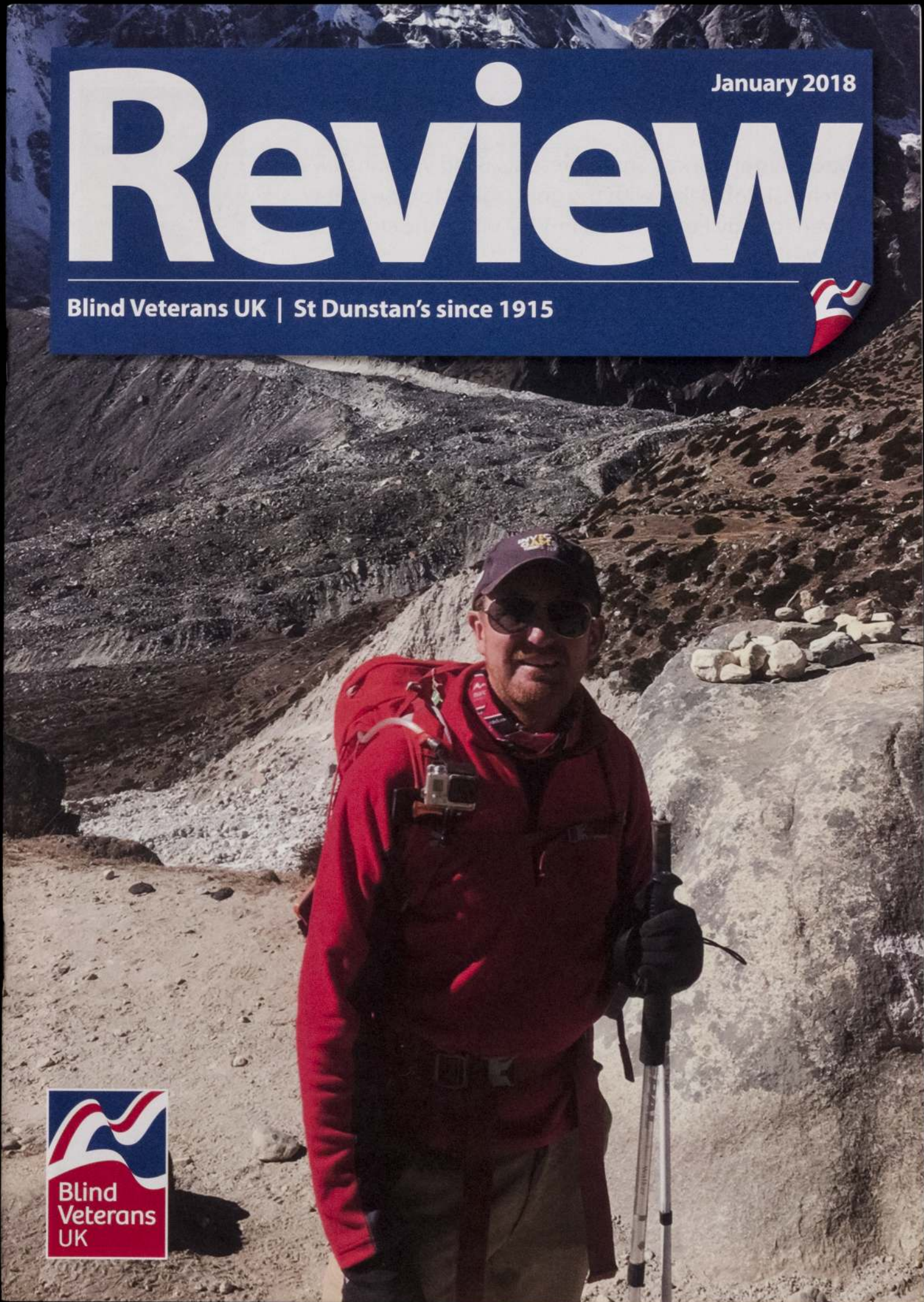


January 2018

# Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915





**On the cover:** Jamie Weller trekking to Base Camp Everest.

**Back page:** Frances Smith presents Blind Veterans UK's Archivist Rob Baker with the gold cigarette case that was given to Lady Pearson DBE in 1947 when she stood down as President.



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**The Llandudno centre** 01492 868700.

**The Booking Office for the Brighton centre:** To book accommodation at the Brighton centre telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please first contact your Team Leader or Community Support Worker (CSW).

**The Booking Office for the Llandudno centre:** To book accommodation at the Llandudno centre please telephone 01492 868700 and ask for the Booking Office. If you have care needs please first contact your Team Leader or CSW.

**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: 0800 389 7979.

**Review Editor:** You can telephone Catherine Goodier, Review Editor, on 020 7616 8367 or email [revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) or write to her at Catherine Goodier, Review Editor, Blind Veterans UK, 12 - 14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Please use this information for Review format changes.

## Blind Veterans UK Calendar

### Activities from the Brighton centre in 2018.

#### February.

Archery Club 18th to 24th.

#### March.

Bowling Fortnight 11th to 24th.

#### April.

Family Week 1st to 7th.

Chocolate & Bunny Week 1st to 7th.

Masonic Weekend 27th to 30th.

Technology Week 22nd to 28th.

Cycling Week 22nd to 28th.

#### May.

Women's Military Week 6th to 12th.

Walking Week 13th to 19th.

Photography Week 27th May to 2nd June.

#### June.

Archery Club 3rd to 9th.

Homes & Gardens Week 24th to 30th.

Paddle Around The Pier.

### Activities from the Llandudno centre in 2018.

#### March.

Health & Wellbeing Week 6th to 10th.

Music Week 25th to 31st.

#### May.

Driving Week 6th May.

History Week 14th May.

#### June.

Potting and Planting Week 25th.

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

For further information and to book your place at the Brighton centre please telephone the Booking Office on 01273 391500. If you have care needs please first speak with your Team Leader or CSW.

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

For further information or to book your place please telephone: 01492 864590. If you have care needs please first speak with your Team Leader or CSW.



# From the Chairman.

## Your message from Tim Davis.

I write to you in this month's Review for the last time, as I have decided to step down as Chairman. After nine years as a Trustee and four years as Chairman, I've been truly inspired by the spirit, initiative, resilience and good humour of all of you whom I have had the pleasure to meet. I'm quite certain these characteristics, with a shared sense of culture and background, have helped each of you, and each of you to help others, make positive steps towards achieving your "victory over blindness".

Of course Blind Veterans UK plays its role in providing help and support to you for the same purpose. It is to management, employees and volunteers that I would like to personally thank for their tremendous contribution, commitment and hard work through a period of considerable change over the last few years.

The organisation has much to do, but equally has also achieved a great deal. Blind Veterans UK now supports more than double the number of members, and has put in place a new organisation to deliver more and more services closer to the communities where you live. Our centres in Llandudno and Brighton continue to deliver a wide range of services throughout the year, and our new regional and community teams orchestrate more local activities, and facilitate social connection through a rapidly growing number of events.

The Council last month approved a new five year plan which will drive improvements in service range, delivery and availability, as well as further growth in members as the organisation can afford. Blind Veterans UK now needs continuity of leadership to see these plans through, and after nine years as a Trustee, I felt it the right time to hand over. I'm delighted to announce the Council has also elected my replacement; our own Vice Chairman, Air Vice Marshall Paul Luker CB OBE AFC DL. My thanks and best wishes to him and to the entire Council for their support.

I wish you all a very positive and happy start to 2018. I remain a close supporter of Blind Veterans UK, and look forward to staying in touch and watching the progress of the charity over the coming years.



**Picture:** Tim Davis at our Centenary Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey in October 2015.



# From the Chief Executive.

## Your message from Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB.

History can often be measured in chapters and I suspect that a key chapter for Blind Veterans UK is just concluding. We have spent much of the last two years working on our strategy for the future and have now brought that work to a very satisfactory conclusion. We have clear and endorsed plans to develop and expand our support to members, particularly through the medium of our community support service, and a bold plan to grow our volunteering service and to refocus our communications and fundraising operations. So we start 2018 with a renewed sense of purpose and considerable optimism.

Our Trustees have provided essential oversight of our plans as they have developed, none more so than our Chairman, Tim Davis. As you will have read in his letter, Tim has decided that now is an appropriate time for him to hand over the Chairman reins to his successor and accordingly, at the Council meeting in December, he announced that he was standing down.

Tim was brought to the charity by Major General Andy Keeling CB, CBE, RM, the former Chairman, and has been a Trustee for nine years. His early Trustee years coincided with key developments, including the opening of the Llandudno centre and the rebranding from St Dunstan's to Blind Veterans UK. He has been our Chairman for four years, including covering the tragic circumstances of the death of my predecessor, Robert Leader. Given that Tim is a busy and successful businessman, his commitment to the charity has been extraordinary. He has overseen much change, including the sharpening of our governance and the development of our new strategic plan. He has also led from the front in fundraising for the charity, not least in running (rather than walking!) the 100k London to Brighton challenge. It is typical of Tim that, with this hard and important work completed, he now feels that it is right for a fresh lead to oversee the delivery of the new strategy.

The Council voted unanimously in December that Tim should be replaced by Air Vice Marshal Paul Luker, our former Vice Chairman, and Paul has duly accepted. I am sure that you will wish to join me in thanking Tim for his selfless commitment to Blind Veterans UK over these many years, and to wish Paul every success as he assumes the Chair. The February edition of the Review will include Paul's first message as our Chairman.



**Picture:** Taken at the Council meeting in December 2017 in the back row from left to right Sarah Lucie Watson, Kerry Levins, Minoo Shani Court, Nicky Pulford, Barry Coupe, Penny Harris and David Turner.

Featured in the front row: President Colin Williamson, Vice Chairman Air Vice Marshal Paul Luker CB OBE AFC DL, Chairman Tim Davis and Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin (CB).

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

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## Your tributes to Tim Davis.

A well liked and respected Chairman, everyone who has met Tim Davis described him as intelligent, warm, kind, a gentleman with a great sense of humour. He's also something of an action man, having run the London to Brighton 100K a number of times and completed the 100K Yorkshire Challenge. We include your messages to Tim.

Ray Hazan OBE, former President of Blind Veterans UK, past editor of the Review and Founder of the Talking Review, said, "No one could have worked harder to raise awareness of this wonderful organisation called Blind Veterans UK than Tim. He was not one for simply encouraging from the sidelines. His participation in the 100k walks was just one example. On two occasions, he led the pack! He enjoyed reunions at which gave him the opportunity to meet blind veterans. His use of vocabulary both spoken and written was always impressive during his term of office, he witnessed the name change of the charity and the new approach to service delivery, no mean tasks!

"We wish him good fortune in all his future endeavours."



**Picture:** Ray Hazan OBE with Tim Davis.

Colin Williamson, President of Blind Veterans UK said, "Whilst some Chairmen give directives and timescales, Tim has always given us direction and vision. Other Chairmen may lead by authority, Tim has led us with respect and dignity. I had the privilege to attend numerous Council meetings where Tim has been Chairman and it has always been a masterclass in how to chair a meeting. He is undoubtedly an officer and a gentleman; never has that phrase been so appropriate."

Tom Bryden recalled. "He's such a lovely man and during the Remembrance lunch we had such a good chat about many subjects, including his airplane. He's down to earth, speaks very well and is someone to trust, and I'm so disappointed he has stood down. I've just stood down as Chairman of Sight Service in the North East as I'm almost 90 and I'm starting to find time for me. When I was Chairman, Tim came to one of our Luncheon Clubs and we had a long chat and he was so warm and welcoming to everyone. We are losing a very valuable member of the Board and I wish him well."

"Kenneth and Anita Grimward were always impressed by Tim's warmth and understanding. Speaking for them Kenneth said: "Anita and I sat with Tim and Lyn Davis at a Blind Veterans UK lunch and we both thought them a charming couple as they told us about their sons. Tim asked about our area and he took the time to really listen to us. They were a pleasure to sit with and Blind Veterans UK was very lucky to have had his input as Trustee and Chairman."



**Picture:** Action man Tim Davis running the 100K. As Ray Hazan and Nick Caplin said, Tim always completed the 100K, leading from the front.



## Treasured gifts. Frances Smith makes a presentation to the charity on behalf of her Aunt, The Lady Frances Pearson.

The Chairman's notes in the November 1947 Review read: Lady Arthur Pearson DBE, has resigned the office of President of St Dunstan's and has been succeeded by her son Sir Neville Pearson BT, who was appointed to fill the vacancy at a meeting of the Council of St Dunstan's, held on Friday October 24th. At a dinner that evening I had the pleasure of presenting to Lady Pearson a gold cigarette case, upon which was inscribed the words: "Presented by the Council of St Dunstan's to Lady (Arthur) Pearson DBE, President of St Dunstan's, 1921 to 1947, to record the affectionate regard of the blinded men and women of two world wars and of her colleagues."

I am sure St Dunstaners everywhere will feel, as I do, a sense of regret that Lady Pearson should wish to lay down her office, and at the same time of thankfulness to her for having held it for so long with such dignity and sympathy.

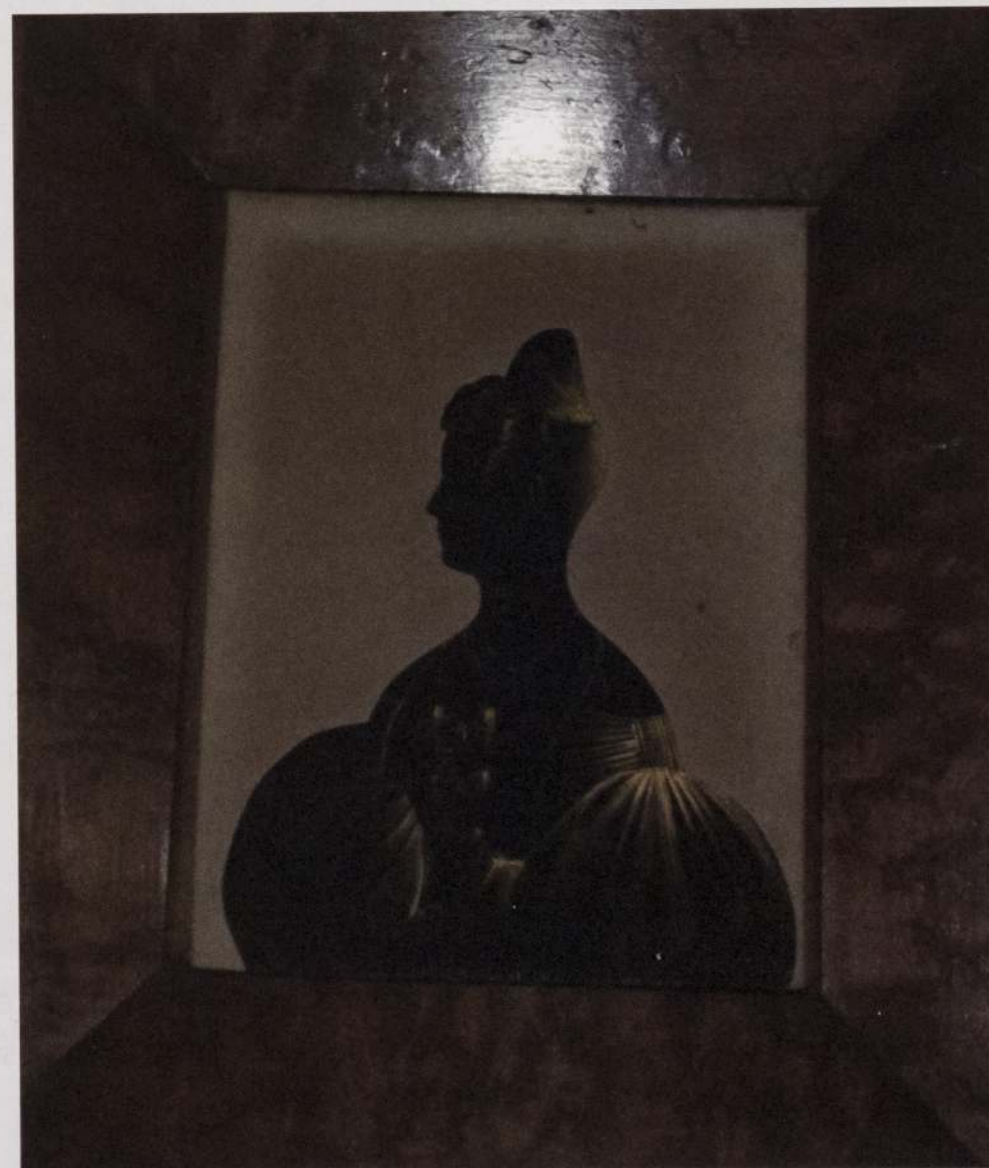
It was on 9th December 1921 that Sir Arthur Pearson BT GBE, the Founder of St Dunstan's, died, and his position of head of the organisation was filled by the appointment of his widow, Lady Arthur Pearson as President and my own appointment as Executive Chairman. Now, owing to the passage of years, another change takes place, but happily the name of Pearson, which has meant so much to us, continues in the place of honour in the constitution of St Dunstan's. Sir Neville Pearson has been a most active member of our Council and Committees since those early days, and was for many years our Honorary Treasurer until the outbreak of the Second World War, when he rejoined the Army in which he had served in the First War.



**Picture:** The gold cigarette case that was presented to Lady (Arthur) Pearson DBE, and bears the Torch of St Dunstan's.

The gold cigarette case that was presented to Lady Pearson DBE in 1947, and that our then Chairman Lord Fraser wrote of in his Chairman's notes, was gifted to the charity on 20th December 2017 by Frances Smith, who made the presentation on behalf of her aunt. The treasured possession had been passed to Frances by her aunt and Godmother, The Lady Frances Pearson, née Hay, who is the widow of Sir Nigel Pearson, the grandson of Sir Arthur and Lady Pearson, and the son of Sir Neville Pearson.

Presenting the gold cigarette case to Rob Baker, Blind Veterans UK's Archivist, Frances also presented him with a portrait of Sophia Jane Pearson, Sir Arthur's grandmother. It was a very exciting day for the charity as it is rare for two such important pieces of our history to come back to us.



**Picture:** The portrait of Sophia Jane Pearson, Sir Arthur's Pearson's grandmother.



Speaking to the Review, Frances Smith, said: "This is the only ancestral picture that my aunt's husband had, and she didn't have a clue who it was, so I brought it home, cleaned it and found her name on the back, Sophia Jane Pearson, Sir Arthur Pearson's grandmother. I'm so glad she has a home at the family. The gold cigarette case is lovely and was obviously chosen by someone with taste. I would imagine it must have been a whip round as I can't think the charity would have funded it. What really stunned me was to find the hallmarks and the maker's mark, which means you should be able to trace its origin. As soon as I saw the St Dunstan's Torch on the front I knew it was from the family charity, and my aunt is extremely excited about these coming back to you. When she asked what you were likely to do with it, I said there were two possibilities, one that you would auction it or two use it as a star prize in a very grand raffle. Her suggestion was that she wanted you to make money out of it if you could, but if you simply want to put it on display that's fine. She said she hoped it would do you some good, so, it's entirely up to you what you do with it, as she's giving it back to you.

"My aunt is The Lady Frances Pearson, nee Hay, fourth daughter of the 14th Marquis of Tweeddale. She was the youngest of four sisters and my mother was one of her older sisters. She was my mother's favourite sister and I was named after her. My aunt didn't really get involved with the charity as she had an absolute passion for horses, moving to Wales to breed her beloved Welsh mountain ponies. My mother is Lady Georgina Coleridge and her charity was the Greater London Fund for the Blind. She also started the Women of the Year lunch and edited Homes & Gardens for 25 years. My husband and I never really got too involved with the family charities, as we tended to support the Life Boats because we had a little sailing dingy, and I support my local church and local charities, the Red Cross and do lunches and hot cross buns for Water Aid. I'm sort of involved in local life a bit."

Accepting the treasures, Blind Veterans UK Archivist Rob Baker said, "It's wonderful to have these and they will make an excellent display as Lady Pearson is obviously a very important figure in our charity. Your aunt's late husband Nigel served on our Finance and General Purposes Committee, so he obviously had good financial acuity."

Frances, who is the co-founder of Appledore Salads in Kent, was a pioneer grower of unusual leaves.

## International Skiing Success.

As Blind Veterans UK's Ski Club this month take to the slopes of Canazei in Italy, established members will take their annual life affirming trip down mountains, and new members will return home with a renewed zest for life. The life changing work of the Ski Club has been documented in the Review for the last 40 years. In 2017 Billy Black, a member of Blind Veterans UK and of the Ski Club, and ski guide Neil Graham, took the skills they had honed over many years of skiing together to the ParaSnowSport UK Alpine Championships in Tignes, where they secured a Silver Medal in the Giant Slalom.



**Picture:** Billy Black and Neil Graham celebrate their success with HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, KG, GCVO, CD, ADC.



## A legend remembers. George Haigh speaks to the Review.

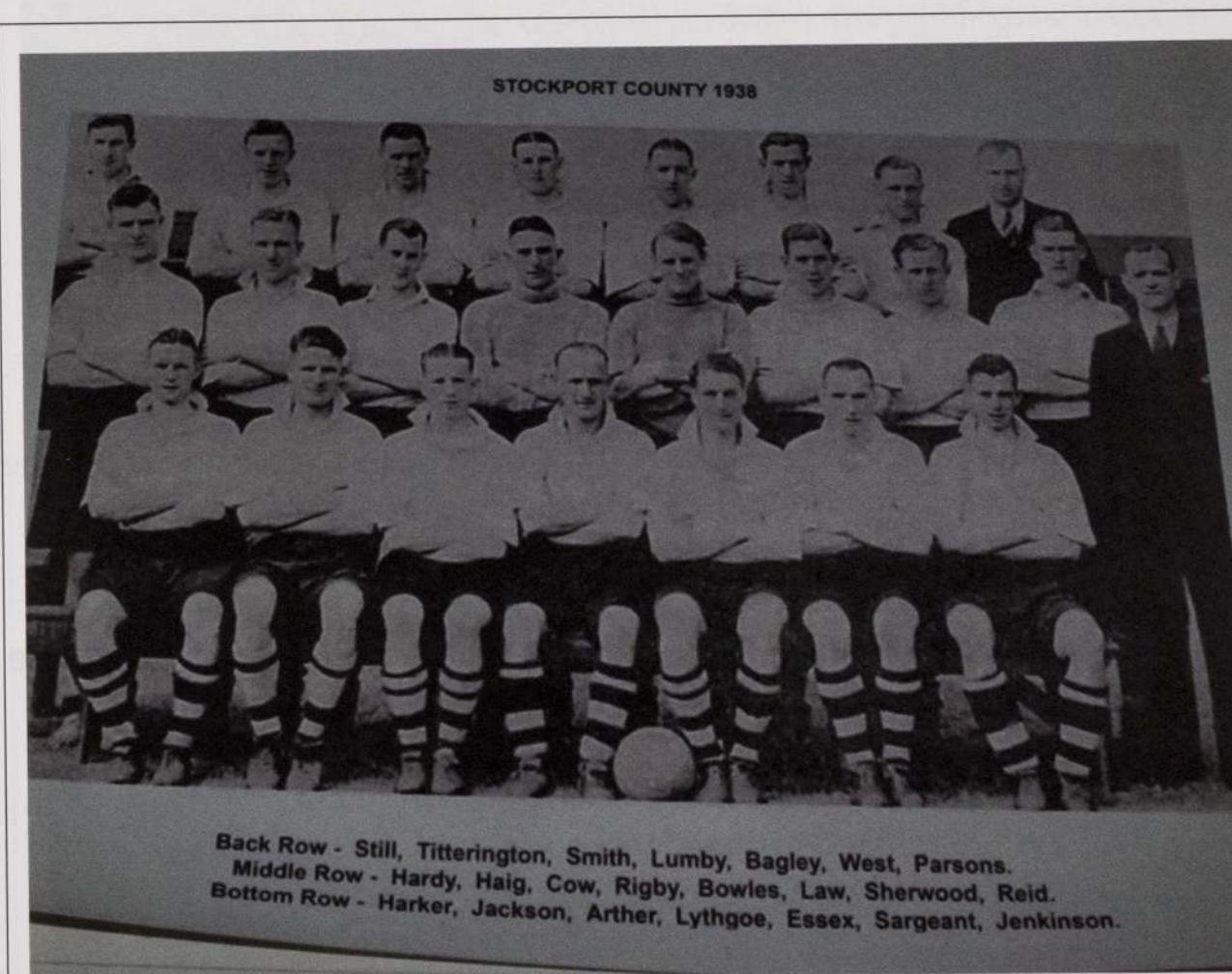
At 102 years young, George Haigh is one of the world's oldest former professional footballers. Former RAF Sergeant George, who joined Blind Veterans UK in 2014, tells the Review a few of his favourite footballing memories.

"I started playing football when I was at school and took to it right away, I probably played football when I should be doing other things. I was 17 when I joined Manchester City on an amateur contract, as you couldn't play as a professional footballer until you were 18. I was out working because that's what you did; you got yourself a job and I worked for a dying and bleaching firm. Frank Swift was the goalkeeper at Manchester City at the time, he was the top goalkeeper of the year and we got on very well together. He became an international goalkeeper and I always followed his career. He was killed in the Munich air crash and that was a tragedy that broke my heart as I thought the world of him. I was always a centre half, a defender, and we would train at Manchester City's Main Road ground on Tuesday and Thursday night. Main Road was magnificent, it would take 100,000 spectators. I don't think my father liked me playing football as it was taking up too much of my time and he wanted me to do things at home. In 1936 when I reached 18 the Stockport County FC Manager came to see me play, he offered me a contract and I took it right away and became a professional footballer. I met my wife then as we saw each other on the tram when I went to train at Ebsley Park for Stockport County and she was on her way to or from work.

"I was at Stockport County FC for three seasons and then war broke out and that was the end of it, as all professional contracts were cancelled. I was always very, very fit, so as soon as war broke out I knew I had to do something that was physical, and I joined the Royal Air Force as a Physical Training Instructor (PTI). There was another chap on the course who was also a footballer and we got on well as we had football in common. When we qualified as PTIs he was posted to Blackpool, but we did get together when we played football in the RAF. I was stationed in Morecambe and my wife was with me for the duration as she found work in insurance and did very well. I was lucky as the CO at the camp was football crazy and he allowed us to get away to play for different teams, so I continued playing football and doing my work as a PTI training parachutists.

"During the war I played for quite a number of clubs and Lancaster City came to see me and asked me to play for them. So, I said, I'll play for you if you teach me a trade. I was thinking about what I would do after I finished playing football so I played for Lancaster City for quite a while at the end of the war. I passed the coaching course and went on to be a coach and I was looking forward to continuing in football after the war.

"Then the war ended and we went to Weaton outside Blackpool to demob where they gave us some very nice clothing, but it was strange going back to civilian life."



**Picture:** George Haigh is shown middle row, second from left with his Stockport County team mates in 1938.

After the war George had his first post war meeting with Stanley Matthews. "When I was at Rochdale, we were playing against Blackpool I think. I was a centre half and the manager said he had better put me at left half. I said what are you doing that for and he said, you'll see. It turned out that I was up against Stanley Matthews. I had played against Matthews quite a lot during the war



and of course he played until he was 50. It was most unusual that he played for so long. I remember after the war when my son was a schoolboy I took him to Main Road to see Matthews and said to him, 'I want you to see who I used to play against'. He enjoyed watching him as Matthews was playing very well, even then, he was giving the full back a run around I'll tell you. When I'd played against Matthews in the past we would all go for a meal afterwards. It was very friendly and once I asked how he did it, as I thought he might tell me some secret, but he said, 'I don't know'. He was just a natural. Today I enjoy watching the two Manchester Clubs and when they played together recently my family was at my house to watch City and United play, but Stockport County will always be a part of me and it always lifts me to go back there."

As football formed George's DNA, his passion for the beautiful game passed through generations of his family as they went to numerous football matches. George's daughter Rosemary said that she probably knows more than she should about football, and is often surprised by the number of football questions she can always answer in quizzes.

Recalling the days when money was tight, and it was often difficult to find enough to buy a pair of football boots, shortly before his 100th birthday George made a donation to Stockport County for a cup for the young player of the year. He also bequeathed a cash prize for the recipient. Each year George takes great pride as he presents the cup to the young footballer, as memories of his time as a professional footballer with Stockport County from 1936 to 1939 come flooding back as clear as the day he first ran onto a football pitch.

A further honour followed when on the occasion of his 102nd birthday on 29th June 2017 George was asked to open Stockport County's Football Museum. It was a proud moment for everyone.

Asked of his opinion of the support he receives from Blind Veterans UK, George said, "Everyone's marvellous. It's a super charity."

We are grateful to George for speaking to the Review, and to George Hudson at Stockport County Football Club for allowing us to include his photographs.



**Picture:** George presents The George Haigh Trophy award.



**Picture:** On the occasion of his 102nd birthday, after opening Stockport County Football Club's Museum, George is shown seated in front of a photo from his days there. He is with Steve Bellis, SCFC Director, and John Fitzpatrick SCFC Ambassador. **Photos:** George Hudson, SCFC.



## The best of the best. Kelly Ganfield claims Gold and Silver Medals in the British Rowing Indoor Championships.

Spurred on by her success in the 2017 Invictus Games in Toronto, Kelly Ganfield competed in the British Rowing Indoor Championships on 9th December, at the Lee Valley Velodrome in the Olympic Park.

Cheered on by her wife Sarah, their daughter Bethany and Sarah's parents Peter and Liz, Kelly took her place on the podium as she won Gold in the adaptive 4000m relay with her team 'We Are Invictus.'

There was more success for Kelly when she pushed herself to her limits to claim Silver in the adaptive 2000m, her first attempt of racing at this distance.

Kelly also competed in the 500m and did very well as she rowed against the best of the best.

2017 was an exciting year for the Ganfield family and here's to their continued successes in 2018, as Kelly hopes to compete in rowing and sprinting in the 2018 Invictus Games in Sydney.



**Picture:** Kelly Ganfield, front, rows to victory.



**Picture:** The proud Ganfields: Bethany, Sarah, Peter, Liz and Kelly holding her well deserved medal.



**Picture:** Kelly with her Gold and Silver medals at Bath University where she trains with coach Corinne Yorston. Photo credit the University of Bath Team Bath/ Matchtight.



## **A massive challenge, and a massive success, as Jamie Weller treks to Base Camp Everest.**

### **Base Camp.**

"People say they've conquered Everest, but I don't think they've conquered Everest, I think they've crawled up Everest." Fresh from his four bronze medal success at the 2017 Invictus Games in Toronto, Jamie Weller joined a group of 30 in an expedition organised by Help for Heroes and Discovery Adventure to trek to Base Camp Everest.

"In total we were away for 19 days from 11th November from our arrival in Kathmandu, to landing back at Heathrow. It was a tough trek, far harder than I'd expected as I was taken to my absolute physical and mental limits. In terms of training as I did a lot for the Invictus Games that was really the basis for my physical training. It was the mental impact that was harder, as I don't think you can prepare yourself for such a trek. It's also quite a big point that it takes a lot of mental stamina to deal with the difficult terrain when you don't have any depth perception, and there was a lot of difficult terrain.

### **Why Base Camp Everest?**

"I did the trek as it was a personal challenge, Everest is a magical place and I've always wanted to go to that part of the world and challenge myself to reach Base Camp. The opportunity came at the beginning of 2017 and I did fundraising for Help for Heroes as they had offered me a place on the trek. Thirty of us met up at Heathrow and we flew off to Kathmandu, via Delhi, and arrived into Kathmandu in the dark. It was a really chaotic city with loads, and loads and loads of mopeds whizzing around the place like flies, and it reminded me a bit of a chaotic scene from Gremlins. As we were tired we checked into a hotel where we had some food and slept, and that was our arrival into Kathmandu."

### **The party.**

"There were some veterans in the party who had PTSD and were members of Help for Heroes' Band of Brothers, but mainly they were civilians who wanted to raise money for Help for Heroes. The day after our arrival we were given a

briefing, but it was mainly a rest day in Kathmandu to recover from the journey from Heathrow and get our energy back for the trek ahead. We used the morning to sort out our kit as you are only allowed to take 10 kilos, that's 5 kilos in your backpack, and when you take into account phone chargers, cameras and stuff like that, 5k is not a lot, but they're very strict as the Sherpas have to carry it on their backs. My kit comprised three pairs of underpants, a couple of pairs of socks, two pairs of trekking trousers, some thermals and a couple of t-shirts. That's not much for two weeks. You also take toilet paper and wet wipes, as two weeks with limited opportunity to shower is pretty tough.

"The following day we set off as a group and flew from Kathmandu to Lukla, which previously had a grass runway; it's now tarmacked, but the tarmac is literally on the side of a mountain. It's one of those one chance only landings, as there is a rock face at the end of the runway and it's quite scary because you just drop out of the sky as the pilot goes into a very deep descent into Lukla. It's absolutely hair raising. As there were 30 of us we travelled in three planes, but we all got there safely and met up in Lukla and it was straight into the trek for three hours to our first stop. That was quite a challenging day, as although it was only three hours, I was surprised at how difficult the terrain was as we walked alongside the Khumbu River. I was given quite a bit of help from one of the guides, but it was mentally quite demanding, and that was the theme throughout the trek as I felt the mental fatigue. It takes a lot of concentration in terms of not being able to see where your foot strikes and having to feel the terrain with your walking sticks.

"The assistance from the guides was great as it was just so tricky to walk without a guide. It took a lot not to fall over and injure yourself and your muscles fatigue a lot quicker because you're effectively tensing them to feel where you need to place your feet on the different steps. You also feel with your walking sticks, and as the trek developed I was becoming more tired. As we walked together someone described the terrain to me which helped to bring the surroundings to life. At the end of the three hour trek we stayed overnight in accommodation that was quite brutal, it was really basic, but as we went up the accommodation became more and more basic. Looking back that accommodation was quite a luxury, as we stayed in rooms that were just pieces of hardboard that were exposed to the elements, but we were quite low at this point so it wasn't too cold."

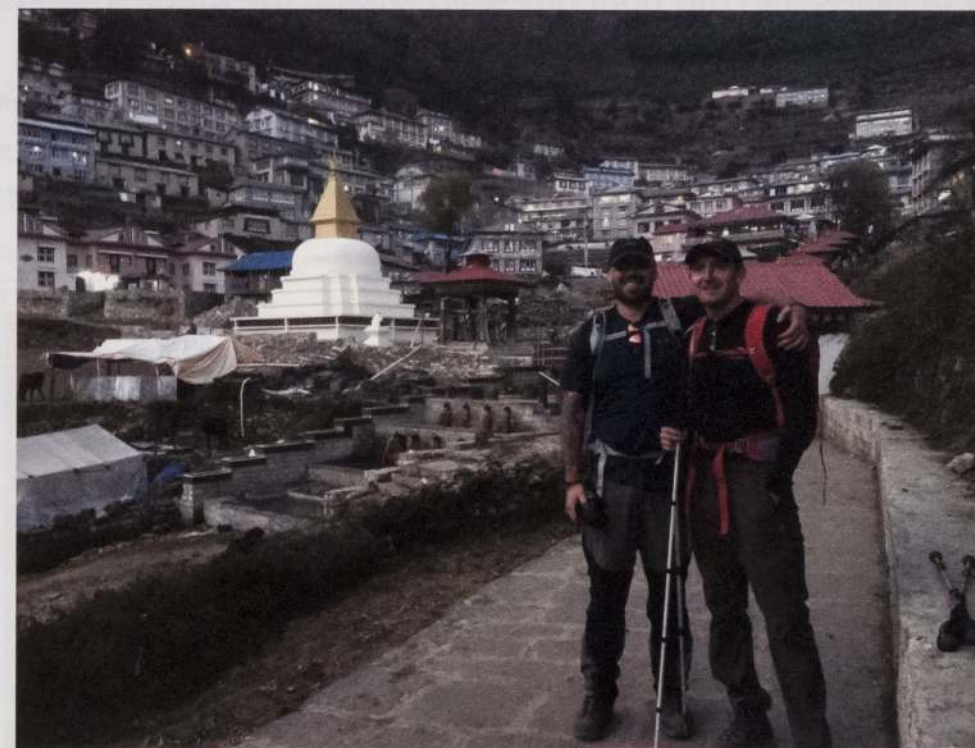


## Namche Bazaar.

"The following day we set off to Namche Bazaar, which is a seven or eight hour trek. The first part around a rim of the Khumbu Valley Gorge wasn't too bad as you're at the top. I have peripheral vision and can only see out of the side of my eye and I just saw this drop into the valley, and sometimes it was quite a big drop. We had to cross five bridges that were at least 200 to 300 metres long, and initially I wasn't too concerned, until I got halfway across and thought, what am I doing? They're a metre wide and 200 or 300 metres long across a massive drop and you just have two thin wire handrails to hold on to. You feel completely exposed as the footbridges bounce as you go across. The river is making a horrific sound, and it's a scary place to be, as the bridge is slightly swinging and you're thinking, I'm not sure I should be here. But we crossed five of those bridges in that day and that was quite challenging to get across.



**Picture:** Jamie follows his guide as they cross a metre wide bridge, that's 200 metres above a river and 200 metres in length.



**Picture:** Jamie and fellow trekker at Namche Bazaar.

"My guide and I developed a good technique for crossing the bridges as he would walk in front and use the walking sticks for me to hold on to behind him, and as we crossed he would say, we're a third of the way, or half way, and keep up the descriptions. So that day, day two, we crossed five bridges and then at the end of the trek we had a two or three hour trek into Namche Bazaar. It was pretty tough as it was constant uphill, and we arrived there at around 5pm, just as the sun was setting and it was really, really cold. Then we had a day of rest to acclimatise because every 500 metres you go up, you have to take a day of rest to acclimatise to the change in altitude. Twelve people out of our group of 30 came down with a bad sickness stomach bug so that day of rest I spent in bed. We had a doctor with us who gave us antibiotics.

## Tea Houses.

We stayed in what are called Tea Houses, and they're not really tea houses like you'd find in Yorkshire, as they're pretty basic and the only room that is heated with oil heaters is where you eat. There were no showering facilities and the food was basic, it was really food for survival, porridge and coffee for breakfast and the water had to be cleaned. We saw some amazing sights here as everything that goes up is either taken by yak, donkey or Sherpa, and we saw a man carrying a new fridge freezer in a cardboard box on his back! We were still quite low, as it was being taken up to Namche Bazaar and someone



read out that it was 105 kilos, and this poor guy was carrying the fridge freezer on his back! Then you see other people carrying building materials. As you went higher you could buy Snickers, Mars bars, Pringles and bottles of water as a treat, but the higher you went the higher the prices, to the point a tube of Pringles cost £6 or £7. A bottle of water that cost 50p in Kathmandu was almost £6 a bottle, which is understandable as it has to be carried up."



### **Gorak Shep.**

"A lot of the ascent is blurred as I focused on my foot placement, as the last thing I wanted was to fall, injure my ankle and be helicoptered off the mountain. A lot of people would stop in amazement because one of my sticks was a white cane and the other was a normal walking stick that you use for trekking. People wished me luck and asked questions about my vision, and again I could educate people about sight loss. It was lovely at the end of the trek when the Sherpas all said how mentally strong I was because it was a mental battle, and I keep going back to it, but not being able to see where your foot strikes on a terrain is really difficult as it takes so much energy. I don't have depth perception, and don't know how deep a step is, and just doing the trek for the day was mentally exhausting.

### **Remote.**

"It really hit me how remote you are in that location because the only way to get to Base Camp is either by foot or helicopter. On the trek up to Gorak Shep my fatigue levels dropped drastically when I became dizzy and my blood pressure dropped. You know that feeling when you've been exercising hard and you just feel really washed out. I didn't know whether it was altitude or fatigue, and one of the guides gave me a handful of jelly babies and flapjacks and I sat down for 10 or 15 minutes and thought, I'm in the middle of nowhere on the side of the Khumbu ice glacier, I have to get going. It's not a glacier as you imagine a glacier to be, all covered in ice, this was rocks after rocks, after rocks, which had been pushed down by the glacier. It was difficult terrain and I sat there and thought, if anything happened to me now I'm in a really exposed position, but everything was fine.

"It was quite scary knowing that people had died while we had been there. Not people in our group, but sadly one lone climber, who died about a mile and a half from Base Camp in a tea room at Gorak Shep. I think that's just under 5,500 metres high and the air there is really thin, and a female solo traveller went to sleep feeling poorly and sadly she didn't wake up. Then a Japanese guy collapsed, and he sadly passed away and that happened within 12 hours of our getting to Gorak Shep. I didn't sleep that night as I was a bit concerned that we were at altitude. Luckily, I didn't suffer too badly from altitude sickness, I had a headache, but you had to rate it between one and ten, and if it went above



five you had to tell the Doctor. I managed it with paracetamol, but one of our group was taken down by helicopter because his altitude sickness worsened the higher we went. A lot of us didn't sleep that night at Gorak Shep as it was an eerie place and we were just willing it to be 6am so that we could get up and start the trek.

### **The final trek to Base Camp.**

"The final day was hard. It was a difficult place to sleep and we were all up early, and as we were high it was really cold and we wore as many layers as we could, I had my skiing gear on over my trekking clothes. It was a four hour trek across the rocks that form the Khumbu glacier. We stopped for lunch and then carried on for three hours up to Base Camp and what a feeling of achievement. You can't see Mount Everest from Base Camp, as it's hidden behind mountains, but one of my photos is from a summit just to the left that gives a good view of Everest. People had expected tents and people at Base Camp, but because it's not the climbing season there was nothing other than prayer flags. The best way to describe it is as a quarry. In some respects, it could be seen as an anti climax, but it's a massive achievement to reach Base Camp, and I was just so glad to have made it. The climbing season is April and May because of the high jet stream winds, and as it's too dangerous to climb Mount Everest after May there were no climbers.

"If I'm being honest I didn't appreciate how difficult it would be. When I've trekked before there are times when you can recover on the flat and it's easy underfoot, but this was tough and unforgiving across a lot of difficult terrain. Seven days to Base Camp and seven days back was pretty tough. It's not until you get into that environment that you understand what trekking pace is. You take one step and you're out of breath, and that's why I say I don't think people have conquered Everest, they've crawled up it. I take my hat off to anyone who goes from Base Camp to the summit of Mount Everest. We were at 5,500 metres and Everest peaks at just under 29,000 feet. It's just phenomenal. It's a tough environment to be in. There's nothing, not even showering facilities. You can't get changed into a nice clean pair of jeans or socks, it's really, really tough, and we only did it for two weeks, which was enough for me. People who go up past Base Camp have my total respect. Airlines fly at that altitude and you talk about the Death Zone, and we were nowhere near it, yet two people died. The real positive was that I was with a great group of people and we really encouraged

one another. People were amazed at what I could do despite vision loss and that's great to be able to educate people, as to show people there is life beyond sight loss can only be a positive. It's all about pushing boundaries and for anyone in our situation that is what we do, we get the most out of life and push boundaries. It's all about a can do attitude.



**Picture:** A rest after hours of trekking.

### **Day eight.**

"Day eight, we've reached Base Camp and we're on our descent to Gorak Shep. In the morning the wind chill factor was around minus 25 and I was absolutely fatigued. The Doctor could see that I needed to rest to recover because the amount of energy that my brain was using to get me safely through the terrain was a lot more than the sighted people, and my legs were starting to wobble. When I sat down at lunch to have some Ghurkha soup they said they were concerned about my fitness, I said no I'm fine, I'm fine, which is what you would say, and they told me they'd hired a horse for me for a couple of days. It was quite funny and it improved morale as I got on the horse and I can't believe what it did, as it scrambled up and down and over bridges, including the 200 metre long rope bridges. This horse was phenomenal as we had to go from one side of a valley, down a really steep gorge, across a bridge and up the other side, and we're not talking about a gentle incline and decline, we're talking



about really quite difficult paths. At one point I had my legs fully extended in the stirrups and I was leaning back because this horse was just jumping down. It was funny because when we came into Namche I came in on horseback."



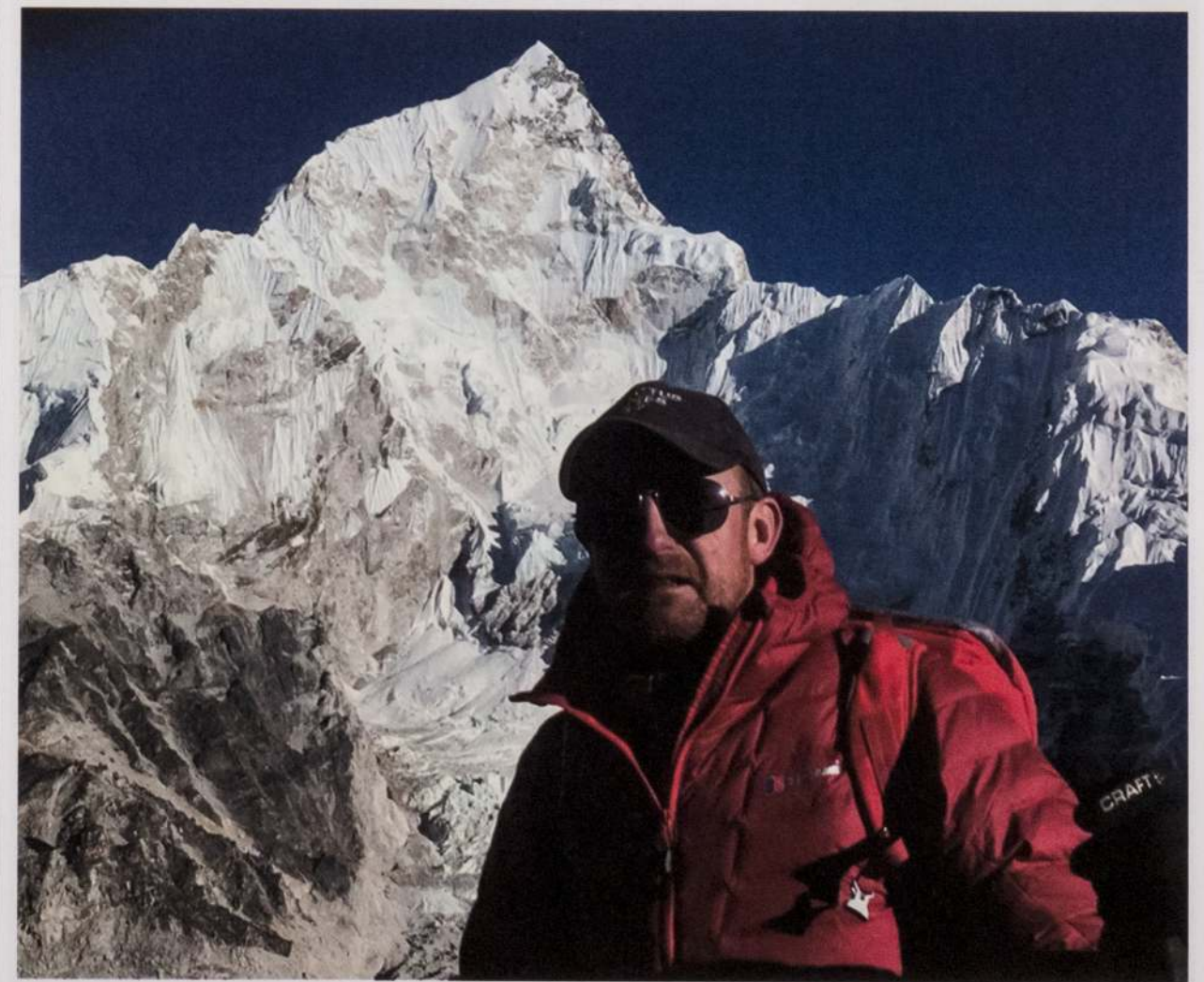
**Picture:** A smiling Jamie rides into Namche on horseback.

### **A massive challenge.**

"The trek to Base Camp was a massive challenge and a massive experience. They talk about type two fun, and that's all about being in that moment when you just don't want to be there, and you think, what the hell am I doing this for. I had some of those moments when I was sick and there were times when I was exhausted, or freezing cold, or going into the accommodation, which was literally two beds, and the best way to describe it is like sleeping in an allotment shed. You have these thin walls, no heat, windows that don't fit, and then if you can find the energy to change out of your trekking kit, you don't as it was so cold that we just slept in it. So, type two fun is those moments when you think, I don't like this, but then two or three weeks later, and like I'm doing

now, you start to think about things and think, actually those were quite good fun moments. They weren't at the time, but they are now, and you think, I'm glad I did that. It's all about keep going, keep going up.

"I feel different in that I've been to a magical place and I've done something that I never thought I would and have met some really good people who I'll keep in touch with. Help for Heroes and Discovery Adventure's organisation was fantastic and I hope I changed perceptions for people about what you can achieve despite sight loss. Once we landed at Kathmandu, where the weather was absolutely gorgeous, we got on to the bus, got back to the hotel and I jumped straight into the shower and laundered my trekking kit, which I'd been wearing for the past two weeks. It was so nice to get back to a warm shower and such basics of life as a flushing toilet, running water to brush your teeth, and hot water to shower in. I'm glad I did it as the trek to Base Camp Everest and being with great people was a life affirming experience."



**Picture:** Jamie with the majestic mountain in the background.



## Theresa Farley's chair exercises to do at home.

If you have difficulty with mobility, or leaving your house isn't possible, Theresa Farley, Sports & Rec Instructor at the Brighton centre, has given suggestions for exercises that you can do sitting in your chair at home. Theresa recommends performing ten of each exercise and repeating them three times a day. The exercises are ably demonstrated by Mark Threadgold.



### Starting position.

**Picture:** This is the starting position for all of the exercises. Please ensure that you sit up straight in your chair and have both feet flat on the floor (no slouching!). The exercises that follow give a good round body movement workout so that you can get moving at home and it shouldn't be too much of an effort.



### Forward punches.

**Picture:** Forward punches are a great way to get the arms moving. To make it harder you can hold a can of beans or a water bottle in each hand to get the blood flowing in the arms. After a bit you may find that your shoulders and arms will ache a bit.

### Heel raises.



**Picture:** Lift up your heels to work the calves as that's really important for walking. If you would like to make it a bit harder rest a heavy book on your knees.

### Knee extension.



**Picture:** Straighten one leg and aim to hold for three to five seconds, then relax and repeat on the other side.

This exercise works the front of the thigh which is a really important muscle for the knees, hips and for general walking and mobility.



### Lateral Raise.

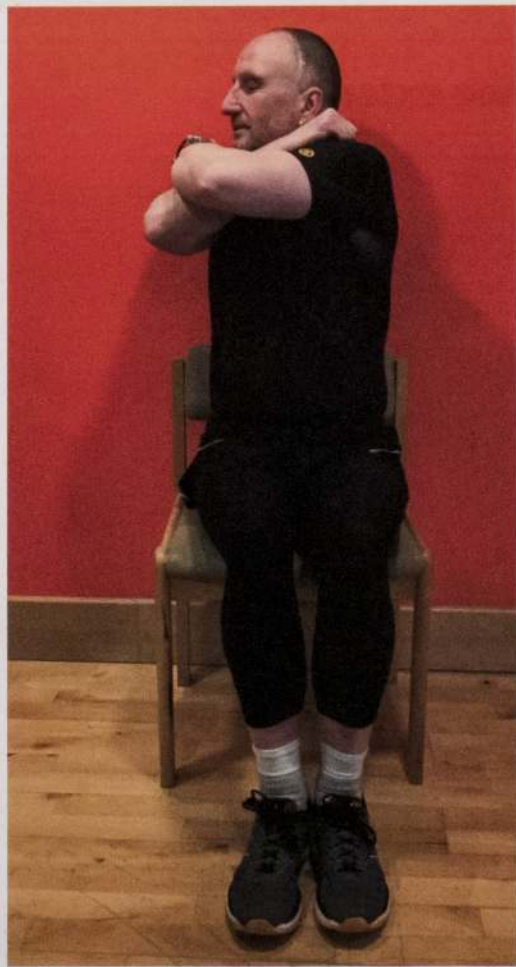


**Picture:** Hold your arms out to the sides so that they flap like wings as this will work the shoulders. Be careful not to hit anything or anyone when you do this! You can make this harder by holding a can of beans in each hand or a small bottle of water. Again this can be tiring after a while and don't push yourself too far. Know your limits and build up gradually to avoid injury.

### Trunk Twist Left.



### Trunk Twist Right.



**Pictures on opposite page:** Hold your arms across your shoulders and rotate your torso around to the left, then to the right. Only go as far as is comfortable, if you have any back pain, stop. It's quite common to sit for long periods of time so this is quite nice to get a bit of movement in the spine.

### From sitting to standing.



**Picture:** The aim of this is to stand up from a seated position. Place hands on either side of the chair to help with this and then use your legs to stand. If this is too much effort, just raise yourself a little then sit back down. It's about doing the action to improve your strength, only stand if you feel able to.

Thank you to Theresa Farley for this set of chair exercises that you can do from the comfort of your own home, and thank you to Mark Threadgold for demonstrating them.

With all of the exercises, the aim is to perform ten of each exercise and repeat three times a day. Please do them at a level that is comfortable to you. If you feel any pain, discomfort or feel unwell, please stop immediately.

If you have any exercises you'd like to share please contact the Review by email [revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) or post to Catherine Goodier, Review Editor, Blind Veterans UK, 10 - 12 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD or telephone 020 7616 8367.



## Letters to the Editor.

As we welcome your letters please do send them in to us. You can post them to Catherine Goodier, Review Editor, Blind Veterans UK, 12 - 14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. Or email them to [revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) Or you can telephone Catherine on 020 7616 8367.

Dear Editor,

Through the pages of the Review I would like to congratulate Mark Threadgold on his effort in reaching the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro. What an achievement. I remember Mark from my induction in 2017 when he mentioned he was hoping to take on the challenge of Kilimanjaro. Me, a born sceptic, and not knowing Mark and his strength of character, thought right, but I take my hat off to him in a subservient style to a better man. He is the embodiment of our motto of Life After Sight Loss and I can't wait to see what he does next.

Yours faithfully,  
Ron Russell.

## Multi Marathon Man Andy Leitch completes his 1,200 mile challenge.

On 24th December 2017, as Andy Leitch crossed the finish line at the Rushmore Park Run in Aldershot, it was the end of an epic challenge to run 1,200 miles in 12 months, the equivalent of 48 marathons. Speaking of the background to this Andy said, "When I came to Blind Veterans UK in 2011, I was in a really dark place. A few months earlier I had just 18 months to serve in the Army to complete 22 years and had plans to set up in business as a driving instructor after that. As my sight had been playing up I went to the hospital and it took just one stroke of the Doctor's pen to take away my livelihood and wipe out any plans for the future. I became selfish, thinking only of myself and not those around me or the way my sight loss would also impact on their lives." At the time that Andy Leitch speaks of he was a 37 year old Corporal in the Royal Logistics Corps working as a skid pan and advanced driving instructor.

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

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

Andy continued, "A few years ago I got back to running and was asked by Blind Veterans UK if I would like to represent the charity at a run in Aldershot. I went along and met someone who really inspired me — Joey Sharma. People at



**Picture:** Mark Threadgold holds the Blind Veterans UK flag at the top of Mount Kilimanjaro that he conquered with Russell Scullion of the Brighton centre's Sports & Rec dept in 2017.



Blind Veterans UK may know of Joey, who is also known as Joey the little Trooper. She's a great supporter of our charity as she completes numerous fundraising sporting events from marathons, to Blind Veterans UK's 100K London to Brighton and Yorkshire Challenges, to the Marathon des Sables, the world's toughest ultra-marathon. Without realising that Joey officiated at our local park run in Aldershot my wife Angie and I and some friends got involved in the park run that takes place every Saturday and we became friends with Joey.

"At the start of January 2017 Joey posted a challenge on her Facebook to run 100 miles in one month. I thought, for £12 and a medal, why the hell not? In January 2017 I successfully completed the Farnborough Half Marathon and the 100 mile challenge. However that snowballed and I set myself the goal to run 100 miles each month throughout 2017 and to collect a medal for each 100 miles. With the support of my wife Angie, Joey and friends Gina Dawson and Dianna Smith, we set up Andy's Angels as we also wanted to use this to raise awareness and funds for Blind Veterans UK, and 1,200 miles later we've raised £1,608 and the medals have mounted up.

"At the start of October I began to find it tiring and Angie and our family stepped up to encourage me. In December I had mixed emotions of 'Why the hell have I done this?' and 'Thank goodness I'm nearly done!' and again my family and Gina, Dianna and Joey really helped me to complete the 1,200 miles. I really want to thank Angie for all of her support come rain, wind, and shine, and for all the driving she did as without her it wouldn't have happened. I either ran on my own or with Andy's Angels, and together Angie and I completed the 100K Yorkshire Challenge, the Great South Run, the New Forest 10K, the virtual 26.2 mile London Challenge, and for good measure a few 5K and 10K runs! "This has helped to rebuild my confidence and every time I put on a Blind Veterans UK vest and did a run I thought, if only one person sees this vest, and like me finds out about Blind Veterans UK, it's done its job. I also want to thank everyone who sponsored us and if anyone would still like to sponsor us please go to [www.justgiving.com/andysangels1](http://www.justgiving.com/andysangels1)"

In the past 12 months, either on his own or with members of Andy's Angels, Andy ran marathons in London, Dorchester, the New Forest, Berlin, the six hour challenge at Dorney Lake. He also ran virtual marathons, submitting the evidence to show he had completed them. He ran half marathons in Dorney Lake, Farnborough, the Royal Parks in London, along the River Thames, Fleet,

Surrey Slog (x country event), the Great South Run. He also completed 5K and 10K runs for Jigsaw autism charity, the Royal British Legion, SSAFA, Blesma, Combat Stress and the charity Mudlarks.

We are sure that you will join us in congratulating Andy and Angie Leitch, Joey Sharma, Dianna Smith and Gina Dawson for this super achievement. Andy hasn't put his running shoes away, as in 2018 he's signed up for the Farnborough Half Marathon, the London Marathon, our 100K London to Brighton Challenge, and the Royal Parks Half Marathon. And as he assures us, a few more mad challenges too. Here's to Andy Leitch — an inspiration.



**Picture:** Andy Leitch at the Rushmore Park Run in Aldershot as he crossed the finish line and completed his challenge to run 1,200 miles in 12 months. For further information go to [www.justgiving.com/andysangels1](http://www.justgiving.com/andysangels1)



# Noticeboard.

## You have until 15th February to nominate for the 2018 Founder's Day Awards.

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

The Founder's Day Awards are held annually on 26th March, the date in 1915 when the first 16 war blinded veterans were welcomed by Sir Arthur Pearson to the new training centre at St Dunstan's Lodge in London's Regent's Park. In 2018 The Founder's Day Awards will take place in St Dunstan's Chapel at the Brighton centre on Monday 26th March. The winners of the 2017 Founder's Day Awards featured in the May Review, and if you know someone you think has excelled, and is eligible to be a recipient of a Founder's Day Award please do nominate them.

The categories for the 2018 Founder's Day Awards are:

- 1) Community Award. This award is for the best contribution to their local community or the family of Blind Veterans UK. The Community Award is open to members, spouses, widows and widowers.
- 2) Training Achievement Award. This award is given to the best novice who has shown great ability or perseverance as they learn new skills. It is only open to members of Blind Veterans UK.
- 3) Creative Art Award. This award recognises endeavour in a creative activity and encompasses art, handicrafts, sculpture and music. If practical, an example should be sent with the proposal form. If this is not practical, then please do send a photograph. This award is only open to members.
- 4) Sports Person of the Year Award. Open to members only, this celebrates an exceptional sporting achievement or achievements during the award year.
- 5) Outstanding Achievement Award. This is for a member who has achieved an

outstanding level of independence via their participation in activities promoted or provided through and by Blind Veterans UK. This award is only open to members.

6) The Ted Higgs Trophy for a war blinded veteran.

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

For guidelines and a proposal form, please contact Hannah Barnes at the Brighton centre. You can write to Hannah at Blind Veterans UK, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 7BS. Or, if you prefer, telephone Hannah on 01273 391443 or email her at [hannah.barnes@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:hannah.barnes@blindveterans.org.uk)

Nominations are treated in confidence and will be discussed by a Selection Committee in early 2018, so please submit your entry by 15th February 2018. Nominees are not informed they have been nominated until the Selection Committee has reached their decision.



**Picture:** At the March 2017 Founder's Day Awards at the Llandudno centre, Joseph Hallett, known as Bird Box Bert, won the Innovator of the Year Award. He is shown receiving his Award from our President Colin Williamson.

Bert was nominated by John Cantwell.



# Family News.

## Congratulations to:

### Birthdays:

**Janet Cruse** who will celebrate her 102nd birthday on 10th January.  
**Arthur Stace** who will celebrate his 102nd birthday on 25th January.  
**Peter Lowen** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 15th January.  
**Pauline Stiles** who will celebrate her 100th birthday on 18th January.

### Anniversaries:

#### Platinum 70 years married:

**Tony & Dorothy Angwin** of Minehead, Somerset on 10th January.  
**Philip & Jane Oakley** of Skegness, Lincolnshire on 24th January.

#### Blue Sapphire 65 years married:

**Joe & Rita Cruickshank** of York, North Yorkshire on 3rd January.  
**Jack & Jean Mays** of Saltburn By The Sea, Cleveland on 10th January.

#### Diamond Yellow 60 years married.

**Maurice & Marie Williams** of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire on 8th January.  
**Tony & Patricia Moore** of Darlington, County Durham on 25th January.

#### Golden 50 years married:

**Bill & Annie Dill** of Newtownabbey, County Antrim on 6th January.  
**Desmond & Evelyn Hutson** of Colwyn Bay, Clwyd on 6th January.

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.

**Joyce Breach** who died on 5th December 2017. She was the wife of Frank Breach.

**Sheila Furnival** who died on 30th November 2017. She was the widow of the late Fourness Furnival.

**Alice Hayes** who died on 20th July 2017. She was the widow of the late Herbert Hayes.

**Joan Jones** who died on 13th July 2015. She was the widow of the late Norman Jones.

**Mary Painter** who died on 2nd January 2018. She was the widow of the late Roland Painter.

**Joan Prior** who died on 8th November 2017. She was the wife of William Prior.

**Winifred 'Betty' Rhoades-Brown** who died in 2017. She was the widow of the late John Rhoades-Brown.

**Patricia Scrimgeour** who died on 1st July 2017. She was the widow of the late Donald Scrimgeour.

**Kathleen Simpson** who died on 25th November 2017. She was the wife of Arthur Simpson.

**Marjorie Smith** who died on 4th December 2017. She was the wife of Kenneth Smith.

**Sydney 'Syd' Thomas** who died on 18th August 2017. He was the husband of Sarah Thomas.

**Eileen Waring** who died on 1st December 2017. She was the wife of Jack Waring.

**Louise Weeks** who died on 1st January 2018. She was the widow of the late Joseph Weeks.



# 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.**

**Irene Adamson née McPherson** of Burgess Hill, West Sussex died on 17th November 2017, aged 97. She served as a Nursing Sister in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service from 1949 to 1950.

**Eric Andrews** of Blackpool, Lancashire died on 15th December 2017, aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Europe and Scotland from 1943 to 1947.

**Ronald 'Ron' Atkinson** of Leeds, West Yorkshire died on 1st October 2017, aged 92. In 1946 he joined 46 RM Commandos and landed on D-Day. He served with Combined Operations until 1970.

**Margaret Berry née Backinsell** of Hailsham, East Sussex died on 3rd December 2017, aged 96. From 1941 to 1946 she served in the UK as a Private in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

**Anthony 'Tony' Cooke** of Brighton, East Sussex died on 16th November 2017, aged 78. From 1959 to 1964 he served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery in Hong Kong.

**Edwin 'Eddie' Cole** of Mayfield, East Sussex died on 6th December 2017, aged 86. He served as a Gunner in the Queen's Royal Regiment in Germany from 1949 to 1956.

**Rita Copeman née Ward** of Pulborough, West Sussex died on 5th December 2017, aged 93. She served in the UK in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1942 to 1945, until demobbed as a Leading Aircraftwoman.

**Ronald 'Ron' Crapper-Bovey** of Plympton, Plymouth, Devon died on 20th November 2017, aged 95. He served in England in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946, leaving as a Leading Aircraftman.

**Maurice Dickinson** of Langtoft, Peterborough died on 29th November 2017, aged 95. He served in England in the Royal Navy from 1947 to 1969, leaving as a Chief Electrician.

**Bernard 'Dennis' Doyle** of Wigan, Lancashire died on 5th December 2017, aged 89. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1947 to 1949 in England and Palestine.

**Brian Elliott GSM** of Consett, County Durham died on 5th December 2017, aged 74. From 1961 to 1985 he served in the Royal Artillery in the UK, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia and Borneo, leaving as a Warrant Officer 1st Class.

**John Elliott** of Baschurch, Shrewsbury died on 11th December 2017, aged 81. He served as a Junior Technician in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1956.

**Ernest 'Darwin' Evans** of Carnforth, Lancashire died on 15th December 2017, aged 96. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1945.

**Neville Every** of Llanelli, Dyfed died on 1st November 2017, aged 82. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force in Gibraltar from 1956 to 1958.

**David Ford** of Accrington, Lancashire died on 1st December 2017, aged 90. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers from 1945 to 1948 in Germany and England.

**Leslie 'Les' Fox** of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 1st May 2017, aged 92. From 1945 to 1946 he served as an Engine Room Artificer in the Royal Navy in England and Sri Lanka.

**Colin Freeman** of Rotherham, South Yorkshire died on 6th December 2017, aged 88. From 1950 to 1952 he served in the Royal Air Force in England, leaving as a Leading Aircraftman.

**William 'Bill' Fuller** of Hove, East Sussex died on 8th December 2017, aged 93. He served in the Far East in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947, leaving as an Acting Corporal.



**Thomas 'Tom' Gardiner** of Colchester, Essex died on 21st October 2017, aged 91. He served in the General Catering Corps from 1945 to 1948 in Egypt, Greece and Palestine, until demobbed as a Corporal.

**John Gilmour** of York, North Yorkshire died on 5th December 2017, aged 87. He served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1953 in Germany and the UK as a Lance Corporal.

**Keith Gotts** of Camden, North London died on 10th November 2017, aged 86. From 1940 to 1946 he served in the UK in the Royal Pioneer Corps from 1949 to 1955.

**Henry 'Jim' Haden** of Rottingdean, East Sussex died on 29th November 2017, aged 99. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers in Europe.

**John Harbourne** of Northfield, West Midlands died on 27th November 2017, aged 78. He served as a Private in Cyprus in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from 1959 to 1960.

**Peter Harris** of Weston-Super-Mare, Avon died on 1st January 2017, aged 88. An Aircraftman 2nd Class he served in the Royal Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

**John Howell** of Swansea, West Glamorgan died on 1st July 2017, aged 90. From 1948 to 1972 he served as a Chief Engineer in the Merchant Navy in The Falkland and Ascension Islands.

**Norman Humphrey** of Chandlers Ford, Southampton died on 25th November 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1938 to 1950 in Norway, Normandy, India and French Indochina, until demobbed as a Flight Sergeant.

**John Kerr** of Bromley, Kent died on 4th December 2017, aged 94. He served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy from 1939 to 1954 in Home Waters, the Mediterranean, Middle East, Far East and Korea.

**Harry Laxton** of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London died on 29th November 2017, aged 94. He served in the Royal Armoured Corps and the Royal Engineers in France, Germany and Australia from 1942 to 1966, leaving as a Corporal.

**Graham Leggett** of Guildford, Surrey died on 28th November 2017, aged 78. From 1956 to 1960 he served in the Royal Air Force, leaving as a Corporal.

**Anthony 'Tony' Lumley-Frank** of Pimlico, London died on 16th November 2017, aged 89. He served as a Private in England in the Queen's Royal Regiment from 1946 to 1948.

**Arthur 'Tom' Markie** of Oakham, Rutland died on 13th December 2017, aged 97. He served in the North Staffordshire Regiment, Intelligence Corps and the Army Cadet Force from 1942 to 1975, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.

**Lionel Marks** of Bushey, Hertfordshire died on 4th December 2017, aged 101. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force in the Middle East and Africa from 1940 to 1945.

**John Milligan** of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne And Wear died on 1st December 2017, aged 89. From 1945 to 1948 he served as a Naval Airman in the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm in New Zealand and Australia.

**Peter Murley** of Yate, Bristol died on 30th November 2017, aged 93. He served in the Primary Training Wing and the Hampshire Regiment from 1942 to 1947 in Egypt, Greece, North Africa, Italy and Austria, until demobbed as a Sergeant.

**Percy 'Vic' Oliver** of Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk died on 11th October 2017, aged 89. He served in the RAF in 1946 and later in the Merchant Navy.

**Alan Phoenix** of Preston, Lancashire died on 27th November 2017, aged 90. He served in the King's Own Scottish Borderers, Wiltshire Regiment, Cheshire Regiment and the Royal Army Service Corps from 1945 to 1958 in France and Germany.

**Douglas Pickering** of Mold, Flintshire died on 15th November 2017, aged 90. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers in Egypt and Palestine from 1946 to 1948.

**George 'Bill' Pleasance** of Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk died on 7th December 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947 in South Africa, Palestine, Egypt and India, leaving as a Leading Aircraftman.



**Lawrence Portet** of Gosport, Hampshire died on 22nd November 2017, aged 92. From 1942 to 1972 he served in the Merchant Navy, leaving as a Staff Captain.

**Alan Silvester** of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire died on 29th November 2017, aged 88. From 1947 to 1981 he served in the Royal Air Force in the UK, Africa and the Middle East, leaving as a Group Captain.

**Philip Stone** of Leominster, Herefordshire died on 13th September 2017, aged 90. He served as a Sick Berth Attendant in the Royal Navy from 1945 to 1947.

**John 'Guy' Sutcliffe** of St. Ives, Cornwall died on 15th November 2017, aged 80. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1955 to 1957, leaving as a Corporal.

**Dr Ronald Tipple** of Tavistock, Devon died on 3rd August 2017, aged 103. From 1940 to 1971 he served in the Royal Navy in North Africa, Sicily and Italy as a Surgeon Captain.

**Archibald 'Archie' Thomson** of Edinburgh died on 5th December 2017, aged 83. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force from 1952 to 1955 in the UK and Northern Ireland.

**Albert Trodden** of Taunton, Somerset died on 1st December 2017, aged 84. He served in the Royal Artillery in 1951.

**Thomas Tucker** of Colwyn Bay, Clwyd died on 19th November 2017, aged 98. From 1940 to 1946 he served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy in Home Waters.

**Henry John Turner** of Wirral, Merseyside died on 10th December 2017, aged 78. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals in England and Germany from 1960 to 1965.

**Brian Warwick-Smith** of Dereham, Norfolk died on 27th November 2017, aged 89. From 1946 he served in the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm in the UK, Korea and Malta, leaving as a Petty Officer in 1954.

**Robert Watt** of Leicester, Leicestershire died on 1st December 2017, aged 98. He served in the Royal Armoured Corps from 1939 to 1946 in Crete, Greece, North Africa, Sicily North Africa and France, he demobilised as a Lieutenant.

**Ronald 'Ron' Webb** of Kenilworth, Warwickshire died on 1st November 2017, aged 90. He served in the UK as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1944 to 1948.

**John Webster** of Derby, Derbyshire died on 3rd December 2017, aged 89. He served as a Cook in England in the Army Catering Corps from 1946 to 1948.

**Trevor Wigmore** of Gillingham, Kent died on 14th December 2017, aged 102. A Sergeant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers he served in France and India from 1934 to 1954.

**Alfred 'Alf' Wilkinson** of Rhyl, Clwyd died on 3rd December 2017, aged 94. He served in the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1946 in the North Atlantic, Burma, North Africa and Russia, until discharged as an Acting Able Seaman.

**Dennis Wilson** of Farsley, Leeds died on 27th October 2017, aged 89. He served as a Gunner in Germany in the Royal Artillery from 1947 to 1949.

**Atherlie 'Lee' Wood née Markham** of Coventry, West Midlands died on 13th December 2017, aged 96. From 1941 to 1946 she served in the UK as a Leading Aircraftwoman in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

**Percy Wykes** of Coventry, West Midlands died on 28th September 2015, aged 99. He served as an Artificer in the Royal Artillery in Italy and Africa from 1933 to 1946.



