

September 2017

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: Blind veteran Alan Walker presents Second World War and blind veteran Alfred Burrows with replacement medals. Photo Abby Tarrant.

Back page: Members of the Brighton centre's Blind Veterans' Radio Play Society.



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Patron Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex GCVO.

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The Brighton centre 01273 307811.

The Llandudno centre 01492 868700.

Harcourt Street (HQ) 020 7723 3392.

The Booking Office for the Brighton centre: To book accommodation at the Brighton centre telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500.

The Booking Office for the Llandudno centre: To book accommodation at the Llandudno centre please telephone 01492 868700 and ask for the Booking Office.

ROVI IT Helpline: If you need to speak with the ROVI IT Helpdesk please telephone the staff at the Sheffield centre on 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 number 0800 389 7979.

Blind Veterans UK Calendar

Activities from the Brighton centre.

September.

History Week 10th to 16th.

Fishing Week 17th to 23rd.

Adrenaline Weekend 29th September to 2nd October.

October/November.

Amateur Radio Club 1st to 7th.

Technology Week (second) 8th to 14th.

Bowling Fortnight (first) 15th to 28th.

Driving Week 29th October to 4th November.

December.

Turkey & Tinsel Week 10th to 16th December.

January 2018.

Beginner's Archery, Shooting and Bowls 28th January to 3rd February.

Activities from the Llandudno centre.

September.

Archery Week 3rd to 9th.

Photography Week 17th to 23rd.

Walking Week 24th to 30th.

October.

History Week 22nd to 28th.

November.

Military Week 5th to 13th.

December.

Sewing Week 3rd to 9th.

March 2018.

Health & Wellbeing Week 6th to 10th March 2018.

Music Week 25th to 31st March 2018.

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.

To book Themed and Club Weeks at the Llandudno centre.

For further information or to book your place please telephone: 01492 864590.

From the Chairman.

Your message from Tim Davis.

I recently read in the news how people feel a growing sense of being busier than ever before. There are many times when I certainly feel the same and hear the same from those I talk to. "How are you?" I often ask. "Really busy" I often hear.

In surveys conducted, large numbers of people feel overburdened with work at the expense of time with family and friends. Interestingly though, empirical evidence of total time people work, paid or unpaid, has not increased over the last two decades and modern parents spend more time with their children than ever before! So what's going on and why is this important for the lives of so many of us.

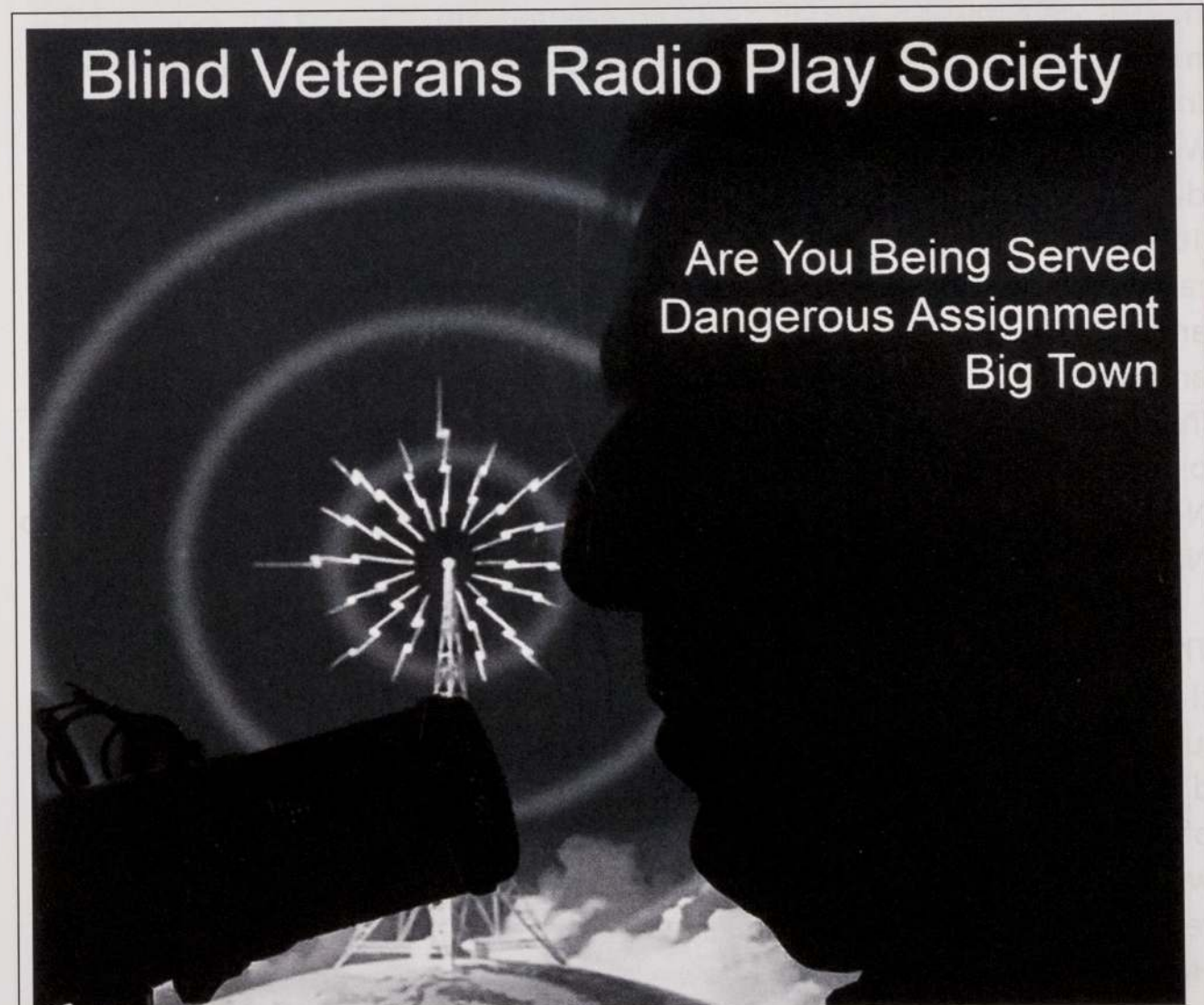
One argument is simple, economics, as economies grow, we've become better off, time has become more valuable, and we feel the pressure to do more. Guilty. I certainly feel a little resonance with that! We also live in a 'knowledge world' where we have access to so much more of everything; more choice, more email, more social interactions on and offline, more travel, and more ideas from media that surrounds us in many forms throughout our day. We also feel a social pressure to do it all. Clearly as humans are finite, this is not a difficult task, but an impossible one.

The irony is, when feeling busy, we perform worse and often with much less compassion. We take on too much, and we prioritise the wrong things. We too often value the effort it takes to get something done rather than the outcome and impact. The new badge of honour linked to high status is feeling busy! Yes I agree this makes no sense at all!

Despite this frenetic world we live in, I've seen and heard so many great examples of blind veterans, supporters, volunteers and employees of our charity quietly achieving tremendous things and making a really positive impact to those around them and for themselves. Reading or listening to this month's Review, and hearing what so many have done across the charity is a real inspiration. I encourage all involved to pause, think and focus on a few important outcomes in your life that make a difference, and make them happen.

In the monthly Review, across the charity's website, i, at events and in our centres, I continue to see great examples of life changing differences being made, whether it be directly helping a blind veteran gain greater independence or supporting the charity to do more and grow. It's a great reminder to consider prioritising and focusing on less, but in so doing achieving more and making a bigger difference for yourself and those around you.

Finally, you will find a poster in this edition and I ask you to please display this in a prominent location where you live, as it will help us to reach the thousands of veterans who are eligible to receive our services. I hope you all continue to enjoy the last of the summer and my best wishes as always to each of you.



Picture: To underline the Chairman's message the Blind Veterans Radio Play Society is a shining example of our charity quietly achieving tremendous things. It gives an extra purpose and sense of achievement to blind veterans, volunteers and staff and produces super radio plays.

The bond between blind veterans and an act of great kindness.

June 2017. Normandy. A pilgrimage. Alfred Barlow stands with the Stockport Normandy Veterans' Association. Beret, cap badge, medals. 1944 merges with 2017 as in his mind's eye he sees the young men who gave their lives, men he fought alongside. So fresh are his memories of regrouping, looking for his pals and the terrible realisation they hadn't made it. There was no silhouette shaped space to show their place, it had been taken by different soldiers, new pals, as they continued their fight through France and towards Germany.

June 2017. England. Alfred Barlow's heart broke as he realised his Service medals were missing. Medals he was presented with 70 years ago as a young man when he was demobbed from the 3rd Reconnaissance (Recce) Regiment in 1947. The 1939 - 1945 Star. The France & Germany Star. The 1939 - 1945 War Medal and The Palestine Medal. Each told the story of Alfred's brave Service during the Second World War. They silently told of his prayers minutes before 10:00 hours BST, D-Day 6th June 1944, when as a young 23 year old soldier he ran on to Sword Beach. They told of his fight through France, Belgium, Holland and in to Germany. They were a reminder to the former Corporal of the friends and comrades that he had served with and the laughter they shared, even in the darkest of times. They became part of him as he proudly wore them on Remembrance Sunday, at public ceremonies with his beloved Stockport Normandy Veterans' Association and during the pilgrimages as they returned to Normandy.

Through Blind Veterans UK he launched a nationwide appeal for members of the public to help him find his Service medals to replace the void they left, not just on his chest, but deep inside. He offered a reward for their safe return, as did Hollywood film star Hugh Grant. Alfred's grandson and fellow members of the Normandy Veterans' Association searched, but sadly Alfred's medals were not found. Hearing this blind veteran Alan Walker was moved to source replacement medals that he presented to Alfred at our garden at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show.

Alfred's smiling face on the cover of this Review and on the adjacent page shows his joy as Alfred said, "I felt bereft when I realised the medals were missing when I returned from a pilgrimage to Normandy in June. The time I was without them felt so dark and it was a great moment and a big relief when

Alan presented me with the replacement medals. I'm so grateful to him for his kindness and this incredible act of generosity as it has made a whole world of difference to me. I'll wear my medals within the next few weeks with the Stockport Normandy Veterans' Association. I'm very proud of my medals and to have these ones from Alan makes everything right again."



Picture: Alfred Barlow speaks as the Standard Bearer, Alan Walker, Alfred's wife May and Blind Veterans UK's Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB look on and listen.



Picture: Alfred and May Barlow. Photos by Abby Tarrant.



Picture: Robert at work in his London patio.

Robert Eddison's

Wisdom & Wordplay

300 original one-liners
to enrich your day



'I salute your genius.
You are my favourite living Aphorist.'

Gyles Brandreth

Picture: Robert's forthcoming book.

A life to die for.

In conversation with blind veteran, Robert Eddison.

Although Robert was registered blind 25 years ago, he only joined Blind Veterans UK in 2007, as like so many he believed the charity served only those who were blinded in war. He hadn't realised that the charity also accepted the thousands of veterans who like him had completed National Service and who had lost their eyesight through natural causes after returning to civilian life.

Life story in summary.

Robert's life revolves around writing. He is a national journalist and his career was launched in 1978 by his interview with Margaret Thatcher for The Times. He has extensive broadcast experience, having regularly reported on BBC Radio Four's In Touch. His play Commanding Voices enjoyed a five week run in Hampstead and many favourable reviews. He is a lifelong member of MENSA and has just been appointed director of a new charity, IAFHA, the International Association for Higher Ability. Now, at the age of 84, the next part of his career is about to begin, that of an author with the 6th October publication of Wisdom & Wordplay. 300 pithy one liners to enrich your day. Robert has said the IT training he received from Anna Brownlie and her colleagues at the Brighton centre transformed his writing career. That's only the tip of the iceberg. For the full iceberg read on:

The war years childhood.

Robert told Review, "As children, my sister Deidre and I had a wonderful war. We lived just above Tunbridge Wells and opposite us was an army camp with these steel Nissan huts and you couldn't move down St Mark's Lane for soldiers in their full uniform. Not only that, but we had aeroplanes landing literally in a field a few hundred yards up the road from us. So, for a young boy it was very exciting. On top of that half way through the night we would be woken with the siren going and then it was gum boots on in the porch, race over the dewy lawn to a very deep hole in the ground that was an air raid shelter where we sheltered as the planes flew overhead, dropped their bombs and returned. Then we had the all clear and reluctantly we then walked back to the house and back to bed, but it was incredibly exciting for young children. We later discovered that underground air raid shelter was on the grounds of Field Marshal Lord Montgomery's headquarters. That is why it was the centre for

couriers, for motor bikes, for aeroplanes, for soldiers, everything buzzed round his centre. So, from our point of view it was a good war."

School & OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder).

Asked if the war had affected his schooling Robert continued, "I went to prep school and we evacuated to Wales and then on to secondary school so the war didn't affect my schooling apart from the poor food and the cold rooms. Sadly, I had no secondary school education to speak of because at 14 I was dragged out of school for three years as I fell ill because I was a terrible rebel, and rebels are not welcome, especially when you're aged 14. The reason I rebelled was because I thought the teaching frankly was unhelpful. It was done by rote. This is how it is, the sun moves round the earth, don't dare dispute this, that's it! I don't like that way of doing things. I don't like a gun at my head when I'm being taught. So, I rebelled and of course I paid a very heavy price because at 14 you can't win against a school establishment. I developed OCD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and I had no secondary education at all between the ages of 13 and 17 when I returned just for the final year and got into the second cricket XI.

Identifying gifted children.

"I felt neglected at school, I wasn't nurtured, I wasn't encouraged, I was bottom, I think, of all the classes. My English Master said, 'I think he can write' and that was the best comment I had in all the school reports for the three terms. The headmaster wrote 'This is the worst report I have ever read on a new boy'. That has motivated me to try and help prevent other gifted children from being so neglected during their schooling. And unless teachers are trained to identify gifted children they will just vegetate at the back of the class because they're bored and end up being rather seen as trouble. Churchill, I think did very badly at Harrow where he wasn't exactly one of their stars, academically speaking, and there are many other examples of people who are neglected. Anything I can do as a Director this new charity, IAFHA, the International Association for Higher Ability, I will do just to ensure that other people don't suffer as I did.

Gap years abroad.

"Eventually I realised that if I was going to get anywhere I had to get my A levels so I crammed for four A levels and then did a couple of gap years. My first gap

year was in Austria where I was the only English student at Innsbruck University and I ended up being bilingual in German after a year. My second gap year was at Perugia University where I became bilingual in Italian."

Cambridge entry.

Returning to England, fluent in both languages, Robert had to decide on his future career. "Cambridge beckoned, although I didn't think I would get in, but before even applying I needed to decide what I wanted to read and medicine attracted me. I thought 'Well if I go into medicine I want to end up a top surgeon where the money is. At that age you think in these rather crude terms. So I decided I'd devote a week to going round all the teaching hospitals in London, getting into the operating theatres and watching surgeons at work and see if my stomach turned or whether it didn't. I entered the first hospital not knowing where the operating theatres were so I asked at the desk. I cheekily changed into gum boots and tunic and went into the operating theatre, no questions asked, and I did this for four or five of the teaching hospitals in London. Each hospital I gave a day to and on one occasion, the surgeon asked me to assist. So there I was off the street assisting in a major operation in a London hospital. Now can you imagine that happening today? Sadly surgery was not for me as my stomach turned once too often.

"I then visited Cambridge and aged 20, I was interviewed by the Master of Clare College. The bad news is that he said no. I asked why and he said I needed to concentrate on analytic, critical thinking as I was bit of a butterfly mind and at Cambridge they seek people who are able to think clearly and logically. He told me to reapply the following year. I don't like taking no for an answer so I visited three more colleges and all three accepted me on the strength of my A levels and I accepted Trinity's offer. I'd learnt my lesson so presumably what I did was to learn to talk more logically. The reason I said yes to Trinity, without even realising it was the richest and best college in Cambridge, is because I love food and even in those early days I loved eating out and there was a wonderful restaurant opposite Great Gate in Trinity Lane. That was my reason for accepting Trinity and it was the best decision I had taken, but for the wrong reason, needless to say."

National Service.

In October 1953 Robert began National Service and as he had been so ill,

the Psychiatrist had written to the Board stating, 'I fear Robert may have a breakdown if you accept him, it will do nothing for his self esteem if he's thrown out of the Royal Air Force', which he was minded to join. "I went for my interview and in those days, you had a lot of young men who didn't want to do National Service and they would find any excuse to get out of it and here was I finding any excuse to get into it. After about 10 minutes I persuaded the interviewing board to let me do my National Service. However, once I faced reality as a young National Serviceman in 1953 the options seemed, for me being a linguist, to spend the next two years in the desert in Iraq with ear phones round my ears listening to intelligence reports from over the frontier, which is the last thing I wanted to do. I hate deserts.

Do or die.

Then I heard there was a Russian course, which I would have died to get on, but didn't think I would. In order to qualify for it you had to do a competitive exam, so I mixed square bashing, I think it was at Cardington and then we were sent to Bodmin where we spent two months round one of these smoky anthracite stoves in the cold winter mugging up on the Russian grammar written by Simoniver. A very dog eared book that I still have. We would all sit a competitive exam and the lucky top 20 in the RAF would then get to Cambridge where you would live like an under graduate in a very nice Mess, no uniform, no square bashing, which I loathed, and doing what I loved, which is learning a new language.

Mastering Russian.

"I was desperate to get to Cambridge, so rather cheekily I took the train one weekend leave to Cambridge and got myself invited by Professor Elizabeth Hill, who headed up Russian studies, to tea. I told her I was desperate to get on her course here and asked if she could put in a word for me. She said she'd love to but couldn't interfere with the way the Army operates, and I would have to qualify in the normal way. So back I go to Bodmin with my heart in my boots. I graft even harder to learn this awful Russian grammar, and the good news is that I was fourth in the whole of the RAF. Professor Elizabeth Hill welcomed me with a knowing look without revealing my attempted back door entry. This was remember the height of the cold war. There I was with this dynamic Russian professor who headed Russian for the whole of the university so her teaching us National Servicemen was a side line for her, but a major side line. I ended up

as a qualified Home Office Russian Interpreter, sad waste really, as I was never used in that capacity and my Russian sad to say has got very rusty. Indeed, the only use I've made of it is to talk Russian with my Slovakian builder, for whom Russian is his second language.

Cambridge here I come.

"After that and the end of my National Service it was Cambridge here I come. I was then aged 22 and it was 1955 and Cambridge, bless it, repaired and healed all the problems I had at school and reversed all that, because they love intellectual exploration. I picked up logic and analytic writing as if there was no tomorrow as I was hungry for it. Trinity was the most wonderful college and it opened my eyes to so many things and really it was the making of me and I owe Cambridge and Trinity a huge debt."

Next stop — Canada.

After Cambridge Robert dabbled with the Foreign Office as a junior consultant before he was offered an academic post lecturing in Russian at Toronto University in Canada. It was also in Canada he cut his teeth as a freelance journalist. After Canada Robert undertook a lecture tour of America on various subjects, some frivolous, some serious.

A complete failure.

On his return to England he was determined to make his name as a journalist. "Well what happened next is I returned to London and became a complete failure. I thought I was able to write and get paid for journalism, even though I was not trained, and it took a few years for me to be disabused of that assumption. I remember taking in an article and giving it to a Features Editor on Fleet Street and he read it and said no. I asked why and he said, the first quote starts far too late, it should start much earlier and I don't think you are ready yet to earn a living in journalism. I said I can write a good university essay, he paused and he said, yes that is the problem. So, I had no option but to bite the bullet and ended up doing three years hard on local papers with North London News up in Crouch End. I started as a cub reporter and one day the group editor said he thought I was a feature writer and ever since then I've specialised in writing features. Having started as a cub reporter on the Camden Journal I ended up as Group Features Editor for all the papers in North London News.

Sudden break through.

"That training was the making of me as a national Fleet Street journalist. Fleet Street as it then was before it went to Wapping under Mr Murdoch. Indeed, what launched my Fleet Street career was a 1700 word interview with Margaret Thatcher for The Times. Landing the article was another matter because the day before I fell off a bus and broke my left arm, which had to be in plaster, and I'm left handed. Thankfully I was given permission to record the interview.

Have you got a gun?

There I was being greeted next day in Mrs Thatcher's then North Finchley Constituency Office. We shook hands. I then said 'Mrs Thatcher have you got a gun?' Pause 'A gun why would I want a gun?' 'To shoot me with.' 'But I've only just met you why would I want to shoot you?' 'Because Mrs Thatcher I gather from Patrick Cosgrave's biography of you that you hate being interrupted. I want to cover various subjects political, domestic, and international and I've only been given half an hour to do this Mrs Thatcher. I'm going to have to interrupt you. Interrupt me as much as you like dear boy.' We started the interview, it went very well, and people have often asked me since what impression did I have of her. The abiding impression I had and have had no reason to change it is that she was genuinely what she said she was in The Times article. She was a conviction politician and I've never had any reason to doubt this. She was as good as her word as I did interrupt her many times during that interview and she didn't take it badly at all. The interview eventually lasted for an hour and a quarter, rather than the half hour I was originally given, and we did cover all the fronts and I was very pleased and that made for a very good article.

Fleet Street ahoy!

"Then when I submitted it to The Times with my heart sort of palpitating, not thinking they would take it because it's pretty unheard of for somebody on local papers to jump straight into The Times with a heavyweight interview. But sure, enough the phone rang back and they said they were accepting it. I asked what's the max to be told 1,400 [words] and in the end because it had been such a long and good interview it ran to 1,700 words. I was quite prepared to read it next day to see the cut version, but in fact to my delight they kept not only all 1,700 words, but they didn't alter a single word or comma. It went in

exactly as I'd written it so I was absolutely delighted. Not only that, it appeared on May the 10th 1978 under my hero of the time, Bernard Levin, whom I always thought of as a brilliant writer. That not only opened all doors to me, but it actually oiled the hinges and indeed the doors opened and they stayed open."

Robert went on to work for the London Evening News, which was subsequently taken over by the Evening Standard and the Daily Express, while supplying articles as a freelance journalist to many other leading national newspapers.

My first stage play.

Another form his writing has taken was a stage play, Commanding Voices, that he wrote in around the late 1990s, 2000 that had a five week run in Hampstead in London and got some golden reviews. The play had a stellar cast headed by Jeremy Child and directed by Richard Hughes. "I hope to revive this play and I always thought of it as a film for the big screen. The main protagonist in Commanding Voices is a young man called Ben who is the older version of me. I was 14 when I had crippling OCD and Ben is around 19 or 20. He wasn't anything like as ill as I was, but quite ill enough. If I made Ben as ill as I had been nobody would believe it and they would leave in the interval. So that is where we come in Act I to see Ben really disintegrating as a direct result of pressure to attend his father's former university rather than art school."

Consuming passion.

The play was the start of Robert's aphorisms. "On re-reading the play again I discovered there were four one liners, each of which was a one off aphorism. The thought hit me that rather than write a whole play in order to produce four pithy one liners, why don't I write a stand alone line and that was the start of my aphorisms. It must have been in the late 1990s I started writing one liners as a hobby and the hobby grew over the years and now I write four original aphorisms a day. When I look back on my aphorisms over 20 years and it's very weird, because I can date my aphorisms by their quality, as the early ones need quite heavy editing. The later ones need virtually no editing at all because over 20 years you hone your craft and you improve. Now having done many thousands of one liners over all that time period, on 150 different subjects, ranging from cannibalism to political correctness I reckon I've learnt my craft. As I said before it's all writing.

Eureka moments.

"I love it. Whereas a novelist might get a eureka moment when they've done their 500 words daily graft, or finished a chapter, I get a eureka moment from every single line that I write. One of my favourites, which I think is on my website is — The absent minded professor is not so much absent, as present elsewhere.

First book.

I'm very excited about the publication of *Wisdom & Wordplay*. 300 pithy one liners to enrich your day. It's my first proper book and it's being launched on 6th October. It's another red letter day in my rather varied life. But it's all constellating around writing as this is yet another aspect of my writing. You've got the aphorisms, you've got the journalism, and you've got the play, now you have the book! I don't know where it's all going to end. I have Anna Brownlie and the trainers at the Brighton centre to thank for enabling me to continue to write."

Had it not been for his sister prompting him to contact Blind Veterans UK it could have been very different. "At the time, my eyesight failed 25 years ago I had assumed, rightly at the time, that St Dunstan's was for veterans who were blinded in war or as a result of their service. It never occurred to that the criteria would change and that I would be eligible. My sister however who is a retired social worker and who digs rather deeper into these things than I do told me that I might be eligible for membership, but even that didn't register that the charity could help me. And here comes another irony, of all the 4,200 members of what is now Blind Veterans UK I live the nearest geographically to your Harcourt Street headquarters. There's a little restaurant that I visit for lunch most days I virtually pass you every day and never went in. Eventually my sister insisted that I at least make enquiries and I did and to cut a long story short discovered that you offer this wonderfully high level of quality IT training, which I had resisted doing for years because you know how it is when you're a bit of a dinosaur like me you tend to resist change and you continue in your old fashioned way. I mean I used to have a manual typewriter, it's on my website. I think the typewriter on my website is a photograph of a manual typewriter that I used to use for my journalism. The electric typewriter passed me completely by, as did the computer.

My heartfelt thanks.

"So there ten years ago I go down to what was then St Dunstan's at Ovingdean [Brighton centre] for an introductory week, which I didn't think I needed, but by goodness I did because there was a lot to learn. One of the things I learnt was that they would train me in IT and teach me computers and I didn't know enough to know how badly I needed it. I left after that week realising that I would benefit hugely from IT training. My first IT week I remember that Anna Brownlie was one of my wonderful world class instructors and she let me in at the shallow end and gradually built me up to give me confidence. You know I was very resistant to all this as one is when you're in your middle 70s. I came away with the training I needed as an IT literate writer. Not a day goes by that I don't thank my sister for pushing me towards this building.

To finish with one of Robert's many aphorisms. We only regret the failures that we did not turn into blessing.

How to buy the book.

Robert's first book: *Wisdom & Wordplay*. 300 pithy one liners to enrich your day, is available from Amazon on Friday 6th October. It not only makes the perfect gift but is an essential traveller on bus, tube, private jet or loo. Review asks you to support him and buy a copy only on Friday 6th October to ensure that this gem gains its rightful place on the bestseller list.

But don't just believe us.

"I salute your genius, Robert. You are my favourite living Aphorist." Gyles Brandreth.

Please do make a diary note to buy this book only on Friday 6th October at www.amazon.co.uk

You can read more about Robert on his website at roberteddison.com

For further information please contact his public relations team at Literally PR on email helenlewis@literallypr.com or telephone 01622 890160.

Rowland Edwards receives his Legion d'honneur. By Felix Ardenz-Caines.

Rowland Edwards, 93 and from Stafford, was presented with the prestigious honour by Monsieur Jean-Claude Lafontaine from the French Consulate in a special ceremony at the National Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire. The ceremony, which was organised by Blind Veterans UK, was attended by Rowland's family as well as representatives from the charity.

Rowland says: "I feel incredibly humbled to be appointed the rank of Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur. I'd particularly like to extend my thanks to the President of the French Republic."



Picture: Monsieur Jean-Claude Lafontaine from the French Consulate and Chevalier Rowland Edwards.

Rowland, who served with the 29th Armoured Brigade HQ 11th Armoured Division, remains humble about the part he played in the liberation of an entire nation, and is instead deeply thankful that he was able to survive the war with his physical health intact. He says: "I still don't feel like I did anything special; it was just part of the job. In truth, I was just grateful to survive when so many people didn't. That being said, I've been able to reflect on everything since I found out I was to be awarded the medal, and I do feel extremely proud to have shaped the history of Europe. I'm honoured that people consider this something special; it'll remain a source of pride for the rest of my life."

Rowland arrived at Juno Beach on D Day +6 aged just twenty years old. Tasked with operating a tank across the beach towards Cully, his role as tank operator meant he was responsible for focusing on the route ahead. As they drove in pursuit of their primary objective — capturing Hill 112 — the severity and extent of the atrocities around them led to his tank driver suffering a breakdown, resulting in Rowland's unexpected and sudden elevation to the role of lead driver.

Despite the horrors and sombre recollections Rowland has, he regards his time in the army as an important part of his life, and therefore one he wouldn't change. He says: "I was very glad it was over; staying up all night waiting to be attacked by the Germans was a terrifying experience. I wouldn't have missed it, though. There was a fantastic camaraderie and I got to learn about so many different things, including photography and poetry."

Rowland, who suffers from age related macular degeneration and glaucoma, counts the backing he's received from Blind Veterans UK as crucial to his receiving the prestigious award. He says "If it wasn't for Blind Veterans UK, I'd have never considered applying for this honour. I'm extremely grateful for their support. One of the most valuable things I've received from the charity has been a reading machine. I'm now able to enjoy poetry again, as well as read some of my own post!"



Picture: Chevalier Rowland Edwards wears the Legion d'honneur.

Happy 100th Birthday to Bill Hassack.

A veteran of the Burma campaign and enthusiastic member of Blind Veterans UK, Bill Hassack celebrated his 100th birthday on 3rd July. Bill started work as a junior clerk for the Salford Co-operative Society at the tender age of 14 in 1931, and when war came he joined the Royal Artillery and served with distinction, both at home and from 1943 in Burma. Like so many veterans, he is humble about his contribution during the War, and reluctant to speak out too much about events. He took part in numerous active engagements, including around Pegu and the Sittang River.

Bill also assisted in the complex task of managing surrendered Japanese forces, before finally embarking on the long sea journey home, arriving back in Liverpool in May 1946. However, his contribution in the Far East nearly didn't happen as he was fortunate to survive a Doodle-bug attack while stationed in Woolwich Barracks before departure. Added to that a troop carrier he was on in the Indian Ocean, was mined. They lost friends and comrades, but Bill and many others survived and the ship limped slowly into Rangoon harbour.

After the War Bill rejoined the Manchester Co-operative Society and continued to work for them for the next 30 years. He became Chief Executive of Southampton and District CRS, and Chair of the local Chamber of Commerce. He met his wife Anne, on holiday in the Isle of Man in 1947, marrying a year later in Edinburgh. Anne is now 97, and they eventually retired to Lincolnshire, and there they recently celebrated his centenary, with family and friends from all over the country shown in the photograph below.



Ron Russell's Mini Quiz.

1. In which Ocean is the Bay of Bengal?
2. Which mysterious phenomenon is represented by the initials ESP?
3. Which resort on the French Riviera is famous for its annual film festival?
4. With which sport is Jack Dempsey associated?
5. Eternal Flame and Manic Monday were hits by which girl band?
6. Which political party has been led by F.D.Roosevelt, J.F. Kennedy and Jimmy Carter?
7. Which British Doctor and middle distance runner was the first man to a mile in under four minutes?
8. Of which country is Sofia the capital?
9. Which Japanese city was largely destroyed by the first atomic bomb used in warfare?
10. What is the official currency of Thailand?

Answers on page 41.

Dr Renata Gomes.

Dr Renata Gomes, Head of Research & Innovation is an exciting addition to the work of Blind Veterans UK. Review caught up with Renata to bring you news of her work and how you can become involved.

Review: Can you please tell us something about yourself and your work?

Renata: Thank you so much for inviting me to into the Review's offices. I am a medical and forensic specialist and have been a medical scientist for 10 years now, researching within biomedical sciences and vascular sciences. I got into science and medicine at a very young age. In fact, I started studying human physiology when I was eight years old and a lot of people even say that I was born a scientist. My biggest aim is to always use knowledge for the benefit of humankind, which in our case means using science to reverse the effects of blindness.

Review: Can you tell us about your role within Blind Veterans UK?

I'm the Head of Research and Innovation and that means I want to produce new solutions, develop existing ones and further support others in order to reverse the effects of blindness. As you are aware, we at Blind Veterans UK are already successful in reversing many of the social and psychological effects of blindness through rehabilitation and integration. However, we want to go further and do more research into medical solutions and any type of innovations whether they are medical or welfare or assistive aids that can make your day to day life even better.

Is there any way that you want blind veterans to become involved in your work?

We want our veterans to be involved at all times. Research is a two-way street and as we need to be in contact we also need you [blind veterans] to contact us. We have open channels to receive feedback for ideas, details of programmes or projects that you know are ongoing, and that could be anywhere in the world. We also want to hear your ideas, perhaps for problems that are persistent and as much as we try we are currently not able to provide a solution to. So, we need this interaction on a day to day basis. In the very near future we will ask

blind veterans to get involved in specific research projects. For some of those research projects we will ask our members to volunteer to perhaps get involved in the trialling of driverless cars. Or to study differences in sleep patterns in veterans and those who are also blinded. I would like to emphasise that all involvement in the research is purely voluntary, as there is no obligation to take part, as the essence of research is always voluntary for the common good.

Can you tell us about the recent medical seminar that took place during Project Gemini?

As part of Project Gemini this year we were able to have an academic professional exchange as well as a veterans' exchange. We ran a scientific seminar when we started the research and innovation seminar series and this year we looked into traumatic brain injury and sight loss. We believe that every veteran will encounter traumatic brain injury during their career, which can be very mild or more extreme in some cases. That is because of the training you go through as during these periods of training you may have some level of traumatic brain injury. But I want to stress this is not something to worry about, and do not panic because traumatic brain injury is something very common in footballers, rugby players and athletes and lots of sports people. We have to remember that when our veterans go through their physical training they are the level of a professional athlete. We wanted to look into traumatic brain injury and sight loss, which in cases can be immediate sight loss from what we call war blindness, but sometimes it can be delayed. It can happen a few years later that they have trouble with their vision and we want to do research into that as there's so little known within this area. For this we brought together 12 leaders in their field from the United Kingdom and United States. Some of those speakers were ex-military and many of them are now professors at world leading universities. We really want to develop better assessment and diagnosis for traumatic brain injury and have paths into providing better support, as for example, with traumatic brain injuries many of those symptoms are very similar to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and it can be difficult to distinguish it. Obviously, there is no harm in treating somebody for PTSD, but if you're not treating for traumatic brain injury then problems can arise.

So, we want to create more awareness and do more research into this and as a consequence we had the seminar, during which, we came to an agreement that we would create a bilateral relationship between ourselves and the United

States to further research this. We're also getting more people involved from other nations and we were very honoured to have the support of the Surgeon General of the British Forces for the initiative who recommended that we research further and that it may be of interest to the Ministry of Defence to help us in our research.

Although the seminar was focussed on traumatic brain injury we have many other research interests. One of our main areas of interest is age related macular degeneration and we will also look into other diseases. In terms of sight loss to us we are always interested in anything that affects our members, whether it affects 64% of our membership or just 1%. Please do not think that because you have retinitis pigmentosa and that as there are only 100 of you within our charity that we are going to forget about you. We will not forget about that.

After the seminar we held a question and answer session and during it working age blind veteran Darren Blanks asked if there had been, or if there was, any research planned into Lepers Optic Neuropathy, which is the eye condition he has. As a result of his question working with the Americans we are looking into developing an app or a platform where we can put all the trials together for all of the sight loss conditions. There are two trials out there, but they are currently not at human level, they are what we call the pre clinical stage. We will always look into every condition and we are very fortunate to have records which allow me to see the different types of sight loss conditions that you have. Obviously, our biggest cause of sight loss is age related macular degeneration, followed by glaucoma and cataracts, but we will look into all of them.

What would you like to achieve? What's your dream?

Our main goal and my dream is still Sir Arthur Pearson's vision as he was truly ahead of his time and if he was born today he would be a key opinion leader. We want a variety of things. We want to keep our beneficiaries informed of any developments that may be of use to them, but we also want our veterans to get in touch with us. Please feel free to email us or telephone and we will always read and listen to everything you have to say and we will get back to you. Of course, we want to reverse the effects of blindness to the point that you even forget that you have sight problems. In fact, recently we ran a survey with the care nursing teams and when we interviewed members, although they were very grateful for the care that they rated as being excellent to outstanding,

you said that you would like to be more independent. One of the top things to help you regain independence is that you would like to drive and as a consequence of that I started looking into driverless cars and how we can trial them and we are undergoing conversations on how to do this. What we really want to achieve is a full life for you, our members, to have fun, play games and be independent and even drive if possible. My dream is to actually reverse the effects of blindness to the point that we may be able to give you a level of vision that may mean you are no longer a blind veteran. That would be a dream, but for now we will take baby steps as we try to achieve other goals. Although of course you may not see, I have to say that all the blind veterans I have met have immense vision.

You can contact Dr Renata Gomes on telephone 0207 616 7965 or by email renata.gomes@blindveterans.org.uk



Picture: Dr Renata Gomes, centre, at The Lincoln Memorial for an earlier Project Gemini in Washington DC. From left to right: Steve Birkin, Sue Eyles, Dr Renata Gomes, Alan Walker and Blind Veterans UK's President Colin Williamson.

Running man Andy Leitch continues his challenge to run 100 miles each month.

In the March Review we launched the news of Andy Leitch's self imposed challenge to run 100 miles every month throughout 2017. Andy stood still for long enough to pen this article of the many miles he's covered this year.

My challenge was to run 100 miles per month, well six months on 600 miles covered. I started Andy's Angels with Dianna Smith and Gina Dawson and our first group run in a Blind Veterans UK shirt was the Fleet half marathon. Dianna I then ran the Virgin London marathon when she acted as my sighted guide for the day. She embraced the whole experience and like me said never again, until a few days later when she asked if we 'Could do it again?' That started a busy few weeks for me where a fortnight later I walked 26.2 miles with my daughter and wife Angie on the moonwalk. Two weeks after that it was the Dorchester marathon which was just hill after hill.

During all of this I was training with my wife Angie to walk in Blind Veterans UK's 100K in 24 hours Challenge in Yorkshire with Joey Sharma. Joey's an incredible person who is also known as Joey the Little Trooper, as she completes marathons and ultra-marathons around the world to raise money for Blind Veterans UK. We had a really enjoyable time walking with Katherine Blyton Dow aka the vicar from Emmerdale. At 50K Angie suffered some really impressive blisters but she carried on to the end. Like Dianna, Angie said never again, however a few days later she asked if we could do it all again next year. And the London to Brighton 100K Challenge walk!

For the remainder of the year there's still plenty of runs to be completed with all of Andy's Angels taking part in one or more run.

We have the Dorney Lake half marathon. The New Forest 10k and marathon. The Royal Parks half marathon and the Great South Run. And all of this still covering 100 miles per month.

If you would like to follow our progress we are on Facebook as **andysangels1** Or Twitter **@Andys_angels1** and if you would like to sponsor us our Justgiving page is **justgiving.com/andysangels1** and all money will go to Blind Veterans UK to thank them for everything they have done for me.



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



Picture: At the end of a successful 100K Yorkshire Challenge.

Operation Jubilee. The disastrous raid on Dieppe. 19th August 1942. By President Colin Williamson.

In August 2017 I had the privilege of representing the charity at a ceremony to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the raid on the German occupied French port of Dieppe by Canadian and British Forces during World War Two.

The raid, codenamed Operation Jubilee, was a disaster for the allies. Some 3,367 Canadian troops were either killed, injured or captured with another 275 of their British counterparts suffering the same fate.

Why the need for the raid on Dieppe? Operation Jubilee was to be the first European engagement for the Canadian army in the war and designed to test the allied armies' ability to mount an amphibious raid on Adolf Hitler's 'Fortress Europe'. It was also in response to a request from Russia to relieve the pressure on their forces who were involved in heavy fighting with the Germans deep inside Russian territory, by opening up a 'second front' in north-west Europe. On the insistence of British Chief of Combined Operations, Rear Admiral (later to become Lord) Louis Mountbatten, who was itching for an opportunity to test his troops on a beach landing against a dug in, well prepared enemy, Churchill agreed for the raid to go ahead.

Preparation for the raid began in earnest. The first rehearsal was a complete disaster as the weather was consistently bad, forcing the parachute element of the raid to constantly postpone drops. The sea-going element didn't fair too well either, with heavy seas and fog playing their part in delaying much needed training. The eight destroyers that were to play a major role in the operation by bombarding the shore were cancelled due to concerns over their vulnerability when they were close to the heavily fortified coast. The planned air bombardment was also reduced over fears of French casualties and the need to prioritise the bombing of strategic targets in Germany.

The second rehearsal however, went better, although the planned parachute drop on the flanks was cancelled. This was much to the relief of the 1st Parachute Battalion commanding officer who later stated that "security for the raid was abysmal".

Due to the success of the second rehearsal, it was jointly agreed that the raid

would take place on the fourth of July, or whatever day after that produced the best weather conditions. The raid was to begin from five ports spread between Southampton and Newhaven with a force of 5,000 Canadian troops, 1,000 British and a small contingent of U.S. Rangers. Furthermore nearly 250 ships and landing craft were to take part in the raid alongside 74 squadrons of aircraft, which included 66 fighter squadrons. The plan was for the main force to attack the coastal batteries which were strung along the coast from west to east and a simultaneous beach landing using tanks and infantry. A small raiding party of Royal Marine Commandoes were to enter the port using fast gunboats, disable the lock installations and capture vital documents which were held in a safe in the port office. The responsibility of capturing these important documents was given to a RM Commando who had been a burglar before joining up! I think that same Royal is now a blind veteran as at a recent younger event at the Brighton centre which I attended a pair of Newcastle United football socks and a half-eaten packet of custard creams went missing from my bedside locker.

The Germans however, were on full alert for a possible raid. Increased radio traffic coupled with reports from French double-agents regarding increased activity in the English southern ports had prompted the Germans to increase manpower and heavy weapons in and around Dieppe.

The raid began at 04:50 on the 19th August but the element of surprise had already been lost as a landing craft had exchanged gunfire with a small German convoy in the early hours of the morning. Things quickly went from bad to worse.

The Churchill tanks from 14th Canadian Tank Regiment quickly lost their tracks on the shingle beach and were sitting ducks for German artillery whilst the infantry, mainly consisting of elements from the Essex Scottish Regiment and the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry were cut to pieces by accurate and deadly cross fire from German positions high up on the cliff tops. Some Commando elements however successfully achieved their objectives but were forced to withdraw against heavy opposition. Only 60 men from the 543 Royal Canadian Regiment soldiers who landed on the beach managed to be evacuated. The Royal Marine Commandoes which had successfully breached the defences further up the coast were then tasked to go to the aid of Canadian fusiliers who were pinned down at the bottom of the cliffs. Many of the RM Commandoes were either killed or captured during this daring rescue attempt and the C.O.,

Lieutenant Colonel 'Tigger' Phillipps, who realised that this was in fact a suicide mission, stood up at the stern of the landing craft and attempted to signal those following him to turn back; he was killed moments later.

There is no doubt that the Raid on Dieppe was a debacle. However, vital lessons were learned and experience gained which came in very useful when it came to the Normandy amphibious landings later on in the war.

As General Sir Leslie Hollis, secretary to the Chiefs of Staff and deputy head of the Military Wing of the War Cabinet stated "As an operation, it was an utter failure and the many lives that were lost in exercises leading up to the raid and on Operation Jubilee itself were lost with no tangible results".

Many brave men gave their lives on Operation Jubilee and we as a nation should never forget their sacrifice. It was an honour and a privilege to lay a wreath on behalf of Blind Veterans UK in honour of them all.

A past interview with the late Alan Saunders, who Served with 40 Royal Marine Commando, and who took part in the Raid is included in the Talking Review.



Picture: Blind veteran Nigel Whiteley, who is a key part of the Ceremony each year salutes after placing his wreath on behalf of the South Atlantic Veterans Association.



Picture: Steve Richards, Transport Brighton centre, with Blind Veterans UK President Colin Williamson as they prepare to march to the Memorial Service in Newhaven.

Please display this poster where you live to help us find veterans, who like you, could benefit from our service.

A poster for Blind Veterans UK. The main image is a close-up of an elderly man, Jim Hooper, with white hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and a dark tie. He is holding a small, black and white photograph of a younger man in a military uniform. The text on the poster reads: "Free services for Armed Forces and National Service veterans", "Blind Veterans UK has helped me regain my independence. It has given me an entirely new lease of life.", "Jim Hooper, Glider Pilot Regiment veteran with age-related sight loss", "Blind Veterans UK", "No one alone", "Call: 0800 389 7979", "Visit: www.noonealone.org.uk", "Life beyond sight loss St Dunstan's since 1915". The poster has a blue and red border.

Dangerous Assignment. The Brighton centre's Blind Veterans Radio Play Society celebrates two glorious years.

If you walk along the corridor past The Stables at the Brighton centre on any Friday between 2pm and 3.30pm you will hear the joyous sound of laughter as members of the Brighton centre's Blind Veterans Radio Play Society work on their latest play. Chris Kirk, the Brighton centre's Transport Manager, Louise Partridge Art & Craft Supervisor and blind veteran John Taylor, are to be congratulated for launching this wonderful Society that has enriched the lives of its members.

Members of the Blind Veterans' Radio Play Society recently celebrated their second anniversary as they listened with invited guests to their latest production, *Dangerous Assignment*. There were plot twists aplenty in the fast paced drama that the players tackled with relish as they immersed themselves in their characters to give convincing portrayals of assassins, spies, a siren and the odd psychopath. There was some great acting and superb sound effects and blind veterans, volunteers and staff said how they have improved over the course of the last two years since such early productions as the much loved BBC sitcom 'Are You Being Served?'

The only sombre moment came as they listened to the recording and heard the voice of their dear friend, the late Bernard Parker, who died suddenly in April. As Bernard died before the Society had finished recording the play Sue Kalusi, who works in the Booking Office, and is now a skilled sound engineer, pieced together Bernard's voice from past recordings to finish the play. It was painstaking work that took many weeks but it ensured that Bernard was in the play with his good chums.

Speaking of the Blind Veterans Radio Play Society John Taylor said, "I've been a member of Blind Veterans UK for about 12 years. Initially I came here because I wanted to use the gym as I've always been into keep fit. That goes back to being a dancer and singer on stage, as unless you have a good level of fitness you can't sing and dance at the same time. We started doing the Radio Play Society here at the Brighton centre and our first play, *The Intruder*, was done by a number of members and it was a completely new experience for them as they had never put their voice to a recording before. The finished radio play wasn't too bad. I can say that because now, 18 to 24 months later, we listen to some of our past recordings and think 'Goodness me when we started we didn't know

what we were doing, but now we sound very much like professionals!'. Listening to *Dangerous Assignment* I forgot it was me and thought 'Oh that was me. I didn't realise. That was good I enjoyed that.' We all have a good laugh doing it and that's why I keep coming back because everybody enjoys themselves.

Pat Keeble said, "I've belonged to the Radio Society Play Society since it started and I thorough enjoy every single minute of it. We laugh from the time we come in from the time we go home. It's marvellous. You don't need to read a script as a volunteers sits with you and feeds you the lines. That's great fun too."

It's not just blind veterans who get a kick from being part of the Radio Play Society, staff do too. Paul Twilley was roped in to help and he couldn't be happier. "My coming to the Radio Play Society was a bit of an accident as I was walking along the corridor when I turned a corner and there was Chris Kirk, my boss, coming towards me. He asked, 'Can you give me a hand I need some lifting and shifting?' The following week he asked me to help again and I've gone back every week since. It's a good laugh and I'm amazed at people's skill and professionalism and it's wonderful to see the same faces every week."

Sybil Henderson, a resident at the Brighton centre is another key member of the Society. With her sultry voice she was a natural for role of the siren in *Dangerous Assignment*. "I've been a resident now for nearly four years and when the Radio Play Society started someone said they thought I should try and join. I said I'd never done anything like that before and she told me to just try it and I'm so pleased I did as I enjoy every minute I'm here. We have so many laughs and I wish we could meet more than once a week."

For Bernard Parker the Radio Play Society changed his life and gave him back something from his youth. As a very young man he was in the Haywards Heath Theatre Group, mainly singing in the chorus, and during the summer month's they would sing Gilbert and Sullivan and in the winter months put on a pantomime. He thoroughly enjoyed going to the Brighton centre on Friday afternoon to spend time with as he put it 'this collection of renegades at the Radio Play Society'.

It was Sue Kalusi and her hard work that ensured Bernard was part of *Dangerous Assignment*. Speaking of her involvement Sue said: "I work in the Bookings Office and before Chris Kirk asked me to get involved I didn't know anything about editing. Chris taught me everything he knew as he is a former

BBC editor. It's lovely piecing everything together and hearing the finished play as it all sounds so amazing. Everyone is incredible and it's been great."

Howard Cutter said, "I'm a Geordie, I suppose you'll be able to tell, nobody else can understand me. I really enjoy all this. I never, ever thought I would do anything like this, I was always very shy and trying to hide behind somebody. I've been a member of Blind Veterans UK for 10 years and I used to enjoy woodwork and making things but I found after losing much of my eyesight I couldn't continue and somebody suggested I join the Radio Play Society. I thought to myself, well I've never done anything like that but I'll have a go and I really enjoy it. I want to thank Chris, Lou, Sue, Paul and volunteers Barbara Summers and Dawn Kozoboli for making this possible."

A recording of Dangerous Assignment is included in the Talking Review and we have CDs for the six blind veterans who phone or write in for a copy. You can telephone the Review editor on 020 7616 8367 and leave your name and phone number or email revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk Names will be picked from a hat. If you would like to join the Blind Veterans Radio Play Society and take part in future recordings contact the Brighton centre. Future plays include The Winslow Boy and Parsley Sidings, but you can also make suggestions.



Picture: The Brighton Radio Play Society from left to right John Taylor, Howard Cutter, Louise Partridge, Bernard Parker, Dawn Kozoboli, Chris Kirk, Sue Kaulsi, Sybil Henderson, Catherine Goodier (guest), Paul Twilley, Mabel Aitcheson, John Isaacs and Barbara Summers.

A fete worse than death. By Grace Bittan.

'Does he take sugar? 'I heard a voice say.
I looked up, someone coming my way.
'Well, does he want coffee or tea?
Margaret's on cake, if he wants some just say.
I think there is ginger, just bring him this way.
Now what is it he wants, you haven't said?
Maybe a biscuit? Graham does those.
He might find him a hob nob, I'm sure,
I suppose, you don't come out much to functions and such,
He is rather quiet, doesn't talk very much.
Oh did I say,
We're collecting for Blind Dogs, you know what I mean,
The ones that pull people around on a chain,
So cute, so sweet, I'm sure you'll agree,
Now can I get him a nice cup of tea?'

I opened my mouth but nothing came out.
I wanted to scream, I wanted to shout,
I've just lost my sight, not my brain, not my voice.
I don't want a coffee or tea. Do I have a choice?'
Do I ask for a coke and confuse the old girl?
Or a whiskey and ice, put them all in a whirl?
But hesitation was saved by my wife butting in.
'Thanks, but we're off to the pub for a large glass of gin.'
We were laughing as we rushed away,
And as we went we heard her say;

'Does she take sugar, one lump or two?
Is there anything else that I can do?
It's Blind Dogs this year that we collect for,
Oh I see that you've got one,
That's very sweet, how nice,
What a treat!'

GOAL Group adventures from Brighton Port Hall. By Dave Hazelgrove.

Seven GOAL Group members, John Cantwell, Lindy Elliott, Graham Ward, John Brice, Carole Sharpe (with guide dog Layla), Chris Humphrey, and me, Dave Hazelgrove, met in Brighton on Monday 24th July.

After settling in at Port Hall, a ten minute walk from the Brighton centre, and our evening meal, we all got together for our first evening overview of the week ahead and our traditional Quiz Night.

Tuesday started with transport along the coast Eastwards to Newhaven Fort, where we were met by Phil, our guide for the day. The visit had been arranged by Kath Dudley of the Fort's organisation. Phil took us all over the Fort, and really brought the Fort back to life for us with his explanations of life there when the Fort was operational. He also showed us a lot of arms and uniforms from many eras, although he did seem a little bemused at our familiarity with certain of the armaments we were shown, including a First World War Lee-Enfield 303 rifle and a Second World War German MP40. Fortunately, you can't get the ammunition these days. After a very enjoyable visit we returned to the Centre for another sparkling Quiz Night and the threat of a very long 'shaggy dog' story from me.



Picture: Chris Humphreys, one of the founders of the GOAL Group, at Newhaven Fort.

Wednesday started with a bus ride to the Jungle Rumble Adventure Golf site, where Mark and Jake split us into two teams, the two Johns, Lindy and Graham in one and Chris, Carole, Layla and I in the other, to go around the two separate 18 hole courses. Layla did try to help — herself to the balls as often as possible. This meant that Team Dog finished a long time after the other team had finished their round. As it was raining, we all got rather wet, but that didn't dampen our spirits.

In the afternoon, after lunch back at the Brighton centre, we were treated to a concert by Her Majesty's Band of The Royal Marines, which everyone at the centre thoroughly enjoyed. As it was a rainy day the concert was held inside, and our thanks go to the Brighton centre's staff and volunteers for the speed with which they converted the restaurant and seating areas into a concert venue.

After the concert, we went back out to catch the bus down to the Marina, well the top of the hill above the Marina to be strictly accurate, and we walked down to the bowling centre for a game of ten-pin bowls. Yes, the side bumpers were used.

We then went on to a local hostelry for our evening meal. After the meal, Chris asked Graham and Lindy if they would be able to climb back up the hill to the bus stop. As they assured him that they could, he stated that the rest of us would be getting a taxi. The sight of the seven of us in stitches, white canes in hand, will doubtless stay with the locals for many moons. Back at our accommodation, we settled in for more quiz and another threat of a 'shaggy dog' story.



Picture: Looking dangerous Carole Sharpe brandishes something.

Thursday began with an early breakfast. We then boarded our coach for the journey to Portsmouth Historic Harbour (the Dockyard as it was once known) where we would enjoy a visit to the completed Mary Rose exhibition. Our contact was Mary Kinoulty, and our guides were June Carroll and Mike Wyles who were both dressed in period costumes. We split into two groups for the visit, and our guides were very careful of us as the exhibition is a very low-light affair. We were taken around everything and everything was explained to us in great depth, which really brought the ship back to life. We even had the chance to handle some things that hadn't made it onto the exhibition. I could have made quite a killing on 'Flog It!'.

After we completed the visit to the Mary Rose, we were taken to another building where we were allowed to handle some other items from the Dockyard. Next, we were taken aboard the Monitor (M33) by Rachel Goodall and handed over to the ship's Curator Alice for a tour around much of the ship. Unfortunately, the clock was ticking and we had to cut this visit a little short so that we could catch our coach back to the Brighton centre.



Picture: The assembled GOAL Group with one extra.

After our evening meal, we settled in for our Quiz Night and I was actually asked for my 'Shaggy Dog' story. Big mistake! I duly obliged and there was much groaning, wailing and gnashing of teeth. Marvellous!

Friday was our 'travel home' day, and it came around much too quickly. We all agreed that we'd had a great time. Strangely, nobody mentioned the story.

The next planned GOAL visits are:

Monday 16th to Saturday 21st April 2018 at Blind Veterans UK's Llandudno centre.

Monday 11th to Friday 15th June 2018 at Blind Veterans UK's Port Hall in Brighton.

Monday 10th to Friday 14th September 2018 in Liverpool.

G.O.A.L stands for "Get Out And Live". The group has been formed for active male and female members of Blind Veterans UK from the ages of 50 to 76 who want to join a group that strongly advocates independence within their day to day lives. Is this you? If so, please get in touch.

For more information about the group, or the events, please contact any of the following committee members:

Chris Humphrey by email at chrisandhazel3@gmail.com or telephone him on 01603 701402.

You can contact John Brice at email john.brice@tesco.net or telephone him on 01934 261783.

Or Dave Hazelgrove by email at dhazelgrove@hotmail.com or telephone him on 01754 896617.

Or John Cantwell by email at john.cantwell1947@gmail.com or telephone him on 01295 273105.

Raising awareness of Blind Veterans UK.

Last December we told you of our plans to conduct some research with different groups of people, to find out what they knew and felt about Blind Veterans UK and the services we provide. We highlighted that our members would play an essential role in our research.

This research is now complete and Blind Veterans UK's Engagement team would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took part.

In general, awareness of Blind Veterans UK, the services we provide, and who we support, is very low compared to other military charities. The aim of the research was to discover the best way to raise awareness of the charity, through our messages and communication channels. This is so that we can reach more veterans who may benefit from joining the Blind Veterans UK family, recruit more volunteers, and increase the number of people who support us by donating money to help fund our services.

What we did.

We invited 1000 members to voice their opinions anonymously, by completing an online questionnaire that was accessible on a range of devices (sadly not all). We were delighted with the results as 416 members completed the questionnaire online.

Our Brighton and Llandudno centres provided large print questionnaires for members to complete and 54 were completed.

We also conducted over 170 telephone interviews with members.

To complete the picture, we carried out research with volunteers and donors, and held focus groups with members of the public who had no prior knowledge of the charity.

Key points from the research with members:

Veterans were unaware of the charity when their sight loss was first diagnosed. 33 per cent of the members questioned, took six years to be put in touch with us.

39 per cent of the members questioned, assumed their sight loss was not severe enough to qualify for help.

18 per cent thought they would not qualify because of their service record — for example, they completed national service.

Key points from research with donors.

Regarding the type of support we provide, rehabilitation programmes (in the community and at home) were top of the 'motivating people to donate' list.

Provision of IT and specialist equipment for blind veterans to use at home, also inspired donors to consider supporting us.

The insight gained from the research will help inform our fundraising and engagement work, leading to higher awareness and an increase in funding for the vital services that we provide. This will enable us to help more blind veterans in need, in the future.

Thank you to everyone who made the time to take part in our research. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Answers to Ron Russell's Mini Quiz from page 21.

1. The Indian Ocean.
2. Extrasensory Perception.
3. Cannes.
4. Boxing.
5. The Bangles.
6. Democratic Party.
7. Roger Bannister.
8. Bulgaria.
9. Hiroshima.
10. Baht.

Smiling, gentle, kindly. Elsie Aldred 1921 to 2017, a very special St Dunstaner. By David Castleton.

I think I first met Elsie during the first Ladies' Reunion and after that we had annual reunions. They were a select bunch of ladies, 46 of them in all, from the First and Second World Wars. There weren't that many of them when I first got to know Elsie, but the thing I remember most about Elsie was smiling, gentle, kindly. Some of the girls were enormous great fun always making lots of jokes, but Elsie was always just a little bit more reserved, she always laughed with us but wasn't at the centre. I did once have the opportunity of visiting her at home up in Warrington.

She had been blinded in a munitions factory, and ironically, she chose that particular job. Of course at that time young women were called up in the Second World War and they could decide to go into one of the Women's Forces or into factory work of some kind, mostly munitions. As she had an elderly father and mother Elsie decided that she would go into a munitions factory near at hand in Warrington so that she would still be at home to look after them. She did, but then unfortunately came the terrible accident when she was blown up and blinded. She eventually went to Church Stretton where she met the other women who like her had been blinded in munitions factories. Elsie went into training and became a telephonist and she was then offered a job back in her old firm. That meant she was able to go between her home and office and keep an eye on, by then, just her elderly mum. She did all of that as a totally blind young woman. She was a keen dancer and had friends that she would go dancing with and when we held Reunions she'd always dance at them, so, she had her way of escaping her blindness in that way. The last thing I remember we were making a film and it was the first time I'd been in Elsie's home. I mentioned earlier that I had the opportunity to visit her in Warrington. We filmed an interview with her and then finally the last scene showed Elsie laying the table. Totally blind she put the table cloth on, placed the plates exactly where she wanted them, put the cutlery and glasses in place and then finally as the shot ended she placed the condiments with perfect timing. She was part of a very special group of women who were such an important part of the history of our charity.

For 35 years David Castleton was PRO for St Dunstan's and editor of the Review. After retirement he read the Talking Review each month for 25 years until 2016. He is the author of *In The Mind's Eye. The Blinded Veterans of St Dunstan's.*



Picture: As David Castleton said Elsie did enjoy dancing and here she is dancing at the Manchester Reunion in 1967.



Picture: At Church Stretton, with chums, walking to town along the wire. Elsie is second from the right.



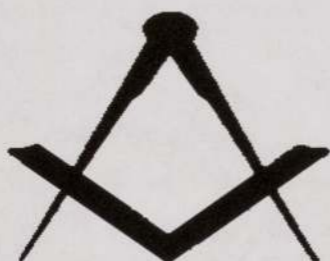
Picture: The beautiful women blinded in the Second World War at Church Stretton. They are, from left to right, Gwen Obern, Vi Delaney, Barbara Bell, Brenda Rea, Thelma Meredith and Elsie Aldred.



Picture: Sports Day at Church Stretton and Elsie runs the egg and spoon race with her sighted guide.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.



Blind Veterans UK's Masonic Group CYMRU.

Blind Veterans UK Masonic group will meet at the Llandudno centre for the annual week of fun, laughter and Freemasonry.

During the week we will visit a local Lodge where who will hosted our group and in return we will host them at our dinner at the end of the week. There will also be other activities put on during our stay.

If you are a mason and would like to join with us at the Llandudno centre from Monday 12th until Monday 19th February 2018 then please contact me no later than the 12th December 2017 on the mobile or email contacts given below.

Please contact W.Bro Clive Jones P.G.Purst on mobile 07854 800256 or email me at DragonEye67@sky.com

I look forward to hearing from you soon and sharing our annual Blind Veterans UK Masonic Group Cymru meeting with you at the Llandudno centre.

Tickets for Notts County v Forest Green Rovers on 7th October.

Penny Growcoat at the Llandudno centre is offering two tickets for the Notts County v Forest Green Rovers home game on 7th October to the highest bidder.

To make an offer please contact Penny by Friday 22nd September on 01492 868722 and leave a voice message stating your name and phone number.

All money raised from the sale of the tickets will go to Blind Veterans UK.

Join with us for Waitrose 'green token' collections.

Waitrose supermarkets have a green token collection for three nominated charities each month. Each customer is given a green token after shopping which they place in their chosen charity box. At the end of the month £1,000 is split pro rata between the nominated charities. There are over 500 stores in the country and with only a small regional fundraising team it is impossible to visit them all.

As a personal approach has always been more beneficial than just sending in an application we would be delighted if you were willing to approach your local store and make an application on behalf of Blind veterans UK. Application forms can be requested from Waitrose Customer Services and being a nominated charity would help raise awareness of Blind Veterans UK as well as funds.

If you are willing to help, please let me know the store you are willing to approach please telephone me on 07788 725408 or email me at penny.prince@blindveterans.org.uk Please also do contact me if you want to find out more about this.

All information that is required for Waitrose about Blind Veterans UK can be sent to you by the regional fundraising team.

Family News.

Birthdays:

Walter Pritchard who celebrated his 101st birthday on 14th September.

Michael Roberts who celebrated his 101st birthday on 21st September.

Ian Lupton who celebrated his 100th birthday on 18th September.

Anniversaries:



Picture: The very lovely Brian and Violet Taylor who celebrated their 60th Anniversary on the 24th August.

Platinum 70 years married.

Cyril & Jeanne Tasker of Lewes, East Sussex on 14th June.

Blue Sapphire 65 years married.

Stanley & Thelma Hawkins of Wimbledon, London on 6th September. **Roy &**

Yvonne Lucas of Seaford, East Sussex on 6th September.

Bernard & Marquerite Boyle of Warwick, Warwickshire on 13th September.

Fred & Kathleen Goodier of Sidmouth, Devon on 13th September.

Eric & Iris Hargreaves of Blackburn, Lancashire on 20th September.

Kenneth & Joan Reeves of New Romney, Kent on 20th September.

Peter & Vera Thomas of Hayling Island, Hampshire on 25th September.

Jimmy & Marjorie Duffy of Seaham, County Durham on 27th September.

Diamond Yellow 60 years married.

Mick & June Thomas of Kettering, Northamptonshire on 7th September.

Phillip & Kathleen Thompson of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire on 14th September.

Kenneth & Muriel Burnett of Stockport, Cheshire on 21st September.

Colin & Patricia Nott of Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire on 21st September.

Golden 50 years married.

David & Johanna Davies of Barry, South Glamorgan on 3rd September.

Ruby 40 years married.

William & Pamela Coleridge of Ottery St Mary, Devon on 5th September.

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

Brenda Hill who died on 3rd April 2017. She was the wife of Herbert Hill.

Isobel Hudson who died on 24th May 2017. She was the wife of Brian Hudson.

Christina 'Chrissy' Taylor who died in 2017. She was the wife of Norman Taylor.

Grace Ward who died on 1st July 2017. She was the widow of the late John Ward.

Hilda Wheeler who died on 12th December 2016. She was the wife of Bernard Wheeler.

Joan Winter who died on 29th July 2017. She was the wife of Stanley Winter.

Welcome to Blind Veterans UK.

Derek Atkinson of Grange-Over-Sands, Cumbria served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1958.

Joseph Barlow of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Marines from 1947 to 1949.

Gerald Beadling of Rochdale, Lancashire served in the Royal Air Force from 1950 to 1952.

William Bennett of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1958 to 1963.

Stanley Bousfield of Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Arthur Box of Manchester served in the Royal Marines from 1941 to 1946.

Ronald 'Ron' Brodie of Heathfield, East Sussex served in the Royal Signals from 1957 to 1993.

Thomas Buchanan of Tranent, East Lothian served in the Royal Scots Regiment from 1955 to 1971.

Thomas 'Tom' Bury of Harrogate, North Yorkshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Ronald Chalinor of Bangor, Gwynedd served in the Royal Artillery from 1962 to 1964.

Donald Cocklin of Stockton-On-Tees, Cleveland served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

Nigel Cole of Petherton, Somerset served in the Royal Navy from 1951 to 1973.

David Crocker of Egham, Surrey served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1947 to 1959.

Albert Davies of Formby, Liverpool served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Engineers from 1947 to 1959.

Peter Ewins of Launceston, Cornwall served in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1955.

Nicholas Fagan of Bolton served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946.

Joseph Farquharson of Stowmarket, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Anthony Finney of St. Helens, Merseyside served in the Lancashire Fusiliers from 1960 to 1966.

Gordon Foskett of Reading, Berkshire served in the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps in 1951.

Thomas 'Tom' Galt of Edinburgh served in the Royal Highland Fusiliers from 1967 to 1976.

James 'Jim' Gordon of Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1947.

David Gore of Bolton served in the King's Regiment from 1971 to 1974.

Dennis Green of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1951.

John Grout of Harleston, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1956.

George Henderson of Cramlington, Northumberland served in the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1951.

Cyril Higgin of Telford, Shropshire served in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1948 to 1954.

Sidney Hoddes of Liverpool, Merseyside served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1953 to 1959.

John Hodge of Maybole, Ayrshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1976 to 1984.

Alan Holden of King's Lynn, Norfolk served in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1957.

Margaret Inglis neé Casebourne of Market Rasen, Lincolnshire served in the Women's Royal Naval Reserve from 1942 to 1945.

Peter Jones of Whitchurch, Shropshire served in the Royal Artillery from 1958 to 1974.

Robert 'Robin' Jones of Mold, Clwyd served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1948 to 1950.

William 'Bill' Keyte of Birmingham, West Midlands served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1950 to 1953.

John King of Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1943 to 1946.

Frederick 'Bernard' Lewis of Stafford, Staffordshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1946.

Albert Mack of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire served in the Royal Navy from 1941 to 1948.

Joseph 'Reg' Mallabone of Melksham, Wiltshire served in the Royal Engineers from 1949 to 1951.

James March of Hexham, Northumberland served in the Royal Signals from 1954 to 1964.

Alan Marshall of Carlton, Nottingham served in the Royal Tank Regiment from 1953 to 1964.

Geoffrey 'Geoff' Mitchell of Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1952 to 1964.

Derrick Molyneux of Bolton served in the Royal Engineers and the Royal Corps of Transport from 1953 to 1967.

Richard 'Eric' Mountain of Chippenham, Wiltshire served in the Royal Air Force from 1958 to 1960.

James Nelson of Paisley, Renfrewshire served in the Scottish Division, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Elwyn Peters of Clwyd served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1949.

Blodwen 'Blod' Phillips of Denbigh, Clwyd served in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

George Pownall of Sale, Cheshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1948.

Albert 'Bert' Prince of Banbury, Oxfordshire served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1952 to 1964.

Joseph 'Joe' Quigley of Westcliff-On-Sea, Essex served in the Royal Artillery from 1956 to 1961.

Paul Richardson of Doncaster, South Yorkshire served in the Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Armoured Corps from 1955 to 1967.

Adrian Ricketts of Ipswich, Suffolk served in the Royal Artillery from 1971 to 2001.

Kenneth 'Ken' Rogers of Chiswick, London served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1949 to 1970.

David 'Dave' Sharp of Goring-By-Sea, West Sussex served in the Royal Air Force from 1956 to 1958.

Dargan Sidgwick of Southminster, Essex served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1941 to 1947.

Anthony 'Tony' Simms of Kettering, Northamptonshire served in the General Service Corps and the Northamptonshire Regiment from 1945 to 1959.

Roger Smith of Slough, Berkshire served in the Royal Navy from 1958 to 1972.

Lionel Standen of Hove, East Sussex served in the Royal Artillery, Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1941 to 1946.

Fred Stones of Holyhead, Gwynedd served in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry from 1956 to 1962.

Reginald Taylor of Norwich, Norfolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1982.

Melvyn 'Mel' Thomas of Ipswich, Suffolk served in the Royal Air Force from 1969 to 1992.

James 'Jim' Timms of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire served in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and the Essex Regiment from 1942 to 1947.

Harry Townsend of Mitcham, Surrey served in the Royal Air Force from 1955 to 1958.

Leonard 'Len' Turner of Bushbury, Wolverhampton served in the Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1948.

Ronald 'Ron' Tyler of Whitstable, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Betty Webber of Christchurch, Dorset served in the Voluntary Aid Detachment from 1943 to 1946.

Arnold Wilkinson of Southampton served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946.

William 'Oscar' Williams of Porthmadog, Gwynedd served in the Royal Artillery from 1953 to 1959.

Graham 'Tugg' Wilson of Ashford, Kent served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1955.

Leonard Wilson of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire served in the Royal Horse Guards from 1950 to 1956.

Ian Yule of Chichester, West Sussex served in the Royal Artillery from 1950 to 1960.

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.

Arthur Alecock of Downham Market, Norfolk died on 24th May 2017, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps. Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and Royal Artillery from 1946 to 1954 in the UK, Libya and Iraq, discharging as a Corporal.

Ronald Algar of Blackpool, Lancashire died on 2nd July 2017, aged 82. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1953 to 1955.

Alexander 'Alec' Bater of Bridgwater, Somerset died on 9th July 2017, aged 92. He served in Portsmouth in the Fleet Air Arm from 1942 to 1943.

Anthony Black of Ashton On Ribble, Preston died on 14th July 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Engineers from 1946 to 1951.

Arnold 'Jim' Carlson of Benfleet, Essex died on 16th July 2017, aged 91. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Fusilliers in Ireland, France, Holland and Germany from 1944 to 1954, discharging as a Corporal.

James 'Jim' Carter of Bognor Regis, West Sussex died on 5th July 2017, aged 82. He served in the Royal Navy from 1956 to 1958.

Peter Catling of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 2nd August 2017, aged 88. He served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Army Service Corps in France from 1946 to 1952.

Pauline Clarke of Ayr, Ayrshire died on 25th July 2017, aged 94. From 1942 to 1946 she served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in England and Wales, discharging as an Acting Sergeant.

James 'Jim' Clements of Guildford, Surrey died on 29th July 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal West Kent Regiment and the Royal Scots Fusiliers from 1943 to 1952 in Europe.

Laurance 'Laurie' Cox of Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire died on 30th July 2017, aged 80. He served in the Royal Engineers in the UK and Germany from 1958 to 1960.

John Cruickshank of Aberdeen died on 11th July 2017, aged 100. He served in the Gordon Highlanders and the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 1946 in Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

Gwendoline 'Gwen' Cutting née Brammer of Ovingdean, East Sussex died on 8th July 2017, aged 90. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1943 to 1946.

Gordon Dangerfield of Grantham, Lincolnshire died on 1st August 2017, aged 91. From 1943 to 1947 he served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the UK, Siam, Burma, Ireland, India, Sri Lanka and Malaya.

Roy Darlington of Cranbrook, Kent died on 5th July 2017, aged 81. He served in Cyprus in the Army Catering Corps from 1957 to 1963.

James Dauncey of Ruthin, Clwyd died on 1st July 2017, aged 98. He served in Libya, Iraq, North Africa and Egypt in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946, discharging as a Sergeant.

Leslie Flint of Norwich, Norfolk died on 20th July 2017, aged 93. From 1945 to 1948 he served in the General Service Corps and the Royal Artillery in India, discharging as a Sergeant.

Roy Freeman of Epsom, Surrey died on 27th July 2017, aged 85. He served in the Royal Signals from 1950 to 1955 in England and Germany.

Leslie 'Peter' Frost of Dunstable, Bedfordshire died on 1st August 2017, aged 89. He was a cook in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948, serving in the UK home waters and the Mediterranean.

Arthur 'Ted' Green of Hampstead, London died on 23rd July 2017, aged 93. From 1942 to 1944 he served in the Royal Marines in Northern Ireland, North Africa, Egypt, Malta, Sicily, India, Malaya, Indonesia and Israel.

David Hamilton of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 30th July 2017, aged 84. He served in the Royal Air Force in England from 1950 to 1960.

George Hannath of Coventry, West Midlands died on 3rd August 2017, aged 89. From 1945 to 1948 he served in the Royal Army Service Corps in England, Scotland, Africa, Italy, Germany and Palestine until demobilised as a Warrant Officer 1st Class.

Decima 'Brenda' Harrison née Waters of Mexborough, South Yorkshire died on 12th July 2017, aged 90. She served in the UK in the Auxiliary Territorial Army from 1946 to 1948.

John Holley of Bristol died on 7th July 2017, aged 83. He served at RAF Chinenor from 1955 to 1957.

Elsie Horsley née Metcalf of Billingham, Cleveland died on 27th July 2017, aged 94. She served in the UK in the Women's Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1944.

Arthur Hough of Dunstable, Bedfordshire died on 14th July 2017, aged 90. He served in the General Service Corps and the Queen's Royal Regiment from 1945 to 1948.

Walter 'Spike' Hughes of Torpoint, Cornwall died on 16th July 2017, aged 83. He served as a Chief Mechanic in the Royal Navy from 1960 to 1982.

Stanley Hunt of Solihull, West Midlands died on 5th August 2017, aged 87. He served in the UK in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

John 'Jim' James of Corwen, Clwyd died on 1st August 2017, aged 94. He served in the General Service Corps, the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the King's Own Scottish Borderers from 1943 to 1947 in Northern Ireland, England and India.

Jack Leonard of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire died on 9th August 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Signals from 1941 to 1947 in North Africa, Italy, Greece, Palestine and the Middle East.

Ronald Lewis of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan died on 29th June 2017, aged 95. He served in the General Service Corps, the Welch Regiment and the Sherwood Foresters from 1942 to 1946 until demobilised as a Sergeant.

Angus Lorimer of Loughborough, Leicestershire died on 9th August 2017, aged 72. In 1962 he served in the Leicestershire Regiment in Malta, England, China and Borneo.

Keith Mepham of Barry, South Glamorgan died on 23rd July 2017, aged 81. He served in Cyprus in the Royal Engineers from 1954 to 1956.

Percy Norton of Dereham, Norfolk died on 9th July 2017, aged 103. He served in the Royal Norfolk Regiment and the Dorsetshire Regiment at home and in France from 1940 to 1945, discharging as a Private.

Peter Norton of Brighouse, West Yorkshire died on 8th August 2017, aged 94. He served in the royal Air Force in India, Burma and Hong Kong from 1942 to 1946.

Doreen Orr of Brighton, East Sussex died on 14th July 2017, aged 90. She served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1944 to 1947.

John Pettitt of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 6th August 2017, aged 83. From 1952 to 1956 he served in the Royal Signals in England and Egypt, discharging as a Corporal.

Sidney 'Sid' Refoy of Worthing, West Sussex died on 2nd August 2017, aged 90. He served in the Primary Training Wing and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1945 to 1948 in the UK and West Africa.

Cyril Salisbury of Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk died on 6th July 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1939 to 1945 in France and Egypt.

Peggy Saunders née Brown of Worthing, West Sussex died on 25th July 2017, aged 96. She served in the UK in the Auxiliary Territorial Service from 1940 to 1945, leaving as a Sergeant.

David Sawyer of Halesworth, Suffolk died on 9th July 2017, aged 83. He served in the Royal Artillery from 1956 to 1958.

Morris Saxby-Taylor of Gillingham, Kent died on 5th August 2017, aged 90. He served in the Royal Air Force in England and Hong Kong from 1948 to 1954, discharging as a Corporal.

Robert 'Bob' Shale of Birchington, Kent died on 4th August 2017, aged 81. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1957.

Leslie Les Shears of Hampton, Middlesex died on 18th July 2017 aged 90. He served in the Royal Air Force in Singapore from 1945 to 1948.

Clifford Swann of Faringdon, Oxfordshire died on 2nd August 2017, aged 87. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1948 to 1950.

Richard 'Bill' Tippett of Redruth, Cornwall died on 26th July 2017, aged 84. He served in the UK in the Royal Artillery from 1951 to 1956.

Leonard 'Len' Tomlinson of Preston, Lancashire died on 27th July 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Artillery in Scotland from 1939 until 1942.

Egerton Walker of Wells Next The Sea, Norfolk died on 1st July 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1939 to 1946 in France, Belgium and Germany, discharging as a Warrant Officer 1st Class.

Richard Wardrop of Hungerford, Berkshire died on 1st July 2017, aged 94. He served in the Royal Scots Regiment, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and the Seaforth Highlanders from 1941 to 1946 in Greece, Italy and Austria.

Richard Waterton of Spalding, Lincolnshire died on 1st August 2017, aged 99. From 1939 to 1946 he served in the Royal Air Force in England, Singapore, Burma, India and Pakistan.

Malcolm White of Norwich, Norfolk died on 4th August 2017, aged 73. He served in England and Singapore with the Royal Corps of Signals from 1965 to 1969.

Kenneth 'Ken' Wilkinson of Solihull, West Midlands died on 31st July 2017, aged 99. He served in the Royal Air Force in the UK from 1939 to 1945 until discharged as a Flying Officer.

