of Nick Scott, MP for Chelsea and Kensington, where Heath ignored all the 10 new MPs present and left early, prompted me to say 'better not to produce the Leader in the flesh if you have any more of these last suppers.'

I decided to vote for Thatcher. I had been introduced by Willie Whitelaw by Christopher Tugendhat, an old Cambridge friend, with his attractive gentility and compassion, he was presented as a possible compromise candidate. I liked him enormously and he was a frequent guest at my 1980s City lunches. But I felt that the dire state of the British economy, about which I had written in my 1971 book, 'Why England Sleeps,' called for nerves of steel. The One Nation approach to politics stemmed from Willie Whitelaw visiting the needy relatives of the soldiers killed or wounded in his tank platoon in 1944. Like other former soldiers who had fought bravely in the 1939 to 1945 war, he felt passionately that the then Common Market was essential to prevent any more devastating European wars. In this context I talked often to Francis Pym about his concerns that Margaret Thatcher, as early as the late 1970s, had little interest in Europe. It was a bad day for the Conservative Party when Francis was dropped from the Government for saying before the 1983 election that large majorities were bad for good government.

Ian Gow, on Airey Neave's recommendations in 1979 became the new Prime Minister's brilliant PPS. My visits to 10 Downing Street in the early 1980s were memorable — no security gates, or 'Plebgate' policemen. Ian's tiny office was live with phones ringing, all answered with courtesy, "Welcome to Camelot" Ian would say to visitors.

For me the most significant MPs in the 1970s parliaments were Patrick Cormack and Norman Lamont. Patrick was cited by a veteran Labour MP as a great Parliamentarian when in 2010 he left the Commons for the Lords. Norman is notable for his kindness and modesty. Both have been staunch and consistent supporters of Shield, the concept of my friend the late Paul Stonor, that there needs to be an international peace-keeping military interventionist force under the auspices of the United Nations.

Otherwise in policy terms I made a modest contribution to the pro-European cause in informal talks with Geoffrey Howe, Ian Taylor, Alistair Goodlad, David Knox, Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler, Jack Weatherhill, Leon Brittan, Christopher Tugendhat, Esmond Bulmer, Norman Fowler, George Younger and Geoffrey Rippon. In the Members' Bar Roy Jenkins held court to any MPs who cared to listen to his romanticising about the Europe of Antoinette Rome and Charlemagne. My former employer, the Daily Telegraph remained staunchly pro-European in the late 1970s.

Iain Sproat was my closest friend in the Commons. I had first got to know him in the context of a chance meeting with Sir Winston Churchill in the Tea Room in 1962. Percy Cole, Editor of Hansard and a close friend of my parents, had got us into the historic debate in which Harold MacMillan announced Britain's belated intention to accede to the Treaty of Rome. Before that he had got me into a debate to hear Churchill's final speech in 1955 about a possible nuclear Armageddon. Iain did not enamour himself to the Conservative hierarchy by moving constituencies and eventually losing Harwich in 1997, which devastated him. In the 1970s and 1980s he was frustrated by the whips tardiness in promoting him. However he did eventually become Sports Minister which he much enjoyed.

In November 1978 I drew 8th in the annual ballot for Private Members Bills. I was inundated with proposals for my Bill. Michael Cocks, Labour Government Chief Whip, summoned me to his office off the members' lobby. He said "Most of the proposals are from nutters and flat earthers, but any of the others would have Government support and therefore a good chance to becoming law." In the event I went with a proposal from the Institute of Chartered Secretaries that Company Secretaries should be qualified (I was not paid). Ian Mikado talked my bill out, on the grounds that it should be incorporated in a wider Financial Services Bill, which happened in the 1980s. John Nott, who had the relevant

financial brief in the Shadow Cabinet said that my Bill was "absurd". We had been rivals for the Cambridge Union Presidency in the 1950s.

Antony Berry was my favourite Conservative whip. He was concerned about my problem of a very young family who were being presumed to live in Nantwich 160 miles from Westminster. I talked to him in the bar of the Grand Hotel hours before he was killed in his room by the 1984 IRA bomb attack. He kindly said that I was much missed at the House.

Of my four conversations with Mrs Thatcher the most significant was in November 1978. As her effective Chief of Staff and in agreement with my thoughts on MPs' allowances, Airey Neave arranged for me to see her on my own. I told her that MPs' allowances were larger than their pay and totally unaccountable, and that sooner or later there would be an enormous row about such an unacceptable situation. Only half listening and therefore missing the point Margaret responded "John, I have always lived on my Parliamentary salary and so should you". I said "I have not come to you to talk about MPs' salaries paltry though they are".

Of the Speakers whom I knew, George Thomas was my favourite. He was interested in my Methodist upbringing which I shared with Mrs Thatcher. He held to the teetotal tenets of John Wesley until late in his life. He did however pour me a sherry and showed me round Speaker's House one evening. He was sympathetic about the predicament of MPs with young families. He suggested a peerage for me. Instead the idea was predictably vetoed by the Conservative whips, doubtless with eyes to their own career options.

Norman Tebitt in private was far removed from Michael Foot's famous description of him as a semi house-trained pole cat. Even after his terrible injuries and the paralysis of his wife Margaret from the 1984 IRA bomb attack he remained friendly and witty. We talked a lot about these matters and the Churchill legacy of the constituency.

This article was reproduced with the kind permission of John Cockcroft, a former 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, who joined Blind Veterans UK in 2009, and with the permission of Sally Growcoat, Editor of Order, Order! to whom we are most grateful. Taken from the Spring 2015 edition, Order, Order! is the official publication of the Association of Former Members of Parliament.

Blind Veterans UK Christmas collection for 2016.

Autumn is almost upon us with its smell of bonfires that evoke memories of toffee apples and fireworks, and hands pushed into pockets or clad in warm gloves, as we walk along paths strewn with fallen leaves. It's also time to turn our minds towards Christmas and we are pleased to bring you our selection of Blind Veterans UK Christmas cards. They each have the Blind Veterans UK logo and all proceeds will go directly to Blind Veterans UK. If you buy three packs of Christmas cards the least expensive is free. Apart from the Festive bumper pack each pack contains ten cards and envelopes and all prices include VAT.

If you would like to view our full range please telephone 0300 111 0440 and quote CAT B to request a catalogue. Or go to our website at:

shop.blindveterans.org.uk You can order online or telephone 0300 111 0440, and again please quote CAT B. Postage is free postage when you spend over £35. To ensure delivery by Christmas, please order by Wednesday 15th December.



Picture: A Festive Bumper Pack of 25 assorted Christmas cards in assorted sizes.

Priced at £2.00 quote reference BV1064. Or buy two packs for £3.50 using reference SO1059.

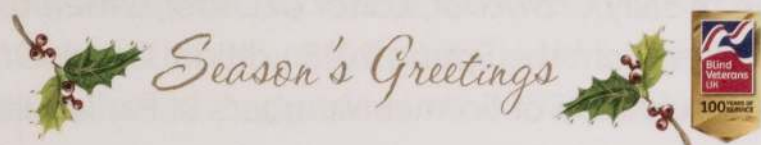


Picture: Three Happy Men of St Dunstan's.

Size: 171 x 121 mm
10 cards & envelopes.

Ref: BV1102.

Price: £2.50.



Picture: The Three Kings.

Size: 121 x 121 mm
10 cards & envelopes.

Ref: BV1088.

Price: £3.00.



Picture: Pulling the Sleigh.

Size: 127 x 171 mm
10 cards & envelopes.

Ref: BV1089.

Price: £3.50



Picture: Spitfires in the Snow.

Size: 121 x 171 mm
10 cards & envelopes.

Ref: BV1097.

Price: £3.50.

Family News.

Congratulations to:

Birthdays:

Ernest Frobisher who celebrated his 103rd birthday on 31st October.

Isabel 'Bunty' Misra who celebrated her 101st birthday on 3rd October.

Lindley 'Bryan' Clowes who celebrated his 101st birthday on 9th October.

Royal 'Ron' Freer who celebrated his 101st birthday on 21st October.

Favourite Memories.

Each month the Review will phone someone who is celebrating their birthday to find out their happiest memories. This month it was Jean Bullar who celebrated her 92nd birthday on 15th October. Jean, a former Red Cross Nurse, said: "One of my favourite memories is walking the dogs with my husband Guy in Devon." Jean was married to the late Guy Bullar, who was blinded at Bari Harbour during the Second World War, when he also lost his hearing. Jean also said how much she enjoys the annual Widows' Week at the Brighton centre.

Anniversaries:

Diamond (60th):

Peter & Daisy Williams of Milford Haven, Dyfed on 2nd October.

Clifford & Kathleen Swann of Faringdon, Oxfordshire on 6th October.

Jim & Diane Stiff of Crawley, West Sussex on 13th October.

Desmond & Elizabeth Morgan of Neath, West Glamorgan on 17th October.

Peter & Valerie Hunt of Newark, Nottinghamshire on 20th October.

Golden (50th):

Eric & Eileen Ward of Seaford, East Sussex on 1st October.

Derek & Beryl Widdowson of Audenshaw, Greater Manchester on 15th October.

John & Catherine Scott of Dunfermline, Fife on 29th October.

Leonard & Joan Clark of Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire on 29th October.

Pearl (30th):

Paul & Kay Hancock of Sheffield on 14th October.

Silver (25th):

John & Hazel Mills of Barnsley, South Yorkshire on 6th October.

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.

Brenda Arblaster who died on 19th August 2016. She was the wife of Keith Arblaster.

Jean Collett who died on 8th August 2016. She was the wife of Leonard Collett.

Joan Cooke who died on 16th June 2016. She was the wife of John Cooke.

Jean Crouch who died on 20th August 2016. She was the wife of Dennis Crouch.

Jeanne Easter who died on 29th July 2016. She was the wife of the late Ernest Easter.

Florence 'Florrie' Glynn who died on 6th November 2015. She was the wife of John Glynn.

Iris Hobbs who died on 30th July 2016. She was the widow of the late William Hobbs.

Jean Hogg who died on 10th August 2016. She was the widow of the late John Hogg.

Sonya Marsh who died on 21st June 2016. She was the widow of the late Vernon Marsh.

Lesley Milne who died on 2nd August 2016. She was the wife of Lesley Milne.

Barbara Renvoize who died on 1st December 2015. She was the wife of Geoffrey Renvoize.

Frederike Whitehead who died on 13th August 2016. She was the widow of the late Terrison Whitehead.

Alma Young who died on 14th August 2016. She was the widow of the late David Young.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

James 'Pidg' Allenby of Liverpool served in the King's Own Royal Border Regiment and the French Foreign Legion from 1973 to 1993.

Walter 'John' Alner of St. Brelade, Jersey served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

Brian Alstead of Abbeydale, Gloucester served in the Royal Engineers from 1949 to 1951.

Leonard Andrew of Hinckley, Leicestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

William Armstrong of Goring, Berkshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1945.

Ronald Atkinson of Leeds served in the Royal Navy Combined Operations from 1943 to 1946.

Robert Avery of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1958 to 1960.

John Banyard of Cardiff, South Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1949.

Thomas 'Tom' Brammer of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Royal Dragoon Guards from 1945 to 1948.

Dennis Brett of Sleaford, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Raymond Brown of Rugeley, Staffordshire served in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders from 1964 to 1975.

Roy Brown of Nantwich, Cheshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1949.

Trevor 'Trev' Brown of Bingham, Nottingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1978.

Ivan Byng of Llandrindod Wells, Powys served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1957 to 1959.

Haydn Callow of Somerton, Somerset served in the Royal Army Dental Corps from 1962 to 1985.

Dulcie Carter née Bailey of Devizes, Wiltshire served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1946 to 1948.

Alan Chandler of Guildford, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Henry Colebourne of Bootle, Merseyside served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Bryan Collings of Liverpool served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1949 to 1951.

Andrew 'Andy' Culloch of Dundee served in the Royal Horse Artillery from 1948 to 1950.

Dennis Cushing of Fulwood, Preston served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1943 to 1946.

Donald 'Danny' Danson of Stockport, Cheshire served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1943 to 1946.

Colin Davies of Weston Super Mare, Avon served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1952 to 1959.

Ronald Dawson of Eccles, Manchester served in the General Service Corps and the Lancashire Fusiliers from 1946 to 1958.

Philip Dickinson of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Service Corps, Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1941 to 1959.

Thomas Donovan of Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Gwynedd served in the Merchant Navy from 1939 to 1987.

William Duddridge of Earls Colne, Colchester served in the Royal Artillery from 1948 to 1965.

Donald 'Don' Eaton of Carshalton, Surrey served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1959 to 1964.

Malcolm Edwards of Bulford, Salisbury served in the Cheshire Regiment from 1962 to 1969.

Richard Egglestone of Hendon, Sunderland served in the Army Catering Corps from 1949 to 1955.

Brian Elford of Acle, Norwich served in the Royal Navy from 1954 to 1978.

David Fyfe of Johnstone, Renfrewshire served in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1963 to 1964.

Lillian Gammack née Jones of Barrow In Furness, Cumbria served in the Auxillary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1946.

Andrew Garner of Buerton, Crewe served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1984 to 1999.

Ronald Griffiths of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

Cecil 'John' Hampshire of Abergele, Clwyd served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

Paul Hancock from Sheffield served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1976 to 1978.

Ronald Hill of Exeter, Devon served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1941.

John Hinchcliffe of Mirfield, West Yorkshire served in the Coldstream Guards from 1950 to 1955.

William Hocking of Brynmill, Swansea served in the Welch Regiment and the Mobile Defence Corps from 1953 to 1959.

Kenneth Holmes of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the General Service Corps, Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers from 1948 to 1960.

Walter 'Spike' Hughes of Torpoint, Cornwall served in the Royal Navy from 1960 to 1982.

Gordon Ingate of South Woodford, East London served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1956.

Ronald Jackson of St. Helens, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1948 to 1950.

Christopher Jaeckle of Wolverhampton served in the Royal Logistics Corps from 2001 to 2007.

Thomas Jennings of Writtle, Chelmsford served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1950.

Brian King of Penzance, Cornwall served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1953.

Graham Kirby of Ecclesfield, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1954 to 1956.

James Lewis of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

Henry 'Harry' McLauchlan of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the King's Regiment from 1939 to 1943.

John Meikle of Winscombe, Avon served in the Royal Signals from 1953 to 1960.

Gladys 'Mickey' Lodge née Overthrow of Hoxton, North London served in the Royal Military Police from 1941 to 1946.

Derek Middleton of Wingerworth, Chesterfield served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1959.

Gary Mills of Carrickfergus, County Antrim served in the Royal Irish Rangers from 1978 to 2006.

Gordon Mitchell of Hempsted, Gloucester served in the Royal Signals from 1954 to 1959.

David Moore of Eastville, Bristol served in the Somerset Light Infantry and the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1953 to 1972.

Frederick 'Vick' Moxon of Keighley, West Yorkshire served in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, Royal Military Police and the Royal Engineers from 1952 to 1957.

Raymond Murphy of Wigan, Lancashire served in the 1st King's Dragoon Guards from 1944 to 1947.

Charles 'Eddie' Newton of Stanley, County Durham served in the Royal Northumberland Fusilliers from 1954 to 1965.

David Oddy of Beccles, Suffolk served in the Royal Artillery from 1949 to 1951.

Desmond Page of Maidstone, Kent served in the Royal Tank Regiment and the Army Air Corps from 1942 to 1947.

Robert 'Gordon' Paul of Poole, Dorset served in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1947.

Michael Paxman of Retford, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Horse Artillery from 1956 to 1958.

John Pettitt of Eastbourne, East Sussex served in the Royal Signals from 1952 to 1956.

Roy Quigley of Otley, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1955.

Meredith 'John' Russell of Aylesford, Kent served in the Royal Artillery from 1945 to 1948.

Bernard 'Bernie' Lyford-Smith of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1948.

Stanley Solk of Leeds served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1949.

Cuthbert 'Bert' Stephenson of Newcastle Upon Tyne served in the General Service Corps, Reconnaissance Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1943 to 1947.

John Stevens of Harpenden, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

Maurice Sutcliffe of Axminster, Devon served in the East Surrey Regiment and the Army Air Corps from 1940 to 1977.

Roy Taylor of Weston Super Mare, Avon served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1954 to 1964.

William Taylor of Keighley, West Yorkshire served in the General Service Corps, North Staffordshire Regiment and the Manchester Regiment from 1943 to 1947.

Keith Terry of Ryde, Isle of Wight served in the General Service Corps, Royal Armoured Corps and the Queen's Bays from 1944 to 1948.

Joshua Thornton of Berwick upon Tweed served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1956 to 1961.

Dennis Thwaites of Doncaster, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Armoured Corps and the Royal Tank Regiment from 1950 to 1957.

Norman Tinsley of Shrewsbury, Shropshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

John Tobin of Coventry served in the Royal Signals from 1952 to 1955.

Terence Tostevin of Kelvedon, Colchester served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

Frederick Tredwell of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire served in the Home Guard from 1942 to 1945.

George Tucker of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Signals from 1943 to 1959.

Evelyn Turton née Cleverley of Witney, Oxfordshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1954.

Dennis Ward of Helston, Cornwall served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1949.

Robert 'Bob' Weedon of Witney, Oxfordshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Army Educational Corps from 1948 to 1953.

Emily Wilcox of Downton, Salisbury served in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps from 1959 to 1962.

Dennis Williams of Tenby, Pembrokeshire served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1941 to 1956.

William Williams of Flint served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Graham Woods of Widnes, Cheshire served in the Royal Corps of Transport and the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1964 to 1972.

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.

David Barten of Colchester, Essex died on 26th August 2016, aged 95. On 26th April 1939, he enlisted in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and fought in the Middle East where he was at El Alamein and later North Europe. He was discharged as a Driver in 1946.

Kenneth Christensen of North Shields, Tyne and Wear died on 10th July 2016, aged 87. He served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1947 to 1949, discharging as a Lance Corporal.

Joyce Clarke of Horley, Surrey died on 7th September 2016, aged 95. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942, training at Fulford Barracks in York before being posted all around England. She was a GD Orderly and undertook office work and became a telephonist. She was discharged in 1946.

Victor Crompton of Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear died on 5th August 2016, aged 88. He joined the Royal Air Force as a Clerk in 1946. After postings to RAF Kinloss and the Suez Canal Zone he was discharged as an Aircraftman First Class in 1949.

John Dryburgh of Diss, Norfolk died on 28th August 2016, aged 90. He left school at 16 and went to RAF Halton for aircrew selection. Joining in 1942, he was a navigator on Mosquitoes, Canberras and Shackletons in the UK and Middle East and left the RAF as a Flight Lieutenant in 1968.

Robert Dunn of Kidderminster, Worcestershire died on 11th August 2016, aged 93. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941, specialising as a ground communications radio operator. After further training he was subsequently posted to Egypt and Italy. He was discharged as a Leading Aircraftman in 1946.

Harry Edwards of St Helen's, Merseyside died on 3rd September 2016, aged 81. Called up for National Service in 1953 he trained at Woolwich and was posted to Oswestry with the Royal Artillery. He was then posted to Gibraltar where he remained until he completed his service in 1955.

Vincent Furbey of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 25th July 2016, aged 88. He joined the General Service Corps for National Service in 1946 before transferring a month later to the 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment. After service in Germany, Hong Kong and Singapore he was discharged in 1948.

Edmund Garbutt of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 17th August 2016, aged 82. He enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1951 and was posted to Singapore and Kenya. Discharged in 1968 as a Chief Technician he remained as an aircraft maintainer with the RAF for the next 15 years in a civilian capacity.

Boris Glassow of Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear died on 24th April 2016, aged 95. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1939 and was deployed to France with the British Expeditionary Force; he was wounded and evacuated through Dunkirk. He then served with the 8th Army in North Africa and Italy before discharge in 1946.

Ronald 'Ron' Goldsmith of Pembroke, Dyfed died on 3rd September 2016, aged 87. Joining the General Service Corps in 1947 he served with the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in the UK and was discharged as a Private in 1949.

Reginald 'Reg' Goudy of Stockport, Cheshire died on 21st August 2016, aged 90. He joined the General Service Corps in May 1944 and transferred to the East Yorkshire Regiment a month later. He later joined the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry and fought in Belgium, Holland and Germany. He transferred to the Wiltshire Regiment before discharge in 1948.

Arthur 'Ron' Griffiths of Haverfordwest, Dyfed died on 30th August 2016, aged, 80. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1954 and served in Egypt before discharging as a Private in 1956.

Arthur Hall of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire died on 31st August 2016, aged 97. He joined the Royal Artillery (TA) in April 1939 and was mobilised in August, serving initially in Northern Ireland for two years. Posted to India he fought in Burma, south of Rangoon and was awarded the Burma Star. He was discharged as a Warrant Officer Second Class in 1946.

Charles Hanaway of Rottingdean, East Sussex died on 28th August 2016, aged 92. He served in the Middlesex Regiment from 1941 to 1943, transferring to the Royal Scots Fusiliers where he remained until 1946. He took part in the 1944 Invasion of France and fought through France, Belgium, Holland to Germany.

Ronald 'John' Hanaway of Herne Bay, Kent died on 7th September 2016, aged 90. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1942 and was an aircraft instrument repairer on Lancaster bombers. He served in the UK and was discharged as an Aircraftman First Class in 1946.

James 'Jim' Hartley of Ovingdean, East Sussex died on 31st August 2016, aged 95. He joined the East Lancashire Regiment in 1940 and carried out his basic training before transferring to the Royal Artillery. He took part in the Invasion of France in 1944 at D and S crossing at Arromanches. He moved through Normandy, Belgium, Holland and Germany prior to being discharged in 1946.

Marjorie Haworth née Whiteside of Fleetwood, Lancashire died in 2016, aged 94. She joined the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) in 1942 specialising in signals and coding. She was transferred to HMS Urley in the Isle of Man for most of the war, working with the Fleet Air Arm and was discharged as a Leading Wren in 1945.

William 'Bill' Johnson of Basingstoke, Hampshire died on 14th April 2016, aged 84. He joined the Royal Signals in 1950 for National Service, serving in the UK and Malaya. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1952.

Eileen Jones née Neck of Ferndale, Mid Glamorgan died on 19th August 2016, aged 75. She enlisted in the Women's Royal Army Corps (TA) in 1959. Serving as a cook, she was a Lance Corporal at the time of discharge in 1963.

Eric Jones of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died in 2016. He joined the Royal Navy in 1940. Based at Portsmouth as a Telegraphist he was discharged in 1947.

Stanley Jones of Eastbourne, East Sussex died in 2016, aged 92. Enlisting in the Royal Navy in 1943 he served in the North Sea, Atlantic and the Mediterranean and was a Stoker 1st Class on his discharge in 1946.

Joan Laing née Harrod of Bath, Somerset died on 3rd September 2016, aged 96. She joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1940 and served in Fighter Command as secretary to AVM Sir Basil Embry until discharge as a Corporal in 1944.

Vivien Lethem of Lewes, East Sussex died on 29th August 2016, aged 93. She volunteered for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1942. Based at RAF Ponteland in Newcastle, she was a Leading Aircraftwoman on discharge in 1946.

Robert Liles of Hertford, Hertfordshire died on 9th September 2016, aged 92. He volunteered to join the Suffolk Regiment in 1942, transferring to the Royal Armoured Corps, Training Regiment in 1943. In 1944 he joined the Army Air Corps where he qualified as a pilot, training in Tiger Moths. He became a glider pilot, flew with Operation Market Garden into Arnhem and was taken prisoner of war. Held in a Polish camp he took part in the march east and was liberated by the US Army. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1945.

Albert Lincoln of Cardiff, South Glamorgan died on 2nd September 2016, aged 91. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served in the Atlantic Convoys, the Pacific, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for action against a German U-Boat and was discharged as an Able Seaman (Submarine Detector) in 1946.

Hubert Lumb of Crewe, Cheshire died on 9th July 2016, aged 92. He enlisted into the Queen's Royal Regiment in 1943. In 1944, he was released to Commission in the Lancashire Fusiliers and was posted to Italy, East Africa and India before being discharged as a Lieutenant in 1947.

Alfred 'Alf' Marsh of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on 18th August 2016, aged 96. In 1940 he enlisted into the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He specialised as a machine gunner in the Middlesex Regiment which he joined in 1943 serving in North Africa and subsequently in Italy. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps as a Driver in Italy in 1944 and was discharged in 1946.

Lewis Matkin of Ovingdean, East Sussex died on 9th September 2016, aged 94. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943, training at HMS Ganges qualifying as a Seaman Torpedoman. He served in destroyers and volunteered for minesweeping, serving in the Algerine class vessel HMS Clinton. He was discharged as an Able Seaman in 1946.

Alfred Morley of Hove, East Sussex died on 12th August 2016, aged 101. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940. He was a general duties Aircraftman whose first posting was to RAF Padgate as a Batman. He was later moved to RAF Moreton in the Marsh, where he finally became the Officers Mess Manager as a Corporal, before leaving the service in 1946.

Eric Moss of Walton on the Naze, Essex died on 13th August 2016, aged 95. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 serving initially as an engine fitter. He then moved to Air/Sea Rescue in Poole and also served in the Far East before discharging as a Corporal in 1946.

George Newcombe of Farnborough, Hampshire died on 8th September 2016, aged 89. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1945 and served in the UK and Germany before being discharged as a Private in 1948.

Terence 'Terry' Nichols of St Neots, Cambridgeshire died on 30th August 2016, aged 93. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and trained at Skegness. He finally became an Aircraft Group 1 Electrician. In 1944 he was posted to Egypt and then Aden. He was discharged in 1946 but rejoined in 1948 and was finally discharged as a Sergeant in 1953.

Eric Noble of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on 4th April 2016, aged 87. He enlisted into the Royal Air Force in 1947, serving in Germany as a clerk. On discharge in 1949 he was an Aircraftman First Class.

Thomas 'Tom' Parker of Corby, Northamptonshire died on 19th August 2016, aged 94. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and after training he was posted to India and Burma, later discharged as a Leading Aircraftman in 1946.

John Preston of Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd died in 2016, aged 77. In 1956 he joined the Royal Air Force and specialised as a cook serving in the UK and Germany before leaving in 1958. He rejoined in 1966 and served across the UK. At the time of discharge in 1978 he held the rank of Corporal.

Denis 'Chris' Redmond of Yateley, Hampshire died on 21st August 2016, aged 87. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1946 serving in India, Pakistan and Germany and greatly enjoyed his service. He was discharged as a Corporal in 1956.

John Rix of Lowestoft, Suffolk died on 11th August 2016, aged 78. He was called up for National Service in 1956 and joined the Army Catering Corps. After training at St Omar Barracks in Aldershot he was posted to Malaya. He served in a variety of locations with the Royal Artillery around the Malayan Peninsula. He also did some boxing for his unit. He was discharged in 1958.

Evelyn 'Louise' Sarvis née Green of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on 9th August 2016, aged 97. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1942. Serving with A Company, No2 Motor Transport Company in Camberley, Edinburgh and Wales she later lectured in map reading to ATS drivers. She proudly served briefly with HM the Queen who was herself an ATS driver during the war. On discharge as a Sergeant in 1946 she worked in London making documentary films for industry.

Norman Sharples of Conwy, Gwynedd died on 27th August 2016, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and served in ATC in the UK and was an Aircraftman First Class until 1944 when he had to leave due to poor eyesight.

Maurice Thirkill of Bradford, West Yorkshire died on 5th September 2016, aged 90. He left school at 14 and joined the Home Guard whilst also working for the Post Office. In 1943 he enlisted in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and was an Air Mechanic Class 1, serving in the UK until his discharge in 1946.

George Todd of Cleethorpes, South Humberside died on 11th September 2016, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1947 and served in Hong Kong as a Signal Telegraphist, a role he continued with when he was posted to Iraq, Germany and Singapore. In Singapore his signals unit was based in the jungle with Australian troops. He was a Warrant Officer at the time of discharge in 1975.

Ian Tott of Preston, Lancashire died on 18th July 2016, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1943 and served in the UK and India as a signals officer until discharge in 1946.

Edgar Waller of Redhill, Surrey died on 27th August 2016, aged 101. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1939 and trained at Crystal Palace. He was part of the British Expeditionary Force and served in France, North Africa, Iraq and Palestine. He discharged as a Sergeant in 1945.

Dennis Williams of Rhyl, Denbighshire died on 31st August 2016, aged 92. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1942 and did his basic training at Blackpool. He was posted to RAF St Athan and RAF Cosford, specialising as a mechanic AC1. He spent time in a variety of UK locations prior to his posting to India. He remained in Allahabad until his discharge in 1947.

Loris 'Harry' Williamson of Walton on Thames, Surrey died on 28th August 2016, aged 85. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1949, commissioned at Sandhurst and transferred to the South Stafford Regiment in 1951. He subsequently lost one eye in an explosion in Northern Ireland and in 1954 transferred to the Army Catering Corps where he did hotel management training. He worked in Yemen on secondment, leaving the Army in 1962 as a Captain.

