

March 2017

# Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915





**On the cover:** Outgoing President Ray Hazan OBE is presented with an engraved silver salver by Chairman Tim Davis. Standing beside Ray is incoming President Colin Williamson and beside the Chairman is our Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB. The inscribed silver salver states Ray Hazan OBE Who led so many to achieve Victory over Blindness.

**Back page:** Our Hampton Court Flower Show Garden.

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### Patron Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex GCVO.

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### Useful telephone numbers.

**The Brighton centre** 01273 307811.

**The Llandudno centre** 01492 868700.

**The Booking Office for the Brighton centre:** To book accommodation at the Brighton centre 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.

#### April.

Cycling Week 16th to 22nd.

Masonic Weekend 21st to 24th.

Technology Week (first) 23rd to 30th.

#### May.

Photography Week 1st to 6th.

Jurassic Coast Walk 7th to 13th.

Women's Military Service Week 14th to 20th.

#### June.

Archery Club (first) 4th to 10th.

#### July.

Ex-PoW Week 2nd to 8th.

Homes & Gardens Week 16th to 22nd.

### Activities from the Llandudno centre.

#### April.

Music Week 9th to 15th.

#### May/June.

Wood Week 14th to 20th May.

Horse Riding Week 28th May to 3rd June.

#### June.

Sea Fishing Week 18th to 24th June.

Potting & Planting Week 25th June to 1st July.

#### July/August.

Adventure Week 2nd to 8th July.

Recreation Taster Week 16th to 22nd July.

Cycling Week 30th July to 5th August.

### To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Brighton centre.

For further information and to book your place at the Brighton centre please 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 864590. If you have care needs please first speak with your Welfare Officer.



# From the Chairman.

## Your message from Tim Davis.

I want to pay a personal tribute to Ray Hazan, who as many of you may now be aware, has retired as President after 40 years of very significant contribution and service with Blind Veterans UK, and 13 years as President. A huge thank you on behalf of the Trustees past and present, and all who have been involved with the charity over this period, for your inspiration, leadership and commitment. We are very grateful indeed and I know there will be many readers of this Review who will have their own special memories of your positive impact and engagement with so many.

Ray has been both a beneficiary and an employee of the charity, and as President he has provided insight and a voice to the Council of Trustees, which I've personally found immensely valuable.

Ray was commissioned into the 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment in 1965, and then served in Cyprus, Malaya, Kenya, Gibraltar and of course in the UK. Ray was blinded and lost a hand, as well as sustaining significant hearing loss, during his second tour of Northern Ireland in 1973 when an IRA parcel bomb exploded. After initial training and rehabilitation at St Dunstan's, as our charity was then known, Ray studied at the International School for Interpreting in Mons, Belgium. In 1977 he joined the staff of St Dunstan's, initially as an Assistant Public Relations Officer, then later Welfare Manager and Editor of the Review. In 1998 he joined the Council of Trustees and in 2004 became President. Ray was made an OBE by the Queen for his service to the blind community and to Blind Veterans UK, where he started a number of our clubs and activities, including the Ski Club which has been active for 40 years!

As Ray retires, it gives me great pleasure to announce and warmly welcome Colin Williamson as our new President. Colin has been doing some outstanding work building bridges and a lasting partnership with the Blinded Veterans Association of the United States of America. This has brought blind veterans together from both sides of the Atlantic, as well as South Africa, as they exchange ideas and comradeship to further the benefit we can have with our Allies. Colin's enthusiasm, selflessness and commitment I know will serve us very well for many years to come.

Before I sign off I would also like to thank Andrew Fisher-Tomlin and Dan Bowyer, the creative duo behind the woodland garden at the Llandudno Centre. They will create a Blind Veterans UK show garden for this year's RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. I hope you all get a chance to visit this in July. Further information is included in this edition of the Review.

## ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

Our heroes are bravely doing their best,  
In learning some useful craft or art,  
Each one nobly doing his part,  
Instructed by teachers in the very best way,  
So we'll wish them success and hope it will pay."  
We all hope so, too.

Sir Henry and Lady Norman made a visit of inspection on Friday, February 16th, and spent much time in closely inspecting the work and inquiring into the results. Sir Henry was impressed by the accounts of the men who have settled at their various trades, and Lady Norman, who proved a most capable cross-examiner elicited information which she described as very helpful. It was a pleasure to tell them all that they wanted to know, as they displayed a grasp of the capacities of the blind which is by no means usual. Sir Henry bought glove boxes for his children, and was kind enough to accept a copy of the ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW.

Extensions on a large scale have been begun, as Sir Arthur finds it imperative to make ready for the increasing demands that are anticipated. A big new building to take 250 men is to be erected on the ground adjoining St. Dunstan's; the Workshops and Braille Room are to be doubled in size; new poultry classrooms are to be erected, and every necessary accommodation is being prepared. We shall be ready for any claims that may be made upon our space.

The fire drills that we have practised at stated times came in useful on February 14th, when we had a valentine in the shape of a little outbreak of fire in one of the chimneys. It was a small affair, and was immediately extinguished, and its only importance

was to prove to us that St. Dunstan's is equipped and prepared for all emergencies.

Miss Vera Philips, one of our most popular V.A.D. sisters, is to marry Captain Rex Hope, M.C., of the Middlesex Regiment, very shortly. Miss Philips, whose unassuming usefulness has earned wide respect, will take our grateful best wishes with her in her new life.

St. Dunstan's had a stall at the Holy Trinity Church (Marylebone) Sale of Work on Tuesday, February 20th. The Sale was opened by Lady Pearson at 2.30 in the afternoon, Sir Arthur made a speech, and a brisk market followed, which was kept up until a late hour in the evening. Many orders were obtained for the blinded soldiers. The Sale of Work was inaugurated by the Rev. E. N. Sharpe, our Hon. Chaplain.

Lady Abdy is holding a Bazaar at Eaton House, which began yesterday and continues to-day, for the benefit of St. Dunstan's. Lady Waterlow is in charge of our stall, and we have no doubt that she will do very well for us. This lady acts as one of our sisters in the afternoon and does good work.

Corporal Kitson writes to us throwing doubt on the statement that one of our pupils learnt basket-making in three weeks, as he does not think that it is possible. Of course, we did not mean to imply that he mastered the whole basket-making trade, but that he learnt to make two or three different baskets in this time. As Sergeant Curtis-Willson is the man in question, perhaps he will let us know the exact particulars.

Albert Woollen tells us that Sir Arthur Pearson, on his recent visit to Manchester, called on the four masseurs at

**Picture:** An extract from the March 1917 Review that gives a snapshot of life at St Dunstan's.



## Serve to Lead. Ray Hazan OBE stands down as our President. By Catherine Goodier.

"I'll never forget my first day as I stood outside the lounge [in Pearson House] and heard all this laughter, and all this chat, and I thought 'What the devil? They're supposed to be blind. They shouldn't be laughing.' And I think that was, to be honest, when the light began to shine at the end of the tunnel that perhaps, perhaps blindness wasn't that bad after all. That there was something cheerful still to laugh about. So that was quite fascinating. It was the first spark of hope."

Always a laugh, Ray Hazan has continued that laughter. But the day he spoke of was in 1973, the day when he first crossed the threshold of Pearson House, and stepped into a new world, a world of possibilities, as he placed his feet firmly on to the broad highway of normal life and took his first steps. Speaking of those early days shortly after he was blinded in Northern Ireland, Ray said: "I don't know if it was luck that the first St Dunstaner, as we were called in those days, I met was Lord Fraser who had been in the Chair for 53 years at that stage. That was during my six week stay in hospital and it was an interesting meeting. He told me all about the organisation and at one stage he leant forward to tap my knee to emphasise a point and I remember thinking to myself 'How the devil did he know my knee was there?' It's a gesture that I'll never forget. It was to indicate, I later discovered, that blind people are not crazy upset people, they're quite normal and can do quite normal things."

"But before Lord Fraser I first had a visit from the Admissions Officer, Lawrie Slade, and he was the first person who asked if I had heard of St Dunstan's? I looked very blankly at him because I'd never heard of the organisation I'm ashamed to say, especially being a serving Army Officer. He told me what they could do for me and I remember saying to him 'Gosh that sounds the place for me where do I sign on' sort of thing. So it was decided on really quickly that rather than take two more weeks convalescing, as I was so bored, that I would go to St Dunstan's. I left hospital on the Friday and on the Monday was driven down with my then wife and her father to Brighton. Not to Ian Fraser House [the Brighton centre], because that was being renovated at the time, but to Pearson House in Kemp Town, which had been used mainly as a nursing home up to then. It was temporarily being used as a training centre and that's where I learnt to be a St Dunstaner."

"It was where I learnt there were people who had lost both their hands and their sight or both their hearing and their sight and there's always somebody worse off than yourself, which is perhaps not the best way to go about feeling better for yourself, but nevertheless it's hard not to. Some of them had fascinating stories and were a great source of inspiration and hope really. I was very lucky, as the Army stepped in and they provided a staff car to take me home on Friday after the classes had finished and bring me back on Monday morning in time for the first class at 9.30am. So, I had the academics, learning mobility and Braille and typing in Brighton, but by going home at weekends I was able to learn things around the home."

"Just before Christmas, the Commandant as he was called, the manager of the house, asked if I wanted to take part in a documentary for the BBC. Not expecting to be chosen, when I discovered it was television rather than a radio show the thought of showing my private life on television at first was a no no. Anyway as a family we talked about it and even in those days Northern Ireland was becoming a forgotten war. One day there would be a headline in the newspaper — Soldier Injured. Soldier Blinded. The next day people had forgotten about it. Whereas for us involved of course it was a headline for the rest of our lives. So, I thought perhaps there is a way of showing there is a cost of conflict, and agreed to do it, and from Christmas onwards for the following six months they followed me with a camera. I think I was preceded by somebody in a wheelchair, followed by somebody who had depression. That was when handicap was beginning to be shown on television and it helped knock down the barriers between the able bodied and the handicapped. Not all in one go, of course not, but it was a start that they were actually talking about blind people on television, or a wheelchair user."

"And then joy of joy in the February, and I was blown up in October, my first son was born, Jonathan. He came at a very important time. At a time when the publicity perhaps had worn off and it was getting down to the hard grind of learning to be blind, and probably feeling very sorry for myself and looking introvertly. Then we suddenly had this third life to look after. It took both my ex-wife and me out of ourselves with this lovely child to take care of."

Having grown up in France Ray was fluent in French and he decided to follow his father to become an interpreter. He spent nine months at St Dunstan's as he prepared to go to the International School of Interpreting in Mons, Belgium."



"My dad was working as an interpreter in Shape [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe], which was just about four miles up the road, and that's where we ended up living. It was lovely to have family support in the background. We'd go up mostly at weekends for lunch with mum and dad and they were of course able to see their first grandson growing up. I spent two years at the International School of Interpreting, who then told me to learn another language and work that back into English, rather than working English, French, French, English. Well the prospect of another year at University didn't interest me to be honest so we decided to come back to London and maybe find some work as a freelance interpreter and do a bit of court interpreting. So that's how I ended up in front of the Magistrate in the Dock of Bow Street's Magistrate's Court. Although it was a French man standing next to me who was accused of bopping a Policeman and I was sort of translating for him. I then had another job, a diplomat from the Belgium Congo who was being interviewed by holding a press conference. One press person turned up who understood French anyway. I got the feeling I wasn't entirely wanted, but it still paid me a fiver, which seemed a fortune in those days for a couple of hours work."

While working as an interpreter Mr Wills, the General Secretary of St Dunstan's, called Ray to offer him the position of Assistant Public Relations Officer at headquarters. Ray initially asked this to be postponed as he wanted to give interpreting a go.

"In 1977 Robin Buckley, a St Dunstaner who had been a FEPOW, was about to retire as head of PR, and his number two, David Castleton, was about to be promoted. I still wanted to pursue a career as an interpreter, but when they told me the salary I immediately accepted the post with St Dunstan's! So David Castleton stepped up and I came in as David's number two. In fact at that stage all the departments were headed by St Dunstaners, Robin Buckley PR, Peter Matthews for Estates, Pat Owens, Industrial and Richard Dufton Research Science. They were all coming up to their retirement so after about a year's time I was the only St Dunstaner working at headquarters and that was the case for quite a few years.

"The first job as Assistant PRO that David gave me was to help the handless community. Their wives read the Review to them, but only reading what they thought the men wanted to read. They got a bit hacked off with this so my first responsibility was to put the Review on cassette. We had a lovely reader, Steven Jack, who read a lot for the Talking Book Library. He'd been an actor between

the wars and was renowned for his different accents. I'd go to his house with a reel to reel tape recorder, and then that was copied onto a cassette and copies made. So that's where the Talking Review started in 1977. But what a wonderful opportunity it was in the Public Relations Office when one had the excuse to go and visit all sorts of functions and affairs in order to write about it in the Review. To interview people from the First World War was a great privilege and one I was honoured to do."

Ray is also the founder of our Computer and Walking Clubs, and in 1977 he set up the Ski Club. "When the chance of skiing came my way I thought 'Skiing no you're joking how on earth is that done?' Anyway my first trip was to Norway and very soon after that we had a trip to Italy where we were five blind skiers and only three guides. I thought, this is no good it's got to be one to one. So I said to Jock Carnochan, the mobility officer at the time, do you mind if I go and find some guides from somewhere. Well of course he wasn't going to say no. Every winter the forces based in Germany go down South to the skiing on Operation Snow Queen. As the first Battalion of my Regiment were based in Germany at the time I wrote to them asking if there was any chance they could lend us any of their ski guides. They did and that's what started our association with the Army. When they left Germany the gunners took over and they're still skiing with us. Forty years later they wouldn't miss this week for all the tea in China. It's absolutely marvellous as we've seen our guides start as maybe a Bombardier and go through to achieve higher rank and then finish their career after 22 years. The Ski Club is working very well and this year they had a party of 58, which is marvellous. At one stage I would visit potential new members in hospital, the young ones especially, and I'd say a little bit jokey 'I'll see you at the ski trip next year.' They'd say 'Oh come on don't have me on' and in a year's time you'd see them skiing. It's wonderful, it really gives you confidence. It's a wonderful sensation, absolutely scary as hell, but there we go, and the nightlife is all part of the fun."

In 2004, something momentous happened that Ray had barely allowed himself to dream of when he was appointed as President of St Dunstan's. "I have to be honest and say to you that in my heart of hearts I always wondered if I would make President. It was something I hardly dared think about, because I'm not an ambitious person. To me the ambitious person is always looking ahead to the future at the expense of today. To me today is much more important, it's what you actually have at the time. So when I was proposed by the then Chairman, Captain Michael Gordon-Lennox RN OBE, the thought of metaphorically leading



such a prestigious charity as St Dunstan's made me just tingle. I still remember almost every month I would have to say to myself 'You're President of St Dunstan's' as it was such a thrill and an honour. To be frank it was a title more than anything else, but one of which I was immensely proud. Why — because I owed everything to, and I still do owe everything, to Blind Veterans UK.

"They gave me my life back when we thought that life had come to an end. You're lying in hospital thinking where are we going from here? And suddenly they pick you up and give you your life back in trumps. I've had experiences which are once in a lifetime that I would never ever have experienced. I'm going to be shamelessly name dropping here! When we were raising money for the new centre at Llandudno we had a reception at Buckingham Palace, a meal for about 30 people. Her Royal Highness Princess Anne was the hostess and the diners included the King and Queen of Greece and their son, the Crown Prince of Greece with his American wife, and also there was the great great granddaughter of the Archduke Ferdinand who was shot before the start of the war. I was sitting next to Dame Mary Perkins the founder of Specsavers, a wonderful lady, so unassuming, and wonderful to talk to, and I had to stand up and address them for five minutes. Now where else would that ever happen! It's the wonderful experiences like that I'll never forget."

Another great accolade on his walk along the broad highway of normal life took place on Wednesday 22nd February 2012 when Ray returned to Buckingham Palace where he was made an OBE by HM The Queen.

"I couldn't believe it, because it's so satisfying to know that your work has been recognised and honoured. Absolutely chuffed to naafi breaks as they say. At the Palace my two sons Jonathan and Giles were with me, and obviously Robbie, so that was lovely to have them with us. I remember walking with the Page of the Presence and suddenly found myself before our Patron, Her Majesty the Queen. I was able to tell Her Majesty about our name change that had taken place the day before, and then offered congratulations on behalf of all blind veterans on the occasion of this, her special year. It was all over in a blink of an eye, a once in a lifetime experience of pomp, ceremony and circumstance, but one which has been repeated many times in my memory."

Going back; as a child Ray's father went over to NATO in 1952 taking his family to France. As they wanted Ray to have an English education he commuted backwards and forwards to boarding school in Seaford, and later to Guildford

to Charterhouse, where he had a great time. Perhaps too good a time! In his last year he was out three nights a week, either playing the flute in the orchestra, or singing in the choir. And in his own words "That showed why I only got one A Level and even that was French! I think for Spanish they gave me an O Level equivalent pass and for English Literature a fail, which I thought was jolly good stead for me being editor of the Review. But there we go!"

At around the age of 16 he considered his career options. He knew that he didn't want an office job and thought the services would be right for him. Flying was out as he wasn't co-ordinated enough, the Royal Navy was out as he would get horribly seasick crossing from Dieppe to Newhaven on the way home for the school holidays, and so the Army it was. At the same time as he took his A Levels he sat the Civil Service Commissioning exam and having also passed the War Office Selection Board was accepted into Sandhurst, which in those days was a two year course. When Ray joined the Army and trained at Sandhurst and later served in the UK, those years were the first time that he had really lived in England.

"At Sandhurst the motto was, Serve to Lead, and by crikey they made you serve, and quite right too as how can you command people if you haven't been through the same demands yourself. I was lucky enough to choose the Royal Anglian Regiment. It was almost a matter of sticking a pin in as I had no connections at all, my only thought was that a friend at school had gone into the Royal Anglian Regiment so it was simply a name I knew. But by golly, I never regretted that choice, they were absolutely marvellous to me. We're talking now about the 1960s as I was commissioned in 1965. The say Join the Army and See the World and really that did happen as my first posting was to Cyprus, I visited Malaya on exercise, Kenya on exercise, was posted to Gibraltar, the UK and of course to Northern Ireland.

"So in 1970 having married in the September six weeks later I was off to Belfast and my first tour in Northern Ireland. Anyway, we just about survived the first tour and we were all pretty shocked by some of the bestialities that we witnessed. My post was second in command of an infantry company, which meant I was in charge of the ops room and spent literally hours in there every day. It was actually the Headmaster's study as we were in a school and the Headmaster had to move out into a staff common room. So that was my first tour in Northern Ireland in 1970 over the Christmas period. The first Christmas away from home so a bit of a disappointment all round."



On his return to the UK Ray was based in Folkestone, at Shorncliffe for two years, before he returned to Northern Ireland, to Londonderry in August 1973. "About halfway through the tour my company commander was away watching the company playing football and a General was about to visit the factory in whose grounds we were based. We were all stationed in an outhouse in the grounds of the factory and in charge of the Ops Room that afternoon was Second Lieutenant Lyn Dobbie of the RAOC. He was learning how the Infantry worked and was attached to us for six months. I thought just in case the General paid a surprise visit to our Ops Room I'd better hang around, as technically I was off duty. Whilst I was there one of the retinue from the general's guard came in with a parcel and said 'Is this for you?' I took one look at it and said 'No it's addressed to the neighbouring gunner unit, but leave it with me, we'll pass this on. Where did you get the parcel?' and he told me. I just really didn't make two and two at the time make four. I suppose halfway through the tour life was becoming a dull ritual of Ops Room — bed, Ops Room — bed, Ops Room — bed. Not going anywhere or doing anything spectacular.

"I was just holding it [the parcel] chatting to Lyn Dobbie on my left when suddenly, as if in a windowless room somebody had flicked the light switch off and turned the sound down. I didn't see anything. I didn't feel anything. I didn't hear anything. Just suddenly black. But the moment I woke up on the floor I sort of thought 'Oh oh something's happened here'. Don't tell me it was a matter of bravery or courage, or intelligence, it was just instinctive, but I remember thinking 'You twit Hazan it's already too late to turn the clock back'.

"Now that I think was a very important fact and I'll come back to that. But I remember going in and out of consciousness and telling the doctor that I was supposed to be going on R&R, which is meant to be rest and recuperation for five days leave in the middle of the tour, but we called it rack and ruin. I remember dictating the telephone number where my wife was staying with her parents in Herefordshire, Leintwardine 200. I won't forget that phone number in a hurry. And I remember hearing the ambulance, the siren, and then the next thing I came to in hospital with a nurse saying 'I'm going to have to cut the clothes off you'. I did an inventory of myself and thought 'Oh oh something's missing. I'm a bit short on the right hand side'. I asked the nurse if I had lost my hand and she said yes. I imagine that she probably thought, don't ask about your eyes, but I didn't, I just assumed I had bandages on. You know, temporarily couldn't see, so that came later.

"Just to go back to that flash and it's too late to turn the clock back. I believe that every disabled person has to overcome their handicap, but first of all the most important thing is to accept what has happened. Whether you like it or not you cannot turn the clock back, and so the only direction you can go in is forward. Easier said than done, but I feel that in some way, I had come to terms with what might have happened to me there on the floor after the explosion. And so when I woke up I'm not going to say it wasn't a surprise when they told me what bits and pieces were missing, but it wasn't a 100% surprise and so I feel very lucky to have had that instinctive reaction to what had happened. And now many years later I find that the lack of hearing is much more annoying than not being able to see. But there we go, it's something you have to live with."

And Ray does bear his injuries lightly. Perhaps it is due to the sound of shared laughter that he first heard decades ago, as it ignited in him a spark of hope that has never been extinguished. It is the same spark of hope that was ignited by Sir Arthur Pearson in 1915 and has blazed through our charity, as from a spark it has grown into a shining beacon of hope that inspires all who come within its orb of light.

Having made the decision to stand down as President, when asked his message to the new President, Ray said: "I'm sure that Colin Williamson will feel the same degree of pride and satisfaction and honour that I've felt knowing that you're representing such a prestigious charity. He will have the chance to travel and see as many people as he can and that is a good morale booster. Again it's being cheerful, positive, and if someone has a complaint making sure that problem is dealt with. I have relished every day as President. At the Trustee lunch I was very moved when the Chairman presented me with the beautifully inscribed silver salver and to learn that someone had taken the trouble to find one that was made as close to the year that our charity was founded was a very special moment."

Speaking to the Review of his appointment as President, Colin Williamson said: "It's an honour to follow in the footsteps of Ray Hazan, as he is one of the most inspirational people I have ever had the pleasure to meet. I feel humbled, privileged and proud to be President of this incredible charity."

We are sure that you will join us in congratulating Colin on his appointment as President and in making a very public thank you to Ray and to Robbie. If you would like to share your good wishes to Ray for your fellow blind veterans to read please do send them into the Review.



## Reach for the Skies. By Colin Williamson, Contributing Editor.

As a young boy growing up in Barnard Castle, County Durham at the start of the Second World War, beneficiary and former Royal Air Force pilot Wilson Taylor was fascinated by aircraft. This fascination stemmed from an incident he witnessed in the skies above the sleepy little market town one sunny summer's day in 1940. This episode was probably the most significant day in The Battle of Britain as far as the North East of England was concerned. Wilson takes up the story.

"I remember it vividly. It is something that I'll never forget. I was a lad of fifteen walking up the bank from the river heading into the centre of town when I heard the unmistakable sound of aircraft engines. I immediately looked up and there were dozens of aeroplanes filling the sky and much to my amazement most of them were German aircraft. I saw Dornier's, Heinkel 111's and Messerschmitt 110's and then I heard the roar of machine gun fire coming from a Spitfire which was in pursuit of them. I watched as a Messerschmitt 110 was shot down by the Spitfire and crashed in a field between Barnard Castle and Darlington. Later that evening I saw the surviving crew members from the Messerschmitt being taken into custody at Barnard Castle police station and I heard later that they had been sent to Canada and served out the rest of the hostilities as prisoners of war. The Luftwaffe had sent over these aircraft from Norway and Denmark because they thought that as the majority of air battles were raging over London and the Home Counties there would be no Hurricanes or Spitfires here in the North East. They were mistaken. Some forty years on I managed to contact the pilot of the Spitfire, the legendary Ben Bennions, and also the pilot of the Messerschmitt and we corresponded for a while.

It was on that day, the fifteenth of August 1940 that I decided that I wanted to learn to fly and join the Royal Air Force. Two years after that day, at the age of seventeen, I volunteered for training as air crew with the RAF.

I was called up in September 1943 and reported to the Air Crew Reception Centre in London before receiving orders to report for pilot training in Newquay, Cornwall and then eventually, on to Canada for further training. I flew in a single engine aircraft, a Fairchild Cornell, in Saskatchewan for 90 hours and then went solo, which was the most exciting day of my life before being sent to Manitoba to train on twin engine aircraft for around 200 hours. After

qualifying on both aircraft I flew my Wings test and passed with an above average rating. Unfortunately for me it was just at the time that the Atomic bombs were dropped which heralded the end of the war as far as the Japanese were concerned. I was immensely disappointed because I had been given orders to report to an airfield in British Columbia where I was to fly Dehavilland Mosquitoes and take the war to the Japanese. Instead of that, I ended up in Quebec and then eventually sailed back to the UK.

My flying instructor at the time, Flying Officer Underwood, said to me, "Wilson, you've done well. You'll receive your wings in due course". Well, that due course took nearly seventy years!

I still had two years remaining to serve in the RAF but as I had no flying duties I spent those two years doing menial tasks before finally being demobbed.

As soon as I was demobbed I went immediately to Durham University where I studied to become a teacher. I taught at boy's schools in the North East, mainly Sunderland and Wallsend and then I went to Manchester University to qualify to teach deaf children which I enjoyed immensely. I eventually retired from that job in 1982 and in the same year because of my love for aviation took a flight on Concord from London to Newcastle which was very interesting indeed.

I have always been fascinated by flying and before my pilot training started I was always begging to be taken up and scrounged many a flight in RAF aircraft. On one occasion I even managed to scrounge a flight in one of the surviving Lancaster bombers which had taken part in the famous Dambusters Raid.

After leaving the RAF and after my initial teacher training I continued to fly, as much as my teachers pay would permit, and after a while I met up with a friend who I had met on-board Concord and who had been a rear-gunner on a Lancaster and he part owned a Grumman Traveller four seater aeroplane and he asked me if I'd care to join him in flying, silly question!

We flew together for a good few years, flying over Scotland, the North East and North West of England and on one occasion flew over the Humber Bridge. We flew until just before our 85<sup>th</sup> birthdays and I remember the last flight that we took together. Ken, my pal, wasn't as fit as he used to be so we decided on one last flight, Ken flew the aircraft from Newcastle to Carlisle, we had a spot of lunch and then I hopped in and flew the aeroplane back to Newcastle.



I was always trying to defy gravity, I flew in gliders, powered gliders, Microlights, single and twin engine aeroplanes and even went up in a hot air balloon which wasn't particularly interesting for me! Flying microlights was very exciting!

Every day that went by I thought about the injustice of me not receiving my RAF wings. I was a qualified pilot, I had passed my Wings test as my log book would confirm and I decided, after 60 years, in 2014, to petition Her Majesty the Queen after the Air Ministry had continually rejected my requests. I received a letter back from Her Majesty ten days later explaining that she couldn't get involved but would forward my letter, and her reply, to the House of Commons and addressed to the then Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond!

Well, this started the ball rolling and after numerous letters, emails and telephone calls I finally received an email from an Air Vice Marshall who told me "Mr Taylor, we are dispensing with protocol and are going to hold a special occasion where you will be presented your pilots wings"! It was so exciting to read those words, believe me.

So, on August 21st 2014 I was picked up by a RAF staff car from RAF Boulmer in Northumberland and taken down to RAF Linton-on-Ouse where, in front of a vast array of Wing Commanders, Group Commanders and Air Vice Marshalls, Air Vice Marshal Edward Stringer, the second most senior officer in the RAF, pinned my pilots wings onto the proudest chest in the UK! He also presented me with a sixpence piece; a George V1 1945 sixpence to be precise and he explained to me that when the RAF was formed back in 1918 the newly qualified pilots were presented with their wings which were made of silk and that they used to place the sixpence behind the crown to make it stand out. I thought that was very thoughtful of him.

After the presentation my family and I were taken to the officers mess for a lovely meal in my honour and then onto an RAF museum where I was asked if I'd like to go in a flight simulator. This was no ordinary flight simulator but a state-of-the-art one where modern day fighter pilots hone their skills. My family were in a room below me watching a bank of television screens and wearing headsets so that they could not only watch me fly but also listen to the commentary. I explained to the instructor that my eyesight was poor and I wouldn't be able to read the instruments, but he told me not to worry and went about showing me where the trim was, the throttle control, mixture control and so on so I strapped in and took off! I flew over the Humber Bridge and on up to

the northern tip of Lake Ullswater in the Lake District before asking permission to land at Newcastle Airport. I threw in a couple of flick turns and barrel rolls before starting my descent into Newcastle. That day was undoubtedly the best day of my life.

This all happened just before my 90th birthday and not long after that I went up to Newcastle Airport once again to see the aeroplanes that were taking part in the Sunderland Air Show. Over the course of the weekend I proudly wore my wings and my medals and as I was given permission to wander anywhere that I wanted I spent some time chatting with the Chief Engineer of the Red Arrows display team. I was then photographed standing next to a Spitfire and Hurricane from the Memorial Flight and also next to a Typhoon and a Swordfish Mark 1. It was a truly memorable day."

Wilson still flies, but only from the comfort of his own home and on a simulator but still gets an enormous thrill when he takes to the skies.

Tally ho Ginger, chocks away!!



**Picture:** Wilson Taylor.



## St Dunstan's South Africa Annual Reunion. By Colin Williamson, Contributing Editor.

In October I, along with another Blind Veterans UK member, had the pleasure of visiting our fellow blind veterans over in South Africa to attend their annual reunion. On this occasion, the reunion was held in Caledon, Western Cape, some sixty five miles east of Cape Town. Caledon is primarily an agricultural region where grain production is the main focus. The town is famous for its hot springs and the original Dutch name for the town was 'Bad agter de Berd' which translates to 'Bath behind the Mountain'. This was later to be changed to Caledon in honour of Irish peer Du Pre Alexander, second Earl of Caledon who was the first British Governor of the Cape from 1806 to 1811.

Accompanying me on the visit was beneficiary Jamie Cuthbertson, a former Captain in the Royal Engineers who had been invited to speak to the board regarding his experiences with Project Gemini, the annual exchange programme between blind veterans from the US, UK and South Africa. Jamie's presence was to prove invaluable as you will discover further into this article.

We flew from Newcastle International Airport, on an unusually warm day for October in this part of the world courtesy of Emirates Airlines, and after a seven hour flight disembarked in Dubai to spend a few hours kicking our heels before catching a connecting flight to Cape Town. On arrival into Cape Town we were met by the current CEO of St Dunstan's South Africa, Charles Dickson and his successor Gareth Morgan who took over the reins in December when Charles retired. After a chat with Charles and Gareth we were met by our driver who drove us the seventy plus miles to our first port of call, the small town of Hermanus, which lies along Walker Bay on the south coast of the Western Cape. During the drive our driver had to dodge the troops of baboons which were scavenging by the sides of the road and were in some instances over fifty strong.

Hermanus is famous for its Southern Right Whale watching during the southern winter and spring and is a popular retirement town. The reason for our stay in Hermanus was to check out the St Dunstan's holiday home which is a ten minute stroll from the town centre and available to beneficiaries from both St Dunstan's South Africa and Blind Veterans UK to use as a base if they are holidaying in the area. The house was donated by a local entrepreneur and

comprises four bedrooms, some with twin beds and others with bunks, a large lounge, dining area and fully fitted kitchen with an extensive garden and BBQ area to the rear. We were shown around the house by Pikki, who looks after the property for St Dunstan's. After settling in we visited the local shop to stock up on essentials and ventured into town to get our bearings.

Hermanus is great for walkers and we hiked along the various coastal paths to check out their suitability for vision impaired walkers. The paths are very accessible with lots of seating areas dotted along the way and we found some lovely little beaches and bays and also came across a few burial mounds for whales that had been washed ashore. We also took the opportunity to visit a nearby craft brewery and wine estate (purely for research purposes) which is in a beautiful setting with stunning views of the nearby mountains and fertile plains. Hermanus is a very friendly little town with some lovely restaurants, bars and shops and very safe to walk around. Its pleasant streets are surrounded by historic buildings and statues and it has a very nice harbour. If anyone would like some further information regarding the holiday home please contact me at [colin.williamson@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:colin.williamson@blindveterans.org.uk)

After a few days exploring the area we were picked up by our driver and taken to the reunion venue, the hotel adjoining the Caledon Spa and Casino. It was a beautiful drive through the rolling hills and plains.

We were shown to our rooms by St Dunstan's social welfare officer Andrea Burton and very pleased to find that the rooms overlooked a lake, barley fields and a mountain range which attracted a lot of wildlife, particularly birds that gave off some very distinctive (and very loud!) calls. After unpacking we headed to the bar to meet up with past Project Gemini participants Don Wessels, Neville Clarence, Pete Hall, Renier Heyns, Zuko Mtwana and James van Eck. It was fantastic to meet up with them all again and we had some great laughs reminiscing about their time spent with us in the UK.

Pete was sporting his new prosthetic leg which we had managed to obtain, with assistance from our friends over at the Blinded Veterans Association in the US, from a hospital over in Texas and which was shipped out to South Africa free of charge courtesy of courier firm DHL. Pete said it was like walking on air compared to his previous prosthetic, which was World War Two vintage and very heavy duty.



After a meet and greet with the rest of the attendees we had a splendid meal and retired back to the bar where we chatted with various members of the board, some of whom had recently visited the Llandudno and Brighton centres. This was combined with a brief visit to Harcourt Street to learn how we support our blinded veterans in order to make improvements to their system.

The following day we attended classes on various pieces of technical equipment such as the Victor Reader Stream and after lunch Jamie and I were invited to attend a bird and snake show with the children as the beneficiaries, directors and staff were scheduled to hold their meeting. I don't know who was the most excited, the children or Jamie and I! Jamie was actually 'volunteered' to assist the very entertaining chap in charge of the show and was pecked by various birds for his efforts!

After the show Jamie and I held the first of a series of discussions with the CEO, his chairman and board of directors regarding the possibility of St Dunstan's South Africa hosting Project Gemini in 2018.

Over the course of the next couple of days we participated in a variety of events such as acoustic rifle shooting, a zip wire experience through the forest, archery, an African drumming session, wine-blending and periodical visits to the gym and spa.

The final evening saw us as guests of honour at a gala dinner held in the very ornate dining room where Jamie gave a splendid speech regarding the burgeoning relationship between our two organisations and how that bond is growing stronger every day thanks to Project Gemini, which was very well received. I too gave a brief talk and presented St Dunstan's South Africa with a miniature officer's sword engraved with the words "To our brothers and sisters at St Dunstan's South Africa from everyone at Blind Veterans UK". My rationale behind the token of our appreciation was that the sword has often been seen as an emblem of courage and bravery which we witness daily in the lives of some of our beneficiaries. We also presented the beneficiaries with talking watches, long canes, bump-ons (which for some reason are incredibly difficult to obtain in South Africa) and other items of equipment which the charity can't obtain due to high import levies. We also presented handless blind veteran Don Wessels with a set of paddling accessories which will enable him to paddle his canoe with both stumps, something that he has not been able to do for over twenty years. Both Don and his wife were very appreciative and somewhat emotional.

Soon it was time to say our goodbyes and we reluctantly boarded the coach to take us back to Cape Town International Airport and start our long journey home.

It was a very interesting and informative week and it was nice to renew acquaintances and make new friends. I feel quietly confident that the board of St Dunstan's South Africa will endorse the proposal of hosting Project Gemini in their beautiful country and I'd like to thank the CEO, Chairman, his board of directors and members of St Dunstan's for their hospitality, and for making us feel most welcome. I'd also like to thank Jamie for helping to make the visit the success that it was and for being a splendid ambassador for Blind Veterans UK.



**Picture:** Jamie, Zuko Mtwana, Joyce Mtwana and Colin in South Africa.





**Picture:** Dame Vera Lynn with St Dunstan's band.



**Picture:** Blind veteran Matt Rhodes' portrait of Dame Vera Lynn that was sold at auction to raise money for her charity.

## Let's make Dame Vera Lynn's new album Number 1 in the album charts!

Forces Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn will celebrate turning 100 with the release of her latest album — Vera Lynn 100. The singer, who buoyed your spirits during the Second World War and who performed at the Brighton centre with the St Dunstan's Band and at our 75th Anniversary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, will mark her birthday with re-orchestrated versions of her most famous music alongside original vocals.

It is thought that the album, to be released on 17th March three days before her 100th birthday, will make Dame Vera the first singer to release a new album as a centenarian. The album also features a previously unreleased version of Sailing, a surprise find, as it was not widely known that she had recorded the track.

The record comes eight years after she became the oldest living artist to land a UK No 1 album and also marks her 93 years in the industry. She will be joined on the album by Alfie Boe on We'll Meet Again, Alexander Armstrong on White Cliffs of Dover and Aled Jones on As Time Goes By.

Dame Vera Lynn said: "It's truly humbling that people still enjoy these songs from so many years ago, reliving the emotions of that time. I was after all just doing my job as a singer — and it's so wonderful for me to hear my songs again so beautifully presented in a completely new way."

The singer will also celebrate her birthday with a charity concert at The London Palladium that showcases the best of British talent. Taking place on 18th March, the one-off spectacular will raise funds for her children's charity and will feature Alexander Armstrong, Blake and Hayley Westenra.

Dame Vera described the prospect of reaching 100 as "an incredible adventure of song, dance, and friendship."

You can buy the album, Vera Lynn 100, online and in record stores. Let's see if between us we can get Dame Vera Lynn to the top of the album charts! If you buy the album please do send in your comments as we will forward them to Dame Vera.



## Ron Russell's Sweet Talk Quiz.

For this quiz from Ron Russell, our resident Quiz Master, you need to work out the meaning behind the sweets. For example if the question was to name the God of War, as he is Mars, the correct answer would be a Mars bar.

1. The emblem of England.
2. Wobbly infants.
3. The contents of Fort Knox.
4. A small dog.
5. Public transport.
6. A conversation killer.
7. Sheikh's Pleasure.
8. 20:01 pm.
9. It holds the Solar System.
10. To make waves.
11. Different shapes and sizes.
12. The Unigate man's round.
13. To talk quietly.
14. Ms Parton makes her own concoctions.
15. Dark & mysterious.

Answers on page 39.

## Aged Veterans Counselling.

Funded by the MoD's Aged Veterans Fund, and managed by Blind Veterans UK, the Aged Veterans Counselling is a free counselling and support service for aged veterans, their families and carers. The service offers free counselling to any UK veteran who was born before 1st January 1950. It also supports the carers and relatives of aged veterans. It was established by Julie McCarthy of Blind Veterans UK with Blesma, Royal Hospital Chelsea, Royal Naval Association, Scottish War Blinded and Stoll.

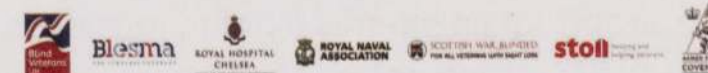
The confidential counselling service can help you with loneliness, depression, bereavement, anxiety and relationships. Should you wish to access counselling there are three ways that you can apply. You can contact your Welfare Officer and ask them to apply for counselling on your behalf. Or you can fill in an application form online at [agedveteranscounselling.org.uk](http://agedveteranscounselling.org.uk) or you can telephone 0300 0120 247.

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### Listening Talking Caring

A free counselling and support service for aged veterans, their families and carers





## My super holiday experiences with Traveleyes. By David Greenwood.

These days I'm something of a seasoned holiday maker with Traveleyes, but I still recall my first holiday with them when I travelled to Argentina, and how I was initially a bit concerned when I had to make my own way to Heathrow. There was absolutely no need because as soon as I arrived at the Terminal I was met by one of the Traveleyes reps and from that moment on in I was looked after right up to the end of the holiday. The Traveleyes team are very experienced and extremely good at their jobs and the holiday started at the airport as soon as we met our fellow travellers.

On arrival in Buenos Aires we were welcomed into the thriving, cosmopolitan Argentinian heart. Unlike any other city in the world, this is a classic fusion of picturesque European influences, imbued with a distinctly South American flavour. The celebrated Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges once described Buenos Aires as "A city that is as eternal as air and water" and there is indeed an elemental quality to this exhilarating cultural centre. We began our day with a city tour which explored many of its landmarks. The Plaza de Mayo is a city square which dates from 1580 and has been central to many of Argentina's pivotal historic events since that time. Located around the Plaza are several major features, including the Metropolitan Cathedral, Argentina's premier place of worship, with its 16th century origins, 18th century interior and magnificent 19th century neo-classical facade. The renowned Colon Theatre was established here in 1908 and thrives to this day. The Pyramid de Mayo is Buenos Aires most historic monument constructed in 1811 in commemoration of the May 1810 Revolution.

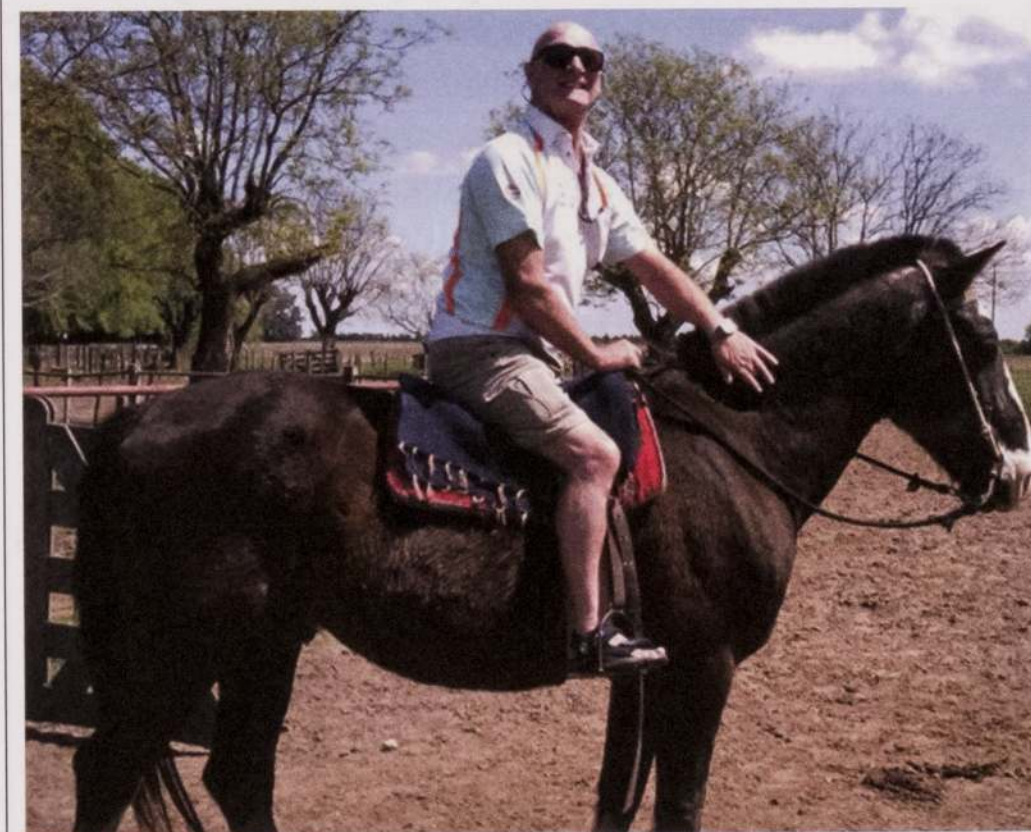
I had the opportunity to go to an Argentinian gaucho cowboy ranch and experience the horsemanship as we rode the horses and experienced the way of life on the ranch. Argentina has long been world famous for this way of life, and to top off the experience we had a traditional gaucho style barbeque on the Pampas. Then it was back into Buenos Aires for some more sightseeing and to see where the legendary Eva Peron, whom the world came to know as Evita, came from.

Then it was onto the airport for an internal flight to Iguassu Falls where we did some abseiling, white water rafting, took a speed boat ride around the falls and then onto Iguassu Falls. On the Brazilian side of the falls we walked into the falls,

which was sublime, and then onto the lush dense subtropical forest.

We then took a transfer into Brazil's Rio de Janeiro and its world famous Copacabana Ipanema beaches and Sugarloaf Mountain with Christ the Redeemer. Sadly after so much wonderful sightseeing and meeting so many great people it was time to return home, but I was hooked on Traveleyes holidays and signed up and took a trip with them to New York and a Caribbean Cruise. So much to do, so much to see, so many great people to meet, as we went to Times Square, the Statue of Liberty, Grand Central Station and Central Park before we took the cruise to the Bahamas. We did rock climbing, abseiling, parasailing, canoeing and swimming. In fact the list goes on. I signed up again and enjoyed a Traveleyes holiday to Hawaii and Pearl Harbour.

Traveleyes is the brain child of Amar Latif, who totally blind himself wanted to see the world, so he set up Traveleyes and now he's the blind guy who shows people the world. On Traveleyes holidays the blind or vision impaired traveller is paired with a sighted traveller, who is given a discount in return for giving visual descriptions of the locations that you visit. It works really well as I could quite clearly picture everything that was being described to me. If you would like to sign up to a Traveleyes holiday, and I would highly recommend them, either as a vision impaired traveller or as a sighted guide please telephone 0113 887 4275 or visit [www.traveleyes-international.com](http://www.traveleyes-international.com)



**Picture:**

David Greenwood on horseback on a Traveleyes tour to a ranch in La Pampas as he experiences the gaucho lifestyle.

**Photo:**

Supplied by Traveleyes.



## Our community teams are taking shape.

Last month we welcomed many new staff to the charity. They joined some of our existing Operations staff who will be moving into new roles. Together, they began a thorough training programme to prepare for the introduction of our new community teams in April. The new joiners will be taking up a number of different roles including Community Team Leader, Community Support Worker, Member Support Worker and ROVI. In time, having these roles based out in communities will mean that we can visit you more often and provide more personal services.

We spoke to Nicky Shaw and Mark Lovatt, the Directors of Operations, about the new recruits after their first week being put through their paces in Llandudno. Here's what they had to say:

"We've recruited a range of professionals with many different backgrounds. We have specialists in rehabilitation, occupational therapy, social work and community development; people who have worked in local authorities, other charities and in the private sector. We have also recruited people with links to the Armed Forces community: some have served, some are married to servicemen and others have worked with the MOD.

"We are delighted to have recruited such a diverse group as it's brought us fresh ideas along with experience from organisations where community teams are working well. So far the new recruits have been impressed with the organisation and the chance it will give them to make the most of their talents. They've been really struck by the flexibility we allow them to do everything they can to make a difference to our members.

"The first week of training was held at the Llandudno centre and was all about introducing the new recruits to our ethos and welcoming them to the Blind Veterans UK family. Nick Caplin met with the new teams and gave a clear overview of why we're increasing the number of frontline staff and how they can make a real difference. Our staff spent time informally chatting to members in the centre and there was also a focus on vision impairments with new recruits experiencing what it's like to be blind, brushing up on sighted guiding and getting to know the specialist equipment we have available.

"It's worth mentioning that a number of members were involved in the recruitment process to make sure that we picked candidates who understand

your needs and will fit well within the organisation. The members were involved in individual interviews where they could get to know the candidates as people. They also helped with judging presentations designed to assess candidates' responses to practical problems.

"Over the coming weeks the new recruits will work together in small teams to fully understand the needs of members within their communities to prepare them for April. New staff are working closely with existing staff to make sure they know and understand the needs and wishes of all of the individual members in their communities.

"Community Team Leaders and Community Support Workers will support you through home visits and phone calls. We will work as we've always done to make sure that you are getting the assistance you need to best support you. We will also make sure you are still able to enjoy the things you value like visiting the Llandudno and Brighton centres and attending reunions."

What the new recruits had to say about the training:

"This week has perhaps been one of the most organised, inspiring and motivational weeks I have experienced in my career. I am very proud to be part of the organisation and the work we do with members." Joanne Lawson.

"The enthusiasm and commitment of everyone I met was tangible and I am very excited to be part of the team." Lizzie Bingham.



**Picture:** The perfect way to start life with the charity. Speaking with Billy Baxter at the Llandudno centre as the new staff are introduced to life at Blind Veterans UK.



## Catch Him If You Can.

"When I came to Blind Veterans UK in 2011 I was in a really dark place. A few months earlier I had just 18 months to serve in the Army to complete 22 years and had plans to set up in business as a driving instructor after that. As my sight had been playing up I went to the hospital and it took just one stroke of the Doctor's pen to take away my livelihood and wipe out any plans for the future. I became selfish, thinking only of myself and not those around me or the way my sight loss would also impact on their lives." At the time that Andy Leitch speaks of he was a 37 year old Corporal in the Royal Logistics Corps working as a skid pan and advanced driving instructor.

Andy continued "When the Doctor registered me as blind and took away my driving licence that was the end. That was it. My future was gone and for a couple of months the outlook seemed really bleak. I became angry, rude, frustrated and took everything out on my wife and family. Thankfully Alton adult social services told me about Blind Veterans UK and I accepted the invitation to go to the Brighton centre for training. When I walked through the doors I thought that it was a hospital and all I wanted to do was to go home. But that changed when I met Martin Shail and spoke with him, as within 24 hours he had changed my perception of the Brighton centre. I was only there for four days and I walked away with a very different attitude and outlook on life. It was the complete opposite of how I'd viewed life just two months earlier when, in a split second, my future had been ripped away. Martin is an incredible man and he knows exactly where to put those big size feet of his to make the maximum impact!"

Today Andy is someone, who like Martin Shail, is an inspiration to his fellow blind veterans. In the Army Andy ran cross country at unit level, but after his sight deteriorated he lost confidence and stopped running.

"A few years ago I got back to running and was asked by Blind Veterans UK if I would like to represent the charity at a run in Aldershot. I went along and met someone who really inspired me — Joey Sharma. People at Blind Veterans UK may know of Joey, who is also known as Joey the little Trooper. She's a great supporter of our charity as she completes numerous fundraising sporting events from marathons, to the 100K, to the Marathon des Sables the world's toughest ultra-marathon. Without realising that Joey officiated at our local park run in Aldershot my wife Angie and I and some friends got involved in the park

run that takes place every Saturday and we became friends with Joey. So a year later when Joey ran for 24 hours at Aldershot military sports stadium she invited me to run with her for two hours. In December 2016 Joey and her husband Daz invited Angie and I as their guests to Blind Veterans UK's Carol Service in St Marylebone Parish Church. Once the hellos had been made Joey calmly reached into her handbag and asked if Angie and I were up for a challenge. With a confused and worrying yes Joey asked if we'd like to do the charity's 100K Yorkshire Challenge with her in July 2017. Before I had time to think about it Angie had already committed us to the challenge and our places were booked!

"Christmas was fast approaching and my daughter didn't know what to get me for a present. However she did remember I had mentioned the new Farnborough winter half marathon that was scheduled for January. Yep you guessed it that was Christmas the present sorted. Unfortunately my guide Dianna Smith had to pull out due to injury and Joey kindly stepped in and ran with me.

"At the start of January 2017 Joey posted a challenge on her Facebook, a challenge to run 100 miles in one month. I thought why the hell not for £12 and a medal. I can say that in January I successfully completed the Farnborough Half Marathon and the 100 mile challenge. However this has since snowballed and I now have a goal to run 100 miles each month this year that will also take in the Fleet Half Marathon, the London Marathon, the Dorset Marathon, Blind Veterans UK's 100k Challenge Walk in Yorkshire (I still have to run 100 miles in July) and the Royal Parks Half Marathon.

"As if Angie and I aren't doing enough we'll also do the Moon Walk with our daughter in London in May. I'm lucky to have a great support team who will take part in one or more of the events and really can't thank them enough. We've called ourselves Andy's Angels and the team is me with Angie, Joey Sharma, Gina Dawson and Dianna Smith."

If you would like to sponsor Andy's Angels for any of these events or send them a message of support their Justgiving page is at [www.justgiving.com/andysangels1](http://www.justgiving.com/andysangels1)

When asked about his focus as he pounds the pavements racking up mile after



mile in his mega marathon challenge Andy replied "Believe it or not I don't actually have a focus apart from the fact that I registered the challenge to run 100 miles a month at Awesome Running Events. For £12 each time I complete 100 miles they'll send a medal. So that's my focus, I've paid for my medal and I want to make sure that I get the medal! Of course the reason is to also raise awareness of Blind Veterans UK and to highlight the support that is given by the wives, husbands and families of those who have to deal with sight loss, as they give a lot and don't always get the recognition.

"The plan is that, if I can remain injury free, by the end of the year I will have completed about 1,200 miles. With the Justgiving page it's not all about the money, as I was inspired by Joey and encouraged by others, and I would like to politely ask blind veterans and supporters to pass the link to the page to as many people as they can just in case it can help anyone."

Please do join us in passing Andy's Justgiving details to as many people as possible [www.justgiving.com/andysangels1](http://www.justgiving.com/andysangels1)



**Picture:** Andy's Angels from left to right Joey Sharma aka Joey the little Trooper, Angie Leitch, Andy Leitch, Gina Dawson and Dianna Smith.

## The Garden. By Nancy Bowstead.

Spring it is a coming in  
To everyone's delight  
The flowers are blooming all round  
And make a lovely sight.

As I take my morning walk  
Around our lovely garden  
I marvel that I can still see  
So many daffodils, so golden.

A little bird accompanies me  
And cheerfully he sings  
I talk to him and thank him  
Then think of other things.

Each flower has its season  
With a colour all its own  
That helps my memory picture it  
When all my sight has flown.

The yellow of the Primrose  
Among the earliest to flower  
Followed by white Snowdrops  
That looks like a snow shower.

One of the brightest is the Poppy  
Oh, so very red  
Bringing back sad memories  
Of men, long since dead.

Then there is the herb garden  
Mint and Thyme and Rosemary  
Will I still be here to celebrate  
My next anniversary.



## Blind Veterans UK Show Garden at RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. By Catherine Goodier.

In *Victory over Blindness*, Sir Arthur Pearson Bt GBE, wrote: "St Dunstan's has been called many names by writers who have visited it; but the name I like the best is the Home of Happiness, for happiness has always meant so much at St. Dunstan's. It meant that the men there were content with the lot that the Fates had dealt out to them. It meant that they had conquered a foe who threatened to destroy spirit as well as sight. It meant that these determined men had dragged themselves from the dark morass in which they were plunged, that they had set their feet on the velvety, flower spangled lawns which lead through the Garden of Endeavour and out on to the broad highway of Normal Life.'

Without having read those words Andrew Fisher-Tomlin, an award winning garden designer and horticulturalist who has gained worldwide acclaim, has for the July 2017 RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, created a garden that takes you to the heart of our charity. A willow weaves throughout the garden and Andrew has used it to represent a vine as it acts as a metaphor for a community with everyone working together. A vine that reaches round and embraces everyone to bring them together. Again without knowing it Andrew captured another part of our history when he incorporated a willow sculpture to resemble a giant vine. During the early years of our charity the men blinded in the First World War and the women who worked at Regent's Park would travel to Hampton Court where they worked on the great vine.

For this article Andrew was asked to take Review readers on a tour through the garden. Before he painted an immersive picture Andrew said: "I've known Blind Veterans UK for a while now as with my business partner Dan Bowyer I worked on the centenary woodland gardens at the Llandudno centre. Now Dan and I are going to create one of the largest gardens at RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show for Blind Veterans UK. The garden is almost 300 square metres, which is quite an undertaking, as the ones you see if you visit the Chelsea Flower Show, or watch it on the television, are from 50m<sup>2</sup> to about 200m<sup>2</sup>.

"What I wanted to do was to look at the bigger picture of blind veterans, staff and volunteers to create a garden that was not just about blindness. We wanted it to be about the community of Blind Veterans UK, as every time that Dan and I visit we get this amazing feeling of community and of everyone working

together and of achievement and we really wanted to bring that into the garden.

"So you enter the garden on one side through iron gates, which are being created by Holkham Forge in Norfolk, and then you turn left and go through a willow sculpture. It's like an arbour, but it's almost organic, as though it's growing out of the ground and it looks like a giant vine. You can walk through this and then through the central square. It's actually a circle, but it represents a village square, and part of that has a very long dry stone bird bench on it. It's a bird bench because we've been given really amazing bird baths and we will have about 20 to 25 different types of birds, which are being made in Ocean Grove in Australia by a guy called Willy Wildlife. So you'll actually be able to feel your favourite spot in the sun because there will be different types of birds.



**Picture:** A computer generated image of the aerial view of the Blind Veterans UK show garden at RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show.



"In the middle of the square there's an amazing liquid amber, which has created quite a lot of shade, because everyone over the age of 30 likes a bit of shade. It will have a willow underneath it, so there's that willow theme coming through again. From there you can look out onto a small allotment which has been created for us by John Wheatley who does the most amazing show displays of vegetables. We're trying to use new and unusual varieties in there, particular types which have great texture or colour or even fragrance. You can leave the garden through the allotment if you like, through another set of amazing gates, but it's also another way to a workshop that's set inside an English Oak. It's got an amazing conical roof and it will have yet more of this vine of willow, which is going to come out of the ground and twist around it and then out. And then as you finally finish you can go back out of the garden through an orchard.

"The orchard will include fruit trees, some pear and some apple, which are 40 years old. There will also be a pictorial meadow in the orchard, which is a brightly coloured meadow of ornamental flowers that's exactly the same as the meadow at the Olympic Park. There will be roses and dahlias and grasses and I'm going to try and give a little more of a contemporary feel to that part of the garden. We've got some smashing plants, as we're using fuchsias from Simpson's who are very famous fuchsia breeders and growers, and Roy Simpson is a blind veteran. And we will show the St Dunstan's rose in the garden. So we have lots of little things like that happening, which will slowly be revealed over time. It's a circular garden, which is quite unusual, as we think of show gardens as square or rectangular. I wanted people to wander around the garden and to wrap around the inside and I feel that a circle allows you to do that.

"As visitors to the show you'll be able to go through a quarter of the garden, but we'll keep the rest as clear as possible and just invite a few people on because you want to experience it without lots of people running all over the garden. The intention is that blind veterans will actually show people around the garden. Pieces that have been created in the centres at Brighton and Llandudno will be woven throughout the garden as it has been designed to celebrate and showcase the work of blind veterans and of the charity.

"We've obviously been working on this for quite a long time and we arrive on site around 10th June as we have three weeks to build the garden. We'll be working over the weekends as we like to finish the build and get all the plants in a few days before the show opens. There are a team of four from the main

contractors and there will be two teams of apprentices from Streetscape, a social enterprise in South London who will also work on the garden. Streetscape take long term unemployed young people who have had a rough time and this is their break as they are given apprenticeships in landscaping. So there will be a core team of about 10 and then I have another 10 volunteers who come and help me plant. So it's a big production with one person even travelling from New Zealand."

"Dan and I will be on hand to answer questions, as there are always lots of questions, and you always find that there's one particular plant that suddenly becomes popular that everyone has seen and they want to know about. We really hope that you will tell us your gardening stories as we want everyone to be involved."

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show will take place from 4th to 9th July 2017 from 10am to 7.30pm on Tuesday to Saturday and from 10am to 5.30pm on Sunday. To book your tickets please go to the Royal Horticultural Society website at [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) or telephone 0844 995 9664 or email [RHSshowscustomer@seetickets.com](mailto:RHSshowscustomer@seetickets.com) If you use a wheelchair or mobility scooter please telephone 01353 653 752 and for group bookings please telephone 0844 412 4650.

Andrew Fisher-Tomlin is a design partner in Fisher-Tomlin & Bowyer with design partner Dan Bowyer. Their website is at [www.andrewfishertomlin.com](http://www.andrewfishertomlin.com)





## Roy Stout is made a Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur.

Roy Stout was one of four Second World War veterans from Sheffield to be presented with France's highest military honour in a ceremony at Sheffield Town Hall. In recognition of the vital role that he played in the liberation of France in 1944, French Honorary Consul M. Jean-Claude La Fontaine told the men and their proud families that France would be eternally grateful for their sacrifice. M. La Fontaine presented each of the men with the Légion d'honneur during a ceremony hosted by the Lord Mayor Councillor Denise Fox.

M. La Fontaine said: "We will never forget what you have done for us and we are eternally grateful. I want to say what a great example you set for people, for young people and to countries across the world and I am delighted to be able to present you with France's highest honour."

Since the 70th anniversary of D-Day in June 2014, when French President François Hollande pledged to honour all British veterans who had served in France in 1944, more than 4,300 D-Day veterans across the UK have been recognised.

Roy, who served in the Royal Air Force before enjoying a 40-year career working for Sheffield City Council in its estates department, said: "The honour was completely unexpected. My Welfare Officer Alison Molloy told me that I was eligible for the Legion d'honneur and she helped me to apply for it, but it's still impossible to believe really. It took me back to when I served as a radar mechanic and was on the Franco-German border three weeks after D-Day."

Speaking after the ceremony, Roy's Welfare Officer Alison Molloy, said: "It was such a great honour and a privilege to escort Roy and Joyce to the event and to witness the ceremony. A very special day that I shall long cherish."



**Picture:** Far right Welfare Officer Alison Molloy stands behind blind veteran Roy and Joyce Stout shortly after the ceremony when Roy was made a Chevalier (Knight) of the Légion d'honneur.

## Answers to Ron Russell's Sweet Talk Quiz.

1. Roses.
2. Jelly Babies.
3. Gold.
4. Yorkie.
5. Taxi.
6. Gobstoppers.
7. Turkish Delight.
8. After Eight.
9. Galaxy.
10. Ripple.
11. Allsorts.
12. Milky Way.
13. Wispa.
14. Dolly Mixtures.
15. Black Magic.



# Noticeboard.

**Dates for your diary and useful information.**

**Come and join us at the Brighton centre for Cycling Week from Monday 17th to Friday 21st April.**

Did you enjoy cycling, but now you struggle to get out cycling? If the answer is yes then this week can get you back out on the road, as you put some mileage in your legs and feel the wind in your face and enjoy the exhilaration of cycling. For this week you will arrive at the Brighton centre on Sunday 16th April and return home on Saturday 22nd April.

We will cycle on tandems, but if you haven't used one before that's fine as you don't need any tandem bike riding experience. You will however need to be comfortable to put your trust into your sighted guide as you meander along the coast, cycle through the countryside, and to finish off on the last day, power around the London Olympic Velodrome.

You'll need a good general level of fitness as each day we will be out on a bike cycling for anywhere up to 60 miles. There are limited spaces on this week due to the amount of tandems that we have at the centre so please do hurry and book. Due to the nature of the week this is a member's only themed week, but partners are very welcome to stay with you at the centre, although they will need to occupy themselves whilst you are out cycling. Unless of course they are an experienced cyclist and you can cycle on the tandem as a pair.

If this sounds like your kind of week please contact Lee Edwards in the Brighton centre's bookings office on 01273 391425. If you would like to speak to the organiser of the themed week please contact Steve Mills on 01273 391577.

## Review Format changes.

If you would like to change the format you receive the Review in please telephone 020 7616 8367 stating your name, postcode and preferred format. Or email [revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) You can receive the Review in both print and audio. It is available as a large print magazine, in MP3CD, USB, email or Braille. It is also on the Sonata National Talking Newspapers website.

## Changes to the holiday booking process at Llandudno from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

My team and I would like to share the changes we're making to the Llandudno holiday booking system from 1<sup>st</sup> April. On the first Monday of each month, you will be able to book rooms in advance for the whole month starting in six months' time. As an example, on 1<sup>st</sup> April, all dates in October (up to 31 October) become available to book. This will mean we will manage bookings in the same way as the team at the Brighton centre manage theirs.

If the centre is full when you call, you can ask to be added to the waiting list for that month. If vacancies arise, the bookings team will work with members on the waiting list to fill the spaces.

To reduce the number of unused rooms, we have changed the arrival/ departure dates for members on holiday to Monday or Tuesday. The booking manager will explain this to you when booking your stay.

Is it best to state specific dates in the month when we're available?

To be honest, the more flexible you are able to be, the more likely we are to be able to offer you a room. Even if you think it is unlikely that we will be able to offer you a room, it's always best to call and put your request forward as we will do everything we can to accommodate as many bookings as possible.

I'd like to visit the centre with a friend. How does that work?

Booking with a friend is no problem at all. When you call, you can ask for more than one booking to be made. If you are booking on behalf of another member, please speak to them before calling us so that you're clear about their availability.

To book your stay, please call Llandudno reception on 01492 868700.

We continue to welcome ALL members to the centre and hope these changes improve the process for you.

See you soon

Matt Lee

Centre operations manager, Llandudno



## Stephen 'Steve' Finlay 1962 to 2017.

Steve Finlay died on 19th January 2017 after a long battle with multiple sclerosis. He became a blind veteran in June 1999 when his welcome in the Review read:

Sergeant Stephen Finlay of Waterbach, Cambridge became a St Dunstaner on June 15th. Now aged 36 he joined the Army in 1987 and served with the Adjutant General's Corps in the UK and Germany. Following the onset of multiple sclerosis he was discharged earlier this year. Sgt Finlay is married to Denise.

Still able to take part in sports at that stage of his illness he was regularly pictured in the pages of the Review during Activities Week from the Brighton centre.

During a swing from Trent Bridge a very unusual photo captured Steve at two points in one still during his Trent Bridge swing.

When notified of his passing our President Colin Williamson said: "Steve was a well-liked and much respected member of the working age members group and we will miss him very much. His fantastic sense of humour and his cheeky grin lit up the room and everyone who came into contact with Steve walked away smiling. Our thoughts are with Steve's wife Minnie and their daughters."



**Picture:** Steve Finlay taking part in a Cadet Challenge in Brighton.

**Previous picture:** Steve Finlay in the Art & Craft Workshop at the Brighton centre.

Steve leaves his widow Denise, known as Minnie, and their daughters Samantha, Lisa and Nicole.

Speaking to the Review Minnie said: "I cannot thank Blind Veterans UK enough for everything they did for Steve and I'm so touched by their genuine kindness. We would like to thank all of the staff at the Brighton centre. We also want to thank everyone who sent messages and gifts as they meant so much and gave us a lot of comfort. I know that Steve would be very touched."



# Family News.

## Births:

Congratulations to Clive & Yvonne Woods on the birth of their Great Grandson Noah Declan Ruddy, who was born to their Grandson Declan and his partner Amy on 8th December 2016.

## Birthdays:

**Archie Cooledge** who celebrated his 104th birthday on 5th March.  
**Thomas Taylor** who celebrated his 102nd birthday on 15th March.  
**Jeanette Goodman** who celebrated her 102nd birthday on 22nd March.  
**Peta Jenkins** who celebrated his 101st birthday on 13th March.  
**Bill Waters** who celebrated his 101st birthday on 16th March.  
**Sidney Roberts** who celebrated his 101st birthday on 25th March.  
**Elvet Davies** who celebrated his 100th birthday on 6th March.  
**Idris Evans** who celebrated his 100th birthday on 9th March.  
**John Clegg** who celebrated his 100th birthday on 21st March.  
**John Cruickshank** who celebrated his 100th birthday on 26th March.

## Anniversaries:

### Diamond Gold 75 years married.

**Arthur & Lilian Barnes** of Woodford Green, Essex on 7th March.  
**Gerry & Sheila Philips** of Wallasey, Merseyside on 16th March.

### Platinum 70 years married.

**Neville & Valmai Bowen** of Ammanford, Dyfed on 1st March.  
**Harry and Erna Furness** on 22nd March.

### Blue Sapphire 65 years married.

**Anthony & Sylvia Parkes** of Devizes, Wiltshire on 1st March.  
**Brian & Saville Turner** of Goole, East Yorkshire on 8th March.

**Ron & Doris Saunders** of Stowmarket, Suffolk on 15th March.  
**David & Daphne Frost** of Crawley, West Sussex on 22nd March.  
**Richard & Doreen Clegg** of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire on 26th March.  
**Reg & Doris Coates** of Sevenoaks, Kent on 27th March.  
**Tom & Margaret Bell** of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne And Wear on 29th March.  
**Michael & Renee Litchfield** of Bramcote, Nottingham on 29th March.  
**George & Barbara Bailey** of Northampton, Northamptonshire on 31st March.

### Diamond Yellow 60 years married.

**Peter & Joyce Robinson** of Rugby, Warwickshire on 4th March.  
**Barry & Lilian Mann** of Daventry, Northamptonshire on 9th March.  
**Trevor & Kath Plackett** of Morecambe, Lancashire on 16th March.  
**Raymond & Freda Kelly** of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 23rd March.  
**Joseph & Lucy Chandler** of Flint, Clwyd on 30th March.  
**Les & Val Fryer** of Worthing, West Sussex on 30th March.  
**John & Christine Clegg** of Corsham, Wiltshire on 30th March.  
**Ronald & Pam Murphy** of York, North Yorkshire on 30th March.  
**Dave & Margaret Oddy** of Beccles, Suffolk on 30th March.  
**Philip & Anne Sparling** of Leeds, West Yorkshire on 30th March.  
**Bernard & Ruth Marsden** of Bury, Lancashire on 31st March.

### Golden 50 years married.

**Peter & Sue Howe** of Coventry, West Midlands on 4th March.  
**Donald & Josephine Solway** of Derby, Derbyshire on 4th March.  
**Brian & Pauline Gibson** of Ferryhill, County Durham on 11th March.  
**Brian & Mary Barlow** of Wigan, Lancashire on 21st March.  
**Bill & Judy Burrage** of Worthing, West Sussex on 25th March.  
**Jim & Sheena Myles** of Dundee, Angus on 25th March.  
**Gordon & Margaret Black** of Flint, Clwyd on 27th March.  
**Alan & Joan Wortley** of Eastbourne, East Sussex on 28th March.

### Ruby 40 years married.

**Allan & Rose Bembridge** of Allenton, Derby on 26th March.

### Silver 25 years married.

**Mark & Trudy Pile** of Bath, Somerset on 7th March.



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.

**Oriel Baker** who died on 28th January 2017. She was the widow of the late Geoffrey Baker.

**Florence Brettell** who died on 2nd December 2016. She was the wife of James Brettell.

**Maureen Cain** who died on 23rd November 2016. She was the wife of Norman Cain.

**Edna Cox** who died on 16th October 2016. She was the wife of Alan Cox.

**Maureen Crust** who died on 19th January 2017. She was the wife of Peter Crust.

**Margaret Harrold** who died in October 2016. She was the wife of Denis Harrold.

**Jean Hill** who died on 23rd January 2017. She was the wife of Fred Hill.

**Lilian 'Peggy' Stainer** who died on 8th February 2017. She was the wife of Leslie Stainer.

**Phyllis Walker** who died on 24th January 2017. She was the widow of the late Paul Walker.

# Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

**Margaret Ashman née Crossley** of Southampton served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

**Arthur Aspinwall** of Barnsley, South Yorkshire served in the Light Infantry from 1946 to 1948.

**Geoffrey 'Geoff' Austin** of Greenhithe, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

**John Barron** of Milton Keynes served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1960 to 1986.

**John Bates** of Heywood, Lancashire served in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment from 1943 to 1945.

**John Belfield** of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

**Keith Beaumont** of Golcar, Huddersfield served in the Prince of Wales' Own Yorkshire Regiment from 1960 to 1963.

**John Bell** of Blackpool, Lancashire served in the Home Guard from 1940 to 1945.

**Anthony Benda** of Salisbury, Wiltshire served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1952 to 1966.

**Charles Botwright** of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1946.

**William Brand** of Kirkcaldy, Fife served in the Royal Engineers from 1952 to 1959.

**Graham Bridges** of Clevedon, Avon served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1943 to 1947.



**Thomas 'Tom' Broughton** of Cranbrook, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1976.

**John Bunn** of Hebburn, Tyne And Wear served in the Royal Engineers from 1946 to 1948.

**William Burke** of Worsley, Manchester served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Educational Corps from 1947 to 1949.

**Arnold 'Jim' Carlson** of Benfleet, Essex served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Fusiliers from 1944 to 1954.

**Donald Carter** of Littlehampton, West Sussex served in the Sherwood Foresters and the Royal Army Educational Corps from 1948 to 1950.

**Clive Cery** of Neath, West Glamorgan served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1957.

**Walter Chadwick** of Nuthall, Nottingham served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1946.

**Cecil Clark** of Newbury, Berkshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1946 to 1948.

**Derek Clay** of Bedford, Bedfordshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1951 to 1953.

**William 'Ray' Clegg** of Conwy, Gwynedd served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

**Ronald 'Ron' Colbourne** of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Navy from 1954 to 1956.

**George Cooper** of New Milton, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1945.

**Laurance 'Laurie' Cox** of Hull served in the Royal Engineers from 1958 to 1960.

**Reginald Dempster** of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Signals from 1944 to 1948.

**George Dentith** of Falmouth, Cornwall served in the Royal Navy from 1937 to 1953.

**Wilfred Dixon** of Bishop Auckland, County Durham served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

**Paul Doyle** of Liverpool served in the Army Catering Corps from 1986 to 2000.

**Ronald 'Ron' Drewery** of Ely, Cambridgeshire served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1957.

**Gladys Elphick née Burgess** of Bembridge, Isle Of Wight served in the Auxillary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

**Alexander 'Alex' Evans** of Millom, Cumbria served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1960.

**Frederick Evans** of Redruth, Cornwall served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1942 to 1959.

**James Finnigan** of Widnes, Cheshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1942 to 1946.

**Dennis Firth** of St. Helens, Merseyside served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**Arthur Forth** of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire served in the King's Own Scottish Borderers from 1947 to 1953.

**Edwin Franklin** of Reading, Berkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**Stephen 'Steve' Gray** of Brixham, Devon served in the Welsh Guards, Royal Corps of Transport and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1974 to 1987.

**Albert Green** of Polegate, East Sussex served in the Royal Signals from 1950 to 1955.

**Arthur 'Ted' Green** of Camden, London served in the Royal Marines from 1942 to 1944.



**Colin Griffiths** of Hartlepool, Cleveland served in the General Service Corps and the Army Catering Corps from 1946 to 1948.

**Hans Haagensen** of Elmstead, Colchester served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**Arthur Hardy** of Shrewsbury served in the General Service Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps and the Light Infantry from 1942 to 1976.

**Terrence 'Terry' Harris** of East Grinstead, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1958.

**Leonard 'Len' Harvey** of Harlow, Essex served in the King's Own Scottish Borderers from 1944 to 1950.

**Peter Hassam** of Sandy, Bedfordshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1944 to 1948.

**Doris Hayes née Ormsesher** of Shepton Mallet, Somerset served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1945 to 1949.

**George Hayes** of Worksop, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1945 to 1948.

**William 'Bill' Haynes** of Gloucester served in the Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Royal Corps of Transport from 1945 to 1982.

**Anthony 'Tony' Hebditch** of Long Eaton, Nottingham served in the Royal Artillery from 1969 to 1976.

**Stuart 'George' Heyworth** of St. Agnes, Cornwall served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

**Frederick Hogger** of Sudbury, Suffolk served in the Royal Artillery from 1952 to 1954.

**Arnold Howett** of West Byfleet, Surrey served in the Royal West Kent Regiment from 1956 to 1957.

**Elizabeth Ingram née Johnson** of Southport, Merseyside served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

**Eric Jackson** of Peckham, London served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1963.

**John 'Jim' James** of Corwen, Clwyd served in the General Service Corps, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the King's Own Scottish Borderers from 1943 to 1947.

**Gordon Johnstone** of Wareham, Dorset served in the Royal Engineers from 1951 to 1964.

**Barbara Jones** of Ryde, Isle Of Wight served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1946.

**Ceri Jones** of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan served in the Royal Artillery from 1989 to 1996.

**Derek Jones** of Nantwich, Cheshire served in the Royal Navy from 1940 to 1946.

**George Jones** of Llandudno Junction, Gwynedd served in the Royal Artillery from 1949 to 1951.

**Robert Knight** of Newton Le Willows, Merseyside served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

**Geraldine Lancaster née Rogers** of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1946.

**Raymond 'Ray' Lawes** of Fleet, Hampshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**Brian Lawton** of Wolverhampton served in the Royal Artillery from 1948 to 1950.

**Stanley Lloyd** of Bootle, Merseyside served in the Parachute Regiment from 1963 to 1966.

**George Lown** of Bedlington, Northumberland served in the Royal Artillery from 1953 to 1955.

**Derek 'Dick' Malyon** of Daventry, Northamptonshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1958.

**Robert Maple** of Fakenham, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1960 to 1974.



**Joseph McClure** of Atherton, Manchester served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

**Thomas 'Tom' McGuire** of Bathgate, West Lothian served in the General Service Corps and Army Catering Corps from 1946 to 1948.

**Leslie McLellan** of Thatcham, Berkshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1951 to 1953.

**James 'Jim' Miles** of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1948 to 1950.

**Godfrey 'Geoff' Millward** of Allestree, Derby served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1953 to 1956.

**Peter Milton** of Upton, Chester served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1944 to 1946.

**Thomas Montgomery** of Wokingham, Berkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1969.

**Grahame Morris** of Abergele, Clwyd served in the Merchant Navy from 1941 to 1946.

**William 'Bill' Neno** of Basildon, Essex served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1944 to 1946.

**Herbert 'Ron' Newbold** of Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

**James 'Jim' Owens** of Lanchester, Durham served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

**Alan Parker** of Colchester served in the Home Guard from 1942 to 1946.

**Edward Parmenter** of Hethersett, Norwich served in the Army Catering Corps from 1957 to 1964.

**John Pilgrim** of Saxmundham, Suffolk served in the Home Counties Brigade and the East Surrey Regiment from 1950 to 1955.

**Arthur Pitt** of Blucher, Newcastle Upon Tyne served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

**Frederick 'Fred' Porter** of Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1950 to 1952.

**Maurice Porter** of Spalding, Lincolnshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1947 to 1949.

**James Pratt** of Whitley Bay, Tyne And Wear served in the General Service Corps and the Army Air Corps from 1946 to 1953.

**Norman Pryer** of Houghton Le Spring, Tyne And Wear served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1942 to 1946.

**Edwin 'Eddie' Purdy** of Bristol served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**Jean Rees** of Poole, Dorset served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1944 to 1947.

**Lesley 'Les' Ramm** of Cardigan, Dyfed served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1943 to 1947.

**Vitruvius 'Cyril' Rayment** of Lincoln, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1955.

**Frederick Revell** of Worthing, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

**Peter Ritter** of Brandon, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

**William Rowland** of Swindon, Wiltshire served in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1954.

**Geoffrey Rushton** of Ashton-Under-Lyne, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1958.

**Brian Salmon** of St. Peter Port, Guernsey served in the Royal Navy from 1959 to 1991.



**Percy 'Jim' Salmon** of Walsall, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1952.

**Leslie Scott** of Newcastle Upon Tyne served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1946 to 1949.

**Leonard 'Len' Sharples** of Huddersfield served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1946.

**Sibyl Sloane** of Balham, London served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1944 to 1949.

**James Smith** of Bristol served in the General Service Corps, Dorset Regiment and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders from 1943 to 1946.

**Wallis Snelling** of Felixstowe, Suffolk served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

**Brian Sperring** of Weston-Super-Mare, Avon served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1951 to 1957.

**Ernest 'Charlie' Stephens** of Llanidloes, Powys served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

**Alan Sumner** of Birmingham served in the Royal Army Dental Corps from 1950 to 1956.

**Ernest Sutcliffe** of Stockport, Cheshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1944 to 1948.

**David 'Dave' Swales** of Stevenage, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1951.

**Sarah 'Sally' Thomas née Warburton** of Farnworth, Bolton served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1941 to 1943.

**Malcolm Thompson** of Glossop, Derbyshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1956 to 1964.

**Robert 'Bob' Thompson** of Pudsey, West Yorkshire served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1952 to 1964.

**Colin Timbrell** of Diss, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1954.

**George Trainor** of Choppington, Northumberland served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1950.

**William 'Ronald' Turner** of Tiverton, Devon served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1953 to 1954.

**Keith Verrall** of Loughborough, Leicestershire served in the Royal Navy from 1973 to 1975.

**Ronald Wallis** of Prescot, Merseyside served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1949 to 1950.

**Cyril Wardale** of Runcorn, Cheshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1953.

**Frank Whitehouse** of Shrewsbury served in the South Staffordshire Regiment from 1949 to 1955.

**Kenneth 'Ken' Wilkinson** of Solihull, West Midlands served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1945.

**William Williams** of Widnes, Cheshire served in the Royal Navy from 1954 to 1964.

**Albert Williamson** of East Boldon, Tyne And Wear served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1954 to 1960.

**Derek Woodcock** of Chichester, West Sussex served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1953 to 1956.

**Raymond 'Ray' Woosey** of Liverpool served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1956 to 1958.

**John 'Pat' Yates-Earl** of Sleaford, Lincolnshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1966.

**Vivian Yates née Cathrae** of Consett, County Durham served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1953.



# 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.**

**Norman Ashworth** of Norwich, Norfolk died on 31st December 2016, aged 92. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**Donald Baker** of York, North Yorkshire died on 4th February 2017, aged 88. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949.

**Thomas 'Tom' Balshaw** of Bootle, Merseyside died on 27th November 2016, aged 83. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1951 to 1952.

**Walter 'Walt' Barber** of Bristol died on 7th February 2017, aged 90. He served in the Royal Marines from 1945 to 1947.

**Robert 'Bob' Beadle** of Carnforth, Lancashire died on 29th January 2017, aged 74. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1962 to 1968.

**Andrew 'Andy' Bell** of Redditch, Worcestershire died on 31st January 2017, aged 45. He served in the Green Howards in 1988.

**Anthony 'Tony' Billingham** of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire died on 19th December 2016, aged 91. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1948.

**Robert Bishop** of Worcester, Worcestershire died on 1st February 2017, aged 86. He served in the South Staffordshire Regiment and the Royal Artillery from 1949 to 1964.

**William 'Ted' Bishop** of Colwyn Bay, Clwyd died on 1st January 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**Lionel Blenkinsop** of Hartlepool, Cleveland died on 4th January 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

**Anthony 'Tony' Boden-Hook** of Dronfield, Derbyshire died on 18th January 2017, aged 96. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**James 'Jim' Booth** of Barnet, Hertfordshire died on 12th January 2017, aged 104. He served in the Home Guard from 1942 to 1944.

**Reginald Booth** of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 17th January 2017, aged 77. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1958 to 1978.

**Arthur Boulter** of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire died on 1st December 2016, aged 87. He served in the Royal Marine Commandos from 1947 to 1959.

**William Brown** of Croydon, Surrey died on 27th January 2017, aged 96. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**Jean Burnet-Smith née Boyne** of Brighton, East Sussex died on 1st January 2016, aged 96. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1943.

**Ronald Butler** of Catford, London died on 15th November 2016, aged 94. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**Maud Casey** of Westcliff-On-Sea, Essex died on 25th December 2016, aged 96. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

**Arthur 'Allan' Chave** of Tiverton, Devon died on 29th January 2017, aged 77. He served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1959 to 1965.

**Raymond 'Ray' Collins** of Epsom, Surrey died on 9th January 2017, aged 94. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**George Crow** of Durham, County Durham died on 7th December 2016, aged 96. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**John 'Joe' Dalley** of Wokingham, Berkshire died on 3rd February 2017, aged 96. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1973.

**Andrew 'Andy' Davidson** of East Kilbride, Lanarkshire died on 16th January 2017, aged 94. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1965.

**Robert 'Dave' Denman** of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 20th January 2017, aged 78. He served in the Royal Signals from 1958 to 1960.

**Edith 'Mary' Doolan née Duxbury** of Leeds, West Yorkshire died on 17th January 2017, aged 93. She served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1945.



**Kenneth Edwards** of Swansea, West Glamorgan died on 31st January 2017, aged 80. He served in the Royal Signals from 1957 to 1962.

**Robert 'Jim' Eldridge** of Southampton, Hampshire died on 3rd January 2017, aged 93. He served in the Royal Hampshire Regiment from 1941 to 1947.

**John Ellis** of Montgomery, Powys died on 16th January 2017, aged 82. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1952 to 1958.

**Ronald Ellison** of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 13th January 2017, aged 77. He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1959 to 1988.

**James 'Jim' Fish** of Blackburn, Lancashire died on 26th December 2016, aged 84. He served in the Coldstream Guards from 1951 to 1953.

**John 'Les' Fitton** of Runcorn, Cheshire died on 3rd January 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**Stanley 'Bill' Fleming** of Amhurst Park, London died on 11th January 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

**Thomas 'Tom' Ford** of Colchester, Essex died on 23rd January 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1944 to 1949.

**Alfred Fox** of Preston, Lancashire died on 20th January 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1939 to 1946.

**Phyllis Fraser née Barker** of Paignton, Devon died on 25th January 2017, aged 96. She served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

**Victor 'Vic' Fry** of Norwich, Norfolk died on 5th February 2017, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1945 to 1948.

**John Gadd** of Wolverhampton, West Midlands died on 23rd December 2016, aged 92. He served in the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1952.

**Jean Galitzine MBE née Dawnay** of Belgravia, London died on 14th December 2016, aged 91. She served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1943.

**Alfred Gardner** of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands died on 9th January 2017, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1944 to 1947.

**John Garrill** of Skegness, Lincolnshire died on 22nd December 2016, aged 83. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1951 to 1954.

**Harvey Godber** of Taunton, Somerset died on 11th January 2017, aged 77. He served in the Royal Air Force in 1959.

**Anthony 'Eric' Goodger** of Port Talbot, West Glamorgan died on 27th November 2016, aged 93. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1948.

**John Hall** of Bournemouth, Dorset died on 17th December 2016, aged 93. He served in the Royal Hampshire Regiment from 1941 to 1943.

**Orvin Hill** of Malvern, Worcestershire died on 14th January 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**George Hodge** of Wokingham, Berkshire died on 30th December 2016, aged 88. He served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1942 to 1981.

**Stanley 'Stan' Howells** of Carmarthen, Dyfed died on 20th January 2017, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps and the Army Catering Corps from 1944 to 1948.

**Harry Hutchison** of Peacehaven, East Sussex died on 6th January 2017, aged 96. He served in the Royal West African Frontier Force from 1939 to 1945.

**James Hutchison** of Cupar, Fife died on 18th January 2017, aged 83. He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1951 to 1957.

**Jackie Irvine** of Kilmarnock, Ayrshire died on 18th December 2016, aged 83. He served in the Royal Navy from 1951 to 1954.

**Richard 'Richy' Kennedy** of Bootle, Merseyside died on 22nd January 2017, aged 96. He served in the Merchant Navy from 1937 to 1947.

**Gordon King** of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire died on 28th December 2016, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1966.

**William Langridge** of Bridport, Dorset died on 3rd December 2016, aged 93. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.



**Wasył Lapko** of Slough, Berkshire died aged 92. He served in the Polish Army from 1945 to 1947.

**Joan Larcombe** of Bisley, Surrey died on 13th January 2017, aged 94. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1941 to 1945.

**Richard Law** of Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey died on 24th December 2016, aged 87. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

**Philip 'Dan' Little** of Colchester, Essex died on 23rd January 2017, aged 93. He served in the General Service Corps from 1942 to 1943.

**John Marcelle** of Romford, Essex died on 8th January 2017, aged 85. He served in the 14th King's Hussars from 1949 to 1972.

**Alfred Meadows** of Taunton, Somerset died on 28th December 2016, aged 100. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1940 to 1946.

**John Miles** of Colchester, Essex died on 30th January 2017, aged 81. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1953 to 1957.

**Brian Miller** of Steyning, West Sussex died on 26th January 2017, aged 87. He served in the Intelligence Corps from 1947 to 1949.

**Brian Mogford** of Holt, Norfolk died on 27th January 2017, aged 80. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1956.

**Wallace Moore** of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne And Wear died on 11th January 2017, aged 85. He served in the Royal Artillery and Royal Parachute Regiment from 1949 to 1959.

**Gerald Morris** of Oswestry, Shropshire died on 31st January 2017, aged 83. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1951 to 1957.

**Theodora Morris née Patton** of Hove, East Sussex died on 15th January 2017, aged 92. She served in the Auxiliary Nursing Service from 1941 to 1946.

**John Newins** of Brentwood, Essex died on 9th December 2016, aged 102. He served in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry from 1940 to 1946.

**Alice Packham née Bradwell** of Crawley, West Sussex died on 25th December 2016, aged 95. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1944.

**Jonathan Paine** of Porth, Mid Glamorgan died on 24th January 2017, aged 83. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1957.

**Anne Palionis née Atkinson** of Newburn, Newcastle Tyne and Wear died on 31st December 2016, aged 91. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1944 to 1947.

**Douglas 'Doug' Perkins** of Crawley, West Sussex died on 12th January 2017, aged 93. He served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

**Jean Pitts née Pearce** of Nailsworth, Gloucestershire died on 9th January 2017, aged 96. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1940 to 1946.

**Alma Plant née Miller** of Wigan, Lancashire died on 8th January 2017, aged 94. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1942 to 1945.

**Frank Pollington** of Sale, Cheshire died on 26th January 2017, aged 99. He served in the Durham Light Infantry and the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

**Thomas Nicholls** of Carshalton, Surrey died on 20th December 2016, aged 91. He served in the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) from 1943 to 1948.

**Joan Pope née Cordingley** of Bradford, West Yorkshire died on 30th December 2016, aged 90. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1944 to 1946.

**Leslie Potter** of Eastbourne, East Sussex died at the age of 91. He served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

**Eric Radford** of Ruddington, Nottingham died on 9th February 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**Charles Reagan** of Kirkhamberton, York died on 25th December 2016, aged 92. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

**Dennis 'Den' Robinson** of Southampton, Hampshire died on 15th January 2017, aged 89. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1945 to 1948.

**Ernest 'Ernie' Sampson** of Harlow, Essex died on 2nd January 2017, aged 85. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1957.



**Edwin 'Ted' Small** of Willenhall, West Midlands died on 4th January 2017, aged 85. He served in the Worcestershire Regiment from 1950 to 1956.

**Aubrey Smith** of Robertsbridge, East Sussex died on 20th January 2017, aged 92. He served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

**Winifred 'Joan' Smith née Benns** of Norwich, Norfolk died on 31st December 2016, aged 98. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1942 to 1945.

**George Spratt** of Waterlooville, Hampshire died on 10th December 2016, aged 71. He served in the Royal Army Pay Corps from 1965 to 1971.

**Ronald Stapleton** of Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire died on 3rd February 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

**George Stringer** of Warrington, Cheshire died on 6th January 2017, aged 105. He served in the King's Regiment and the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946.

**Peter Symington** of Scunthorpe, South Humberside died on 2nd January 2017, aged 77. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1957 to 1958.

**Sydney Tavender** of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on 17th January 2017, aged 98. He served in the East Yorkshire Regiment and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders from 1934 to 1946. He was the Chairman of Blind Veterans UK's ex-Prisoner of War Group.

**Fred Taylor** of Eckington, Sheffield died on 1st December 2016, aged 93. He served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

**Norman Taylor** of Wolverhampton, West Midlands died on 18th January 2017, aged 96. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946.

**Geoffrey Treadgold** of Newark, Nottinghamshire died on 25th December 2016, aged 93. He served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

**Umberto Tondo** of Hastings, East Sussex died on 10th January 2017, aged 86. He served in the Royal Fusiliers and the Army Catering Corps from 1948 to 1950.

**Thomas 'Jerry' Underwood** of Plymouth, Devon died on 11th January 2017, aged 93. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1942 to 1947.

**Wallace Urry** of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire died on 7th December 2016, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps, Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Signals from 1944 to 1955.

**George Voyle** of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 10th February 2017, aged 87. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1953.

**Frank Wallis** of Stone, Staffordshire died on 21st December 2016, aged 94. He served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1941 to 1946.

**John Wardlaw** of Penrith, Cumbria died on 5th February 2017, aged 81. He served in the Royal Navy from 1953 to 1958.

**Eric Wells** of Henfield, West Sussex died on 21st January 2017, aged 84. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

**Donald White** of Reading, Berkshire died on 19th January 2017, aged 88. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Berkshire Regiment from 1947 to 1949.

**Joseph 'Glyn' Williams** of Prestatyn, Wales died on 11th January 2017, aged 79. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1959.

**Edward 'Jack' Winter** of Lichfield, Staffordshire died on 26th January 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1946.

**Betty Woodin** of Worthing, West Sussex died on 27th January 2017, aged 99. She served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

**Reverend Ronald 'Ron' Young** of Stroud, Gloucestershire died on 31st December 2016, aged 89. He served in the General Service Corps and Royal Army Medical Corps from 1945 to 1948.

**Violet 'Jean' Young née Commerford** of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died on 15th January 2017, aged 97. She served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

**Julian Zwierzchowski** of Hove, East Sussex died on 23rd January 2017, aged 97. He served in the Polish Army from 1940 to 1947.



