

February 2018

Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915



On the cover: To combat Blue Monday on 15th January the No One Alone team and Community 17 organised afternoon tea at our Harcourt Street HQ for local members, with a centre piece cake baked by Sophie Faldo, The Great British Bake Off winner. Cover Matthew Athey, Eric Waters and Margaret Neale. Photo Mariana Mendes.



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Back page: David Poyner who has done so much for the progression of blind archery, pages 17 & 18.

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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 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.

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 Round The Pier exact date TBA.

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 Community Support Worker.

Activities from the Llandudno centre in 2018.

February.

10th Masonic Club. Please contact Chairman & Secretary W.Bro Clive Jones P.G.Purst on: mobile 07854 800256 or email dragoneye67@sky.com

March.

Health & Wellbeing Week 6th to 10th.

Music Week 25th to 31st.

May.

Driving Week 6th.

History Week 14th.

June.

Potting and Planting Week 25th.

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 Community Support Worker.

From the Chairman.

Your message from Air Vice Marshall Paul Luker CB OBE AFC DL.

I'm most grateful for this opportunity to introduce myself as I take over the post of Chairman of Trustees from Tim Davis.

I took retirement in 2016, following two very full careers. I joined the Royal Air Force as a seventeen-year-old in 1968, going straight to the RAF College Cranwell as a flight cadet and training on the Jet Provost. Graduating in 1971, I immediately went on to convert to helicopters at RAF Tern Hill before being posted to 28 Sqn in Hong Kong later that year. It amuses me now to think that I flew my first jet solo before I was 18 and was carrying passengers in a Whirlwind before I was 20 — and I still didn't have a driving licence (but that's another story). From there I went on to fly most of the helicopters in the RAF and Army inventory, having had the enormous good fortune to be selected for a long exchange tour in Germany with the Army Air Corps when the Lynx came into service, and then to form and command a tactics and trials unit at RAF Odiham. Odiham has played a big part in my life. Perhaps uniquely I served there in every commissioned rank from pilot officer to air vice-marshal, so it is not surprising that Sue and I eventually made the local village our permanent home.

I completed my RAF service with two hugely enjoyable but very different tours. In 2002 I took command of the Joint Helicopter Command, where I first met and worked with Nick Caplin, our CEO. This involved managing the helicopters of all three Services and the Army's Air Assault Brigade; unusually for an airman I therefore had command of all three Battalions of the Parachute Regiment. Immediately afterward I went on to be the Deputy Commanding General of US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan. This was just before NATO progressively took over responsibility from the US and my pretty wide responsibilities were mainly to do with nation-building activity on top of our counter insurgency work.

I left the RAF on my return in 2006 and moved straight on to become Chief Executive of the Council of Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations. What a change. Having spent all my previous life as the demanding and petulant operator I now found myself wholly in a supporting function, looking after the

needs of all three Services' reserves and cadets. And I couldn't have asked for a better way to transition from service to civilian life. In the last eleven years I have come to know some of the nicest and most committed people in the UK. In the process I have found myself championing their cause and fighting for the resources they need so badly when defence is being stretched. It was a wrench to retire from it late in 2016 but it needed new blood and I wanted new challenges.

I'm not sure my wife entirely shared my enthusiasm for more time at home. She has stuck by me since my early years in the RAF but I think she holds dear the dictum, "I married you for life, but not for lunch". Sue and I also both come from RAF families. Sue's father had a full career in the Royal Air Force, joining towards the end of the war and serving with Coastal Command as a Liberator pilot. He then moved on to fly transport aircraft, taking part in the Berlin Airlift. He rose to the rank of Air Commodore and had appointments as Commander RAF Hong Kong, where I met Sue, and several Director posts in MOD. My father and mother also served in the RAF, starting in Egypt, where they met and then serving around the world in places such as Singapore and Kenya. My mother's claim to fame was that she was the drum major for the WRAF Middle East Air Force band, while my father's favourite memories took him back to Egypt, first driving for the Airfield Construction unit but mainly as a despatch rider along the length of canal zone road during Suez, on his treasured Harley Davidson. He also had a full RAF career but decided to retire as a flight sergeant in the '70s, rather than risk meeting me in uniform — and having to salute me.

So what has all this got to do with Blind Veterans UK? Well, I've led a very privileged and charmed life. Along the way, though, I have come to understand that the Services demand a lot from their people and their people often pay a heavy price. I have friends, colleagues and subordinates who have been badly damaged by operational service, and too many who have made the ultimate sacrifice. For these reasons, fairly early on in my working life I made a vow to myself that I should do something to repay my own good fortune. I wanted to become involved with a charity that had a clear purpose for the military community and so, when Andy Keeling offered me the chance to become a Trustee in 2012, I never hesitated.

Now, taking on the mantle of Chairman from Tim Davis, I need to start by recognising the superb work that he has done. Tim took on the role at a

difficult time, not least with the untimely death of Robert Leader, our previous CEO. He did a great deal to hold the charity on a steady course in that year and then to lead the charity through an important transition. Consequently, thanks to Tim's clarity, energy and determination, we are now well positioned to move Blind Veterans UK forward into its next epoch. Crucially thanks to his doggedness, we are on a sound financial footing to do so. I and my fellow Trustees owe Tim a great debt of gratitude for bringing us to this point.

Looking ahead I believe that we now need a period of consolidation. Before the transition we were probably too comfortable: we had a well-earned reputation for delivering quality support, mainly through our centres at Brighton, Llandudno and Sheffield. But we were sitting on large financial reserves for which we could not completely identify a particular requirement and we were serving a gently dwindling population of veterans. We now have a comprehensive plan to help many more deserving veterans; if we get this right over the next ten years we should be able to reach as many as 12,500, a marked improvement on the membership levels when I first became a Trustee and especially important in supporting the last of the National Service generation. More importantly, the manner in which we engage with you, our members, is changing, such that we become just as effective working locally in communities as we are through the centres.

My goal as Chairman is to ensure that we make this plan work but without any reduction in the quality of our support. We will need to invest some of our reserves to make this happen but your Trustees are unanimous in the belief that this is what our benefactors would want. I am also convinced that we need to lift our game in making Blind Veterans UK more recognisable to the general public. Clearly this is in part driven by the crucial need to increase the level of donations to the charity but it is about much more besides. We struggle to make veterans aware that we are here for them when they suffer sight loss, at whatever point in their lives. We need to encourage volunteers to help us. We need to persuade other, like-minded charities that we could achieve more collaboratively. And we need to make our voice heard in ensuring that our members get the public benefits to which they are entitled. So, in the next few years, our main effort will be to implement an engagement strategy which serves all these purposes in a coherent way.

Finally, looking further ahead, I share deeply many of the Trustees' views that

we need to re-invigorate research work which could have direct benefit to you. When Sir Arthur Pearson spoke about Victory over Blindness he almost certainly understood that research would play an important part in that victory — not necessarily in finding cures but certainly in discovering avenues by which veterans could live independent and fulfilling lives despite their sight loss.

I feel strongly that I have been given yet another privilege in being appointed chairman and very much look forward to helping take Blind Veterans UK into new and exciting times. In doing so I am very conscious of the exceptional team of professional and volunteer staff who achieve so much already; their industry and commitment is fundamentally what makes this all work. I hope this resonates with you and, if not, encourage you to put me straight as we meet over the next few years.



Picture: Air Vice Marshall Paul Luker CB OBE AFC DL, who in 2018 became Blind Veterans UK's eighth Chairman.

Meet our Trustees.

Colin Williamson. President.

Colin became the sixth President of Blind Veterans UK in 2017. He served in the Royal Artillery as a driver, gunner and signaller and has been a beneficiary of Blind Veterans UK since 2003. He has volunteered and worked for Blind Veterans UK for more than ten years and he developed and leads Project Gemini, our exchange programme between blind veterans from the UK and USA, and more recently South Africa. He is also the Review's Contributing Editor and spends much of his time travelling the country speaking about the charity.



Picture: Blind Veterans UK President Colin Williamson.

Kerry Levins.

Kerry was appointed as a Trustee in December 2012 and is on the Governance and Strategy and the Service Delivery committees. A blind veteran himself, Kerry was commissioned into the Royal Signals in 1991. He served with the Queen's Gurkha Signal Regiment until 1994 in Hong Kong, Nepal and Brunei. He left the Army as a Captain in August 1999. Kerry became a member in 2010.



Picture: Kerry Levins.



Picture: Sarah-Lucie Watson.

Sarah-Lucie Watson.

Sarah-Lucie Bashall (née Watson) was born in London and grew up in Kent. Her mother was blinded in an accident aged six and brought up three children. Sarah-Lucie is married to an army officer and they have three children. She trained as a doctor at King's College hospital in London in 1982. After an experience in Kenya working on a research project involving the effects of Leprosy on the eye and completing her FRCS part one, she specialised in ophthalmic surgery. She completed her fellowship specialising in Medical retina at Moorfield's Eye hospital in London, and in 2003 took up a full-time consultant position at the Royal Berkshire hospital. Sarah-Lucie was appointed as a member of Council in December 2014.

Ty Platten.

Since January 2016 Ty has been the Chief Executive of Broughton House Veterans Care Charity. Ty, who is based in the North West, was formerly Managing Director of Hull based HICA for just over five years. His career started in London where he trained as a barrister before taking up the role of National Development Manager for Nuffield Hospitals, opening up health screening facilities across the UK. He then progressed into a regional management role for Bupa Care Services. He was recognised for 'Management Excellence' in the Laing and Buisson Independent Healthcare Awards 2011. Ty was appointed as a Trustee of Blind Veterans UK in September 2015.



Picture: Ty Platten.



Picture: Lieutenant-General Mark William Poffley OBE.

Lieutenant-General Mark William Poffley OBE.

Mark was appointed a Trustee of Blind Veterans UK in March 2017 and is currently a serving Lieutenant General in the Army. Throughout his 32 years of service, he has completed operational tours in the Balkans, the first Gulf War, Afghanistan and most recently in Iraq. A logistician with management account qualifications, he is currently the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff responsible for delivering the strategic balance of investment for all three services.

David Turner.

After studying at the College of Estate Management, University of London, he qualified as a Chartered Surveyor. After some years working as a consultant, he joined the UK board of a listed property development and investment company before joining a leading UK bank where he became CEO of the Group's property subsidiary and Group Property Director. Post retirement David has used his general management and property experience through a number of board appointments in the private and public sectors; some adding to his international experience and including chairing a FTSE 250 company. He also has experience at board level with charities and in higher education. David joined the Council of Blind Veterans UK in March 2016.



Picture: David Turner.



Picture: David Buckley.

David Buckley.

David is a chartered accountant and former senior partner at Ernst & Young, with over 25 years of experience operating at board level. He has held a wide range of leadership positions, including being a member of Ernst & Young's UK & Ireland Leadership team, and has led businesses through critical transformational change programmes. The health sector has been David's primary industry focus, including leading the global relationship with Bupa, and working with NHS Trust Boards on cost management and reconstruction. David's grandfather and father both served in the Armed Forces, during the First and Second World Wars respectively. David has been a volunteer speaker for Speakers for Schools, a charity that supports state schools to inspire their students and broaden horizons through access to a range of insights, experience and expertise.

Neelesh Heredia.

Neelesh is currently Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Group Chief Executive at HSBC Holdings Plc. Neelesh has been with the HSBC Group since 1989 and has undertaken leadership roles in Latin America, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Mauritius, India and the UK. His extensive experience in Financial Services has encompassed banking operations, internal audit, human resources, strategy and planning, credit and operational risk management, securities custody & clearing, trade services and retail branch management. Neelesh is a member of HSBC Group's International management cadre.



Picture: Neelesh Heredia.



Picture: Nicky Pulford.

Nicky Pulford.

Nicky trained as a medical secretary and has spent most of her career working for the NHS, local councils and latterly within the Thames Valley Police Force as a PA to the Superintendent Ops and in the Child Abuse Investigation Unit. She has also worked within the private sector for such companies as Sony and IBM. Nicky is married to a retired Royal Air Force Officer and for the past 35 years has accompanied him around the world and overseas, living in 19 different homes. During these years she has been a Vice President of SSAFA and has chaired the RAF High Wycombe SSAFA In-Service Committee. She has served on the RAFA Welfare Committee and has been President of the Air Attache Partners' Association and the International Club for Air Force Officers' Wives.

Barry Coupe.

Barry's knowledge of Blind Veterans UK goes back as far as he can remember, as his father retrained as a physio at St Dunstan's after losing his sight in 1943, while serving in the Royal Navy. After working as a volunteer for the charity for two years, Barry became a trustee in 2017. He also has extensive experience of working as a non-executive for charities, as he is one of the founding Trustees of the Children's Hospices for the Eastern Region. Barry has also served as Chairman of the national charity Dyslexia Action and is an award-winning architect. He established and ran a successful practice for 34 years, and currently runs a consultancy as a RIBA Client Adviser.



Picture: Barry Coupe.



Picture: James Leavesley.

James Leavesley.

A chartered surveyor by profession, James is Chief Executive of JT Leavesley, where he oversees a vast range of commercial activities, including agricultural and property interests. James has just stood down as Vice-Chair of the National Memorial Arboretum's Fundraising committee after ten years, during which time the committee secured £15 million of support. James is also a member of the Local Enterprise Partnership Board, a Deputy Lieutenant for Staffordshire and, until recently, was a qualified fixed-wing and rotary pilot, despite being partially sighted.

Minoo Sahni Court.

Minoo joined as a trustee in September 2017 and has been appointed chairperson of the investment committee. She is an investment specialist; most recently as an Executive Director at UBS Wealth management. During her 35 year corporate career, she gained extensive experience in culturally diverse regulatory and operational environments in the UK, US and Middle East. During her time at UBS she was the Co-Chair of the All Bar None UK women’s diversity network. Minoo is also a trustee of MyTime Active, a social enterprise with charitable objective that invests in a range of projects and services to meet the needs of local communities.



Picture: Minoo Sahni Court.



Picture: Malcolm Cree.

Malcolm Cree CBE.

Malcolm retired from the Royal Navy in 2016, in the rank of Rear Admiral. He served in all types and sizes of ship, from minehunters to aircraft carriers, and commanded a destroyer, a task group in the Gulf and the Navy’s prized operational sea training organisation. He was deployed all over the world and served in the Gulf (Tanker War) and Adriatic. Since retiring, Malcolm has worked for a management consultancy that specialises in decision analysis, and has recently become Chief Executive of the Bar Council. He joined the Council of Trustees in 2016.

Liz Hunt.

Liz is a journalist with more than 25 years of experience working on the frontline of national daily newspapers, including The Independent, The Telegraph, Daily Mail and Washington Post in the US. She has been a reporter, specialist health correspondent, feature writer, travel writer, columnist and editor, and a regular contributor to TV and radio. Most recently, she has worked as a senior editor and newspaper executive, and until July 2016 was a Deputy Editor at The Telegraph. Liz is now a Consultant Editor at The Daily Mail.



Picture: Liz Hunt.

Patron: Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex GCVO.

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Standing Down. By David Poyner.

I returned from California after refereeing the World Underwater Hockey championships in August 1998. Before I knew it I was in a coma for 30 days, and came back to the world having lost my sight.

Desperate to get back to sport, Blind Veterans UK introduced me to archery in 1999. Little did I realise that it would take over my life, and I shot at all competitive levels including winning a silver medal in Europe for GB.

Keen to improve the technical side of archery, I developed the foot locators which are now recognised by World Archery as essential equipment for blind archers, and are used throughout the world.

Now, after 17 years on our archery committee — 14 as chair, 18 years on British Blind Sport archery committee and 12 as their chair — it is time to step down. Health issues are preventing me from shooting as well as I would like, and it's time to let someone new take the helm. I'd like to think that I've left a legacy of vision impaired archery being recognised as an international sport after campaigning for many years, something that was acknowledged by an award from Archery GB.

It's been a good 17 years on our archery committee, and like everything in life you get as much out of it as you put in; at times that was more than 100 percent. Every best wish to my successor, and may everyone's arrows fly straight and true.

Special mentions must go to Sue Habgood, Barbara Degenhardt and particularly David Habgood and Colin Dickinson for all their help and encouragement. John and Sue Lilley have been tremendous over the years and without them I wouldn't have gone to shoot regularly. And special cheers for Brian Muggridge and most of all my wife, Jane.

You can keep up to date with Blind Veterans UK Bowmen via the website I built and will continue to maintain at www.blindveteransukbowmen.org.uk

February 2018



Picture: David Poyner who has done so much for archery for the blind and vision impaired. He is using the foot locators that he developed.

Fishing Week 2017. By Bryan Kilburn.

With the clear start of autumn the Blind Veterans UK fishing week started with the optimistic group of seven vision impaired anglers making their way to the Brighton centre on Sunday 17th September. Most of them settled into their rooms at Port Hall, but a few had rooms at the main building due to various issues. A good night's sleep was wanted by all to prepare for the epic giant fish battles that were on the cards for the following five days.

The fishing week would see seven of our members go freshwater fishing for five days. We have a number of different venues, all good size lakes within a reasonably short drive. Leaving the centre at 8am after an early breakfast, and returning at about 5pm, in time for a wash and then tea, we managed to get a good six to seven hours of fishing each day, even with the setting up and packing away of so much gear. Each member has a helper for the day, either a member of Blind Veterans UK staff or one of our excellent volunteers.



Picture: Monster of the deep. John Taylor with the biggest fish he has caught in 70 years of angling. **Opposite:** Gordon Timmins reels another in.

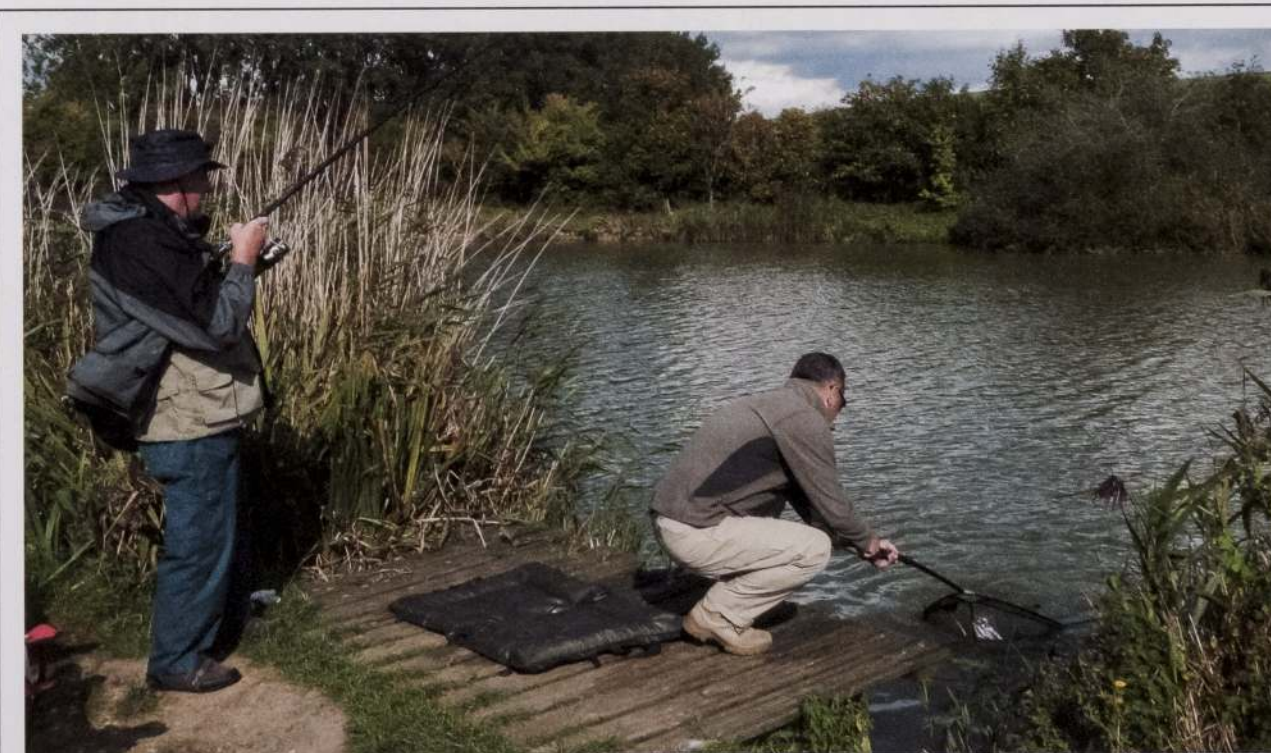
Monday 18th.

An early breakfast that was not quite as early as planned and a hunt for the packed lunches, saw us off a little later than planned to our first venue at

Passies Ponds in Lancing. There are three lakes to choose from and everyone voted to go to the main lake and try for the bigger fish. Gary and Graham soon started catching good size carp that were just short of 15lb. Then at about 1.30pm John lifted a 16lb common carp, a long battle saw this personal best fish on the bank and a very happy and relieved angler. This fish was the biggest John has ever caught in about 70 years of angling. Fish then started coming in for Gordon and Peter with a very surprising and slightly scary 10½lb pike for Peter, which we all tried to avoid. On the whole a great days fishing with just a little rain, a bit of wind and a fair bit of sleeping from Gary's swim.

Tuesday 19th.

The breakfast was ready this morning and we got off to a great start at Falcenville Fishery in Hailsham. This complex has about five lakes and we opted for the bigger one again. Gordon started the catching early with a carp of about 3lb before we'd been there an hour. The favoured bait seemed to be the trusty fruity boilie and this was working well for Gordon as he was catching every cast. Gary and Peter were putting fish on the bank but Gordon was a catching machine and in real danger of being thrown in. When we stopped for our packed lunch at about 12.30pm John had caught a good 10lb carp, Gary and Peter had a few each but Gordon had caught seven fish. The weather could not have been better with beautiful sun and a slight breeze. The day ended with Gordon catching a 10lb carp at about 3.30pm bringing him to 15 fish, weighing a total of 91lb.



Wednesday 20th.

Amazingly everyone made it up for breakfast, even after Gordon's celebratory drinks the night before. We headed back to Falcenville and this time further in to the complex to the Z Lake. We had been assured that this lake might give us more fish. The weather was definitely wetter and with a stronger wind too, but we were prepared with fishing brollies and hot drinks. It wasn't long before both Stuart and Vic had fish both around the 5lb mark. Gary and Rod followed shortly after and this marked the success of the week as every member had now caught fish. Vic, Stuart and Gary continued to catch fish and ironically Gordon the fish catcher from yesterday kept dry nets today, that's why they call it fishing not catching! With an hour or two to go Bryan gave out his secret bait to everyone, and these tutti-frutti pellets resulted in no less than 12 fish in the next hour, with Graham and Gary landing a number over 11lb, and Stuart and Vic catching four fish each for the day.

Thursday 21th.

Thursday saw us heading back to good old Passies in Lancing. The weather was definitely against us today and the rain was forecast for the afternoon. The members were not put off though and off they went to brave the weather if fish were in the offering. The fishing was slower though and only three of the members caught before we decided to head home to the dry and enjoy some fish and chips.

Friday 22th.

Off back to Passies and although we considered the smaller lake everyone still was hunting the big one. The ground was wet after a night of rain but the sun was looking good for the day. Fishing unfortunately seemed quite slow and the only one catching was Rod with a few good carp and some bream too. There was a moment when we thought that Stuart and Vic had both hooked into a big fish, but you guessed it, they'd just caught each other.

So all in all it was a great week with everyone catching fish. The weather was good, the fishing was relaxing and the company was excellent. Everyone agreed that the week had been brilliant. The members told us that the staff and volunteers who helped had been great and enabled them to have a successful and enjoyable week.

Awards.

We always give out awards for the week and this year had been valiantly contested. John Taylor got the biggest fish with the 16lb carp. Peter, the pike, Gadsby got the best fish with a 10½ lb pike. Stuart Boyz got the smallest fish with a bream that was just bigger than the hook. And finally Gordon Timmins got the biggest bag of 91lb in a day. We usually have an award for the best angler or best newcomer, but the group all did so well we couldn't decide on takers for this, and agreed it would go to the group.

Technique.

For those of you interested in how we get people with poor vision to be able to fish here is a basic answer. We use a running weight, or lead as it is called, on the line that allows the fish to pull line through it. When this line is pulled a beeper on the bank sounds the alarm and you simply pick up the rod and start reeling in line. The bait, bollies or pellets, nothing wriggly, is attached to a plastic stop that hangs below the hook and it's as simple as that. Each member has a volunteer or member of staff with them to help with landing fish, setting up, putting bait on and of course getting the tea. We only use barbless hooks so the hook slides out of the fish nice and easy and after weighing and a photo the fish is returned to swim another day.

Future.

The fresh water fishing week will return this year and word is there will be two weeks at the Brighton centre. There was also talk of the members getting together to start their own Blind Veterans UK fishing club. If this takes off we'll be sure to keep you up to date in the Review.



Picture: The happy anglers with our author Bryan Kilburn standing at the head of the table.

My story. By Marsden Hewings.

My name is Marsden Edward Meredith Hewings. I was born on 6th October 1931 in a village named Cwmbran in the Eastern Valleys of South Wales, the youngest of eleven. Times were very hard, no electric light, we had two oil lamps, no radio or television.

My father was a collier, and so you can imagine the hard work my mother had to do, no washing machine, with just a mangle and flat irons warming by the fireplace.

In 1937 my father and four brothers found themselves on the dole. I remember my father helped a neighbour put a shed up in his garden, the authorities found out and stopped his dole money, they said that he was working. My mother had to go to Grandma for two shillings to pay the rent.

Later in 1937 my father and one brother left the family home to work in Birmingham. After 12 months, my father returned home but my brother married and stayed in Birmingham.

I started school at St Dials School in the village of Cwmbran and after completing my basic education I left at 14 years old. It was a Friday afternoon, I went home and told my mother that I had finished school, she told me to go to the local factory and ask for a job. So, I went to the office, knocked on the door, a voice said, "Come in" and "What do you want?" I said that I was looking for a job. He replied, "Start Monday morning at 7 o'clock". I remained there until I was called up for the Army.

My instruction was to report to Aldershot where I was ordered to enlist into the Royal Army Service Corps. On the first day we sat down to a cooked dinner, after which the orderly officer came to the table, and asked if we had any complaints. The chap next to me said, yes sir, it is not enough. The Sergeant went into the cookhouse and brought a huge dinner and told the man to eat it. He waited there until he had eaten it all. I bet he didn't complain again. Ten weeks of training came to an end and the company moved to Taunton where we did a lot of drill to prepare for going abroad. A train took us to London where we changed to another station to catch a train to Southampton, it was there we boarded a troop ship, Empire Orwell. Port Said was our first stop, staying for

four hours and then on to Aden for another four hours, then on to Ceylon with another four hour stop. We finally arrived in Singapore after four weeks. After two more weeks of training at Neason we were put on a troop train for Taiping, it was a terrible journey which lasted three days. We were at Taiping for two weeks then on to Sungie Patani, attached to 1st 6th Gurkha Rifles, where they had boys company, training wing and Rifle men, also they had married families. I saw some terrible things there which I would never forget.

After my time in Malaya my return trip on-board the troop ship Empire Pride, a trip which took six weeks from Singapore to Liverpool. Bad memories of the trip back and forward in a hammock. I was finally demobbed and put on the Reserve. I was only back one week when my dad passed away.

I settled back home and started work with South Wales Electricity Board. I married and had a son, then when my wife died a few years later with cancer it broke my heart.

Life has had its tough times, some would say not a very bright life, but I thank the Lord for what I have had. It was about 12 years ago I was diagnosed with glaucoma, and underwent three operations to relieve the pressure at the back of my eyes. I lost the sight in my left eye and now have a cataract on my right eye. The specialist says that he dares not take it off.

A few years ago, my life was changed when I was told to join Blind Veterans UK. I went to the Llandudno centre where I was taught how to use the tablet and I have never looked back.

The kindness I've been shown is unbelievable, the aids that I have been given have been remarkable. So, I take my hat off to all who work at the Llandudno and Brighton centres.

God bless you all.

Ron Russell's anatomy quiz.

1. What punctuation mark can be found in the human body.
2. The Gland Zeiss lubricates which part of the body, the nostril hairs, moustache, or eyelashes.
3. Where in the human body is the nasolacrimal gland.
4. Where would you find the zygomatic bone.
5. Which part of the human body is affected by gout.
6. In which part of the body is the thyroid gland situated.
7. Where in the body is the gluteus maximus, is it the feet, the ears or the buttocks.
8. The term ginealls used specifically to describe what part of the body.
9. Where in the human body would you find an anvil.
10. The hypothalamus is part of the liver, true or false.
11. Where in the human body would you find the axilla.
12. Which is the largest organ in the body.
13. Where in the body would you find the haversian canals.

You can find the answers on page 47.

Ron Russell, our Quiz Master.

When I was informed by the surgeon that I had a 60/40 chance of being totally blind, I had lost the sight in my left eye due to an accident at work many years ago, I was devastated by the news and the odds even though Mr Green assured me they were in my favour. I began to think, 'What if? Will I see my kids again? My grandchildren? My great grandchildren? How will I be able to go fishing, do my woodwork, what if, what if'. The questions kept coming and coming. There seemed no end to them and worst of all no answers either.

A few weeks earlier I'd heard of Blind Veterans UK through a fishing buddy who explained all the who's, what's and where's. Me being a born sceptic thought, 'Yeah right, just someone else who wants money and I get zilch in return,' and I promptly forgot about it.

The following week at our club social, my buddy asked if I'd contacted Blind Veterans UK. I told him I hadn't and he proceeded to tell me the many things members did, such as abseiling, skiing, fishing and canoeing. He told me there was an indoor swimming pool at the Brighton centre and a sports hall for short mat bowls and archery. He went on, and on, and the more he told me, the more I was convinced.

The following day, a Friday in November, I rang the number he'd given, expecting some surly couldn't care less receptionist. How wrong I was as I was greeted by a bright, cheerful voice. After listening to my diatribe the young lady promised that she would inform membership who would send me an application form.

I had also received my copy of our Review magazine and read it from cover to cover, marvelling at the stories I read. I noted with interest there was a hatched, matched and despatched section and I was left amazed. However, I felt that there was something missing. I couldn't put my finger on it, so I read it through again. Bells were ringing in my head, lights flashed. Got it! I shouted. I know what's missing. The one article that's in almost every newspaper and magazine. Ron Boy, I said to myself, you need to contact the Editor and offer your expertise.

I scanned the magazine again and soon found what I was looking for, the Editor's phone number. I rang and Catherine Goodier answered. I explained that

I was a new member of Blind Veterans UK and that I had just read the Review and noticed something missing, something to tease the brain, to keep it active. There isn't a small quiz. Catherine told me there used to be a quiz, however, the guy who did it had since passed away and nobody could be found to take it on. I explained that I used to run pub quizzes and that I still have a few left, asking if she would like me to email her a couple and see how the response and reaction was.

I didn't just email a couple and see how the response and reaction was, I sent her enough for the year (2017) and part of 2018, and the rest as the saying goes is history.

May I say I hope you have as much fun trying to solve the quizzes as I did writing them.

I would also like to say how much I enjoyed my Introduction Week and how much pleasure I get from visits to the Brighton centre. I always look forward to my next visit, so much to do, so little time.

Response from the Editor:

Dear Ron,

Thank you so much for your wonderful quizzes as they are always great fun, even though I have yet to score 100 percent! From feedback I know how much the Review's readers and listeners enjoy them, so on behalf of everyone this is a very public thank you. Please keep them coming in 2018 and beyond as your quizzes are in demand!

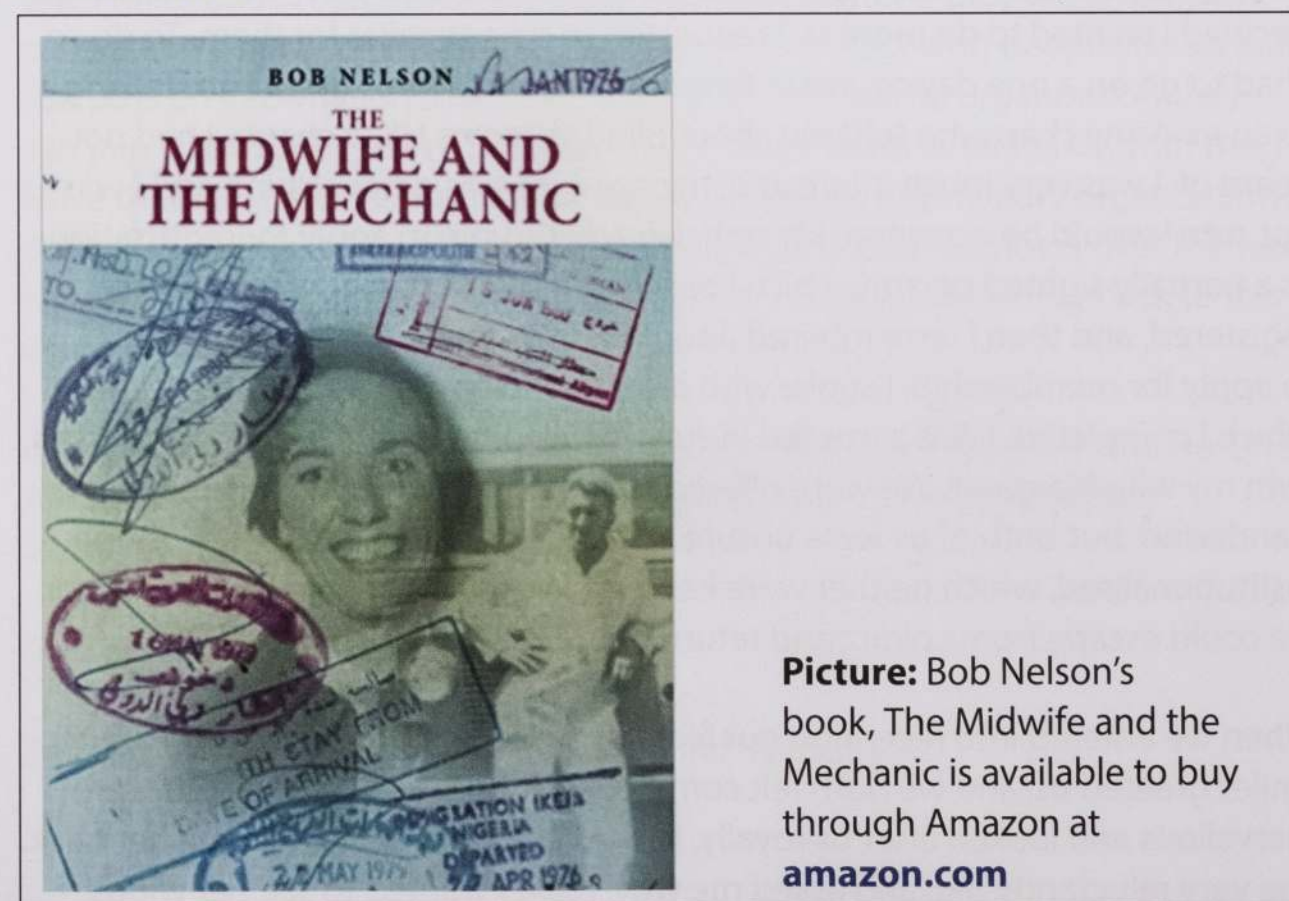
Ed.

Bob Nelson's book *The Midwife and the Mechanic*.

Bob Nelson was born in County Durham in 1935 to a family of coal miners. After finishing school, he worked as a telegram boy until 1953, when he was due for National Service. He signed on for an extra year in order to complete his motor vehicle mechanic apprenticeship in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, and, in 1956, at the age of 21, he found himself embarking on a long journey to a new life as a mechanic in Nyasaland (now Malawi) with five traveller's cheques for £2 each in his pocket.

He met his wife Gwyneth, a state registered nurse and midwife, in Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), in 1959 and, over the next 56 years, their work and travels took them from gold mines in Kenya to rebuilding a farmhouse in West Cork, Ireland. They also worked in Uganda, Nigeria, South Africa, and the Middle East, enjoying everything from scuba diving to paragliding in their spare time. They visited many exotic places like the snow-capped Rwenzoris in Western Uganda, crossed the Kalahari, the Namib and the Karoo deserts and visited the Skeleton Coast and the Wild Coast, among other places.

Bob's book, *The Midwife and the Mechanic*, is available to buy on Amazon at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) Bob became a member of Blind Veterans UK in April 2017.



Picture: Bob Nelson's book, *The Midwife and the Mechanic* is available to buy through Amazon at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

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 Or you can telephone Catherine on 020 7616 8367.

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter as I would like to urge my fellow members to increase awareness of Blind Veterans UK in their communities; I realise many already do this and have done so for many years. My name is Ted Davies, and I am a member volunteer for the charity. I was in the Royal Air Force for 22 years, joined in July 1956, and left in July 1978 with the rank of Sergeant. After leaving the service I went and worked in a national insurance brokers. I left after one year to form my own company, and I grew the business to nine offices in Shropshire and mid Wales, before I sold up and bought a brokerage in my home town of Wem, Shropshire. I retired in 2005, 2007, and finally retired in 2015 at 77 years old, due to my failing eyesight caused by macular degeneration.

I saw a flyer for the Macular Society and decided to enrol as a member. I then decided I wanted to do more so I requested to be a speaker for them. To do so I had to go on a one day course in Birmingham, while I was there I got talking to an ex-Army chap who told me about Blind Veterans UK, a charity I had not heard of. I was very much interested, my eyesight was deteriorating and I was not sure I would be accepted. My optician advised me to apply for registration as a partially sighted person, which I did. This took me some months to be registered, and then I remembered about Blind Veterans UK and decided to apply for membership. I spoke with a chap who sent an application form which I completed. I was accepted in July 2016, going on the induction course with my wife Margaret. We were offered to be collected from home to go to Llandudno, but both of us were unsure about going as we feared it might be institutionalised, which neither were keen on. We felt that if we went in our car we could escape from colditz and return home to safety!

When we entered into reception our fears proved to be groundless. Big smiles greeted us, and we both felt completely at home there. The staff were marvellous and looked after us royally. I asked Lisa from IT to show me her back. She very reluctantly did, and asked me why. I said I wanted to see her wings

as all the staff were angels. After the week at the Llandudno centre, we left for home, after a superb week of discovering all the good things about Blind Veterans UK, and how they could help me and the other members.

Going to the Llandudno centre made me think of how I could be of service to such a wonderful charity. I was asked what more could they do for me, but I was thinking what I could do for them. I was a speaker for the Macular Society so I thought why should I not be a speaker for Blind Veterans UK as well. I had already let Blind Veterans UK know that I wanted to be a volunteer, for which I was accepted. I then applied to be a speaker for them, again accepted. I have done to date three speaking presentations, manned the See&Hear Show in Shrewsbury, and assisted Blind Veterans UK to arrange two lunches for members in Birmingham and Shrewsbury. I have booked three more presentations in the coming months.

If we are to increase membership we each have an important part to play in this and I have recruited four new members. I do not go out much and you may ask how can I help. I answer that by saying we probably see more medical professionals than the Blind Veterans UK staff do in their day to day work. We all have appointments with consultants, opticians etc. Where ever I go I tell every one I meet about Blind Veterans UK. It does not matter if they are an eminent consultant, a nurse or a helper, as they come in contact with people like us and can pass on information to inform them of the wonderful organisation they can join. I also always carry a stock of flyers about Blind Veterans UK with me. I leave them at opticians, doctors' surgeries, hospitals and military organisation's clubs. If we all did some of this the target of 12,500 new members over the next ten years could be achieved. It really is up to us to give something back to this charity which has helped all of us.

If you would like posters or literature please contact Jack French in the No One Alone team at Blind Veterans UK on telephone 020 7616 7999 or email jack.french@blindveterans.org.uk

God bless you all.

Ted Davies, a very proud volunteer for Blind Veterans UK.

D-Day Dodgers.

A good friend of the Review Norman Ashton, who served in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946 in Algeria, Tunisia and Italy, sent in the D-Day Dodgers.

We're the D-Day Dodgers out in Italy
Always on the vino, always on the spree.
Eighth Army scroungers and their tanks
We live in Rome - among the Yanks.
We are the D-Day Dodgers, over here in Italy.

We landed at Salerno, a holiday with pay,
Jerry brought the band down to cheer us on our way
Showed us the sights and gave us tea,
We all sang songs, the beer was free.
We are the D-Day Dodgers, way out in Italy.

The Volturno and Cassino were taken in our stride
We didn't have to fight there. We just went for the ride.
Anzio and Sangro were all forlorn.
We did not do a thing from dusk to dawn.
For we are the D-Day Dodgers, over here in Italy.

On our way to Florence we had a lovely time.
We ran a bus to Rimini right through the Gothic Line.
On to Bologna we did go.
Then we went bathing in the Po.
For we are the D-Day Dodgers, over here in Italy.

Once we had a blue light that we were going home
Back to dear old Blighty, never more to roam.
Then somebody said in France you'll fight.
We said never mind, we'll just sit tight,
The windy D-Day Dodgers, out in sunny Italy.

When you look 'round the mountains, through the mud and rain
You'll find the crosses, some which bear no name.
Heartbreak, and toil and suffering gone
The boys beneath them slumber on

They were the D-Day Dodgers, who'll stay in Italy.

So listen all you people, over land and foam
Even though we've parted, our hearts are close to home.
When we return we hope you'll say
"You did your little bit, though far away
All of the D-Day Dodgers, way out there in Italy.

If you served in Italy and would like the Review to interview you please contact the editor, Catherine Goodier on telephone 020 7616 8367 or email revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk

Or please just get in touch if you would like to feature in the Review.

100th Anniversary Battlefield Tour of the Somme from 22nd July 2018.

We have 40 spaces available for a battlefield tour visiting the Somme and Ypres on the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War. You will arrive at Brighton or Llandudno centre on the 22nd July and travel to France via ferry ahead of a three day guided tour around the battlefields. Due to the popularity of the battlefield tour spaces are limited to members only. You will also be asked to share accommodation in France.

To book a place please call 01492 868700. Lines will open on Monday 19th February and lines close Tuesday 20th March 2018. There is no charge for this trip. To take part you will need a letter from your GP, a valid passport and an E111.

The Time Machine.

It was a great start to December when Lindsay Sharman and Laurence Owen, two stars of the theatre who received five Star reviews from critics for their adaptation of HG Wells classic, The Time Machine, performed it in the lounge at the Brighton centre.

Picture if you will the year 1959. It is the golden age of sci-fi. A mysterious man arrives at Radio Woking to present a thrilling musical adaptation of HG Wells' classic story. Then prepare yourself for show-stopping songs! Live sound effects! And a rip-roaring original score!

If you missed their sublime performance at the Brighton centre, they will perform at Greenwich Theatre on 27th February and at Wilton's Music Hall in White Chapel on 29th, 30th and 31st May. For further information visit website seabrights.com.thetimemachine

The Time Machine was performed by Laurence Owen & Lindsay Sharman. Written & Directed by Lindsay Sharman. Music by Laurence Owen and based on the book by HG Wells. Their performance at the Brighton centre was organised by Chris Kirk, Operations Manager, and Gary Norman, Deputy Transport Manager, for the enjoyment of the Brighton centre's Radio Play Society and members at the centre.



Picture: In the front are the sublime Lindsay Sharman and Laurence Owen with members of the Brighton centre's Radio Play Society and volunteers and staff.

Audio book of Came The Day, by Grenville Davies.

In Came The Day, Grenville Davies, a young man from the Welsh Valleys, relates his experiences when taken Prisoner of War at the beginning of WWII. Held in Stalag XXA and XXB POW Forced Labour Camps in Poland and Germany his story is retold from a diary he kept on scraps of paper obtained whilst in camp. Knowing the Germans were withholding Red Cross parcels containing food and provisions, being thoroughly demoralised through near starvation, hard work and cruelty, interspersed with occasional acts of kindness, simply increased the mental instability of many men, some of whom were driven to suicide. Came The Day tells how prisoners, with no hope of escaping, did their best to live off their wits and impede the German war effort to the best of their ability.

Eventually, riddled with lice, disease, and in a state of near collapse, as the allies began to advance closer to the German borders, late one evening they were removed from their camps and aimlessly marched for hundreds of miles in the most atrocious weather conditions imaginable, not knowing whether at any moment they would be abandoned or shot. In total the march lasted for 85 days with 20 rest periods, and covered approximately 870 miles. Grenville recalled as they sheltered in a Church, 'Suddenly, music from a violin could be heard and it appeared that the entire group of Russians joined in singing a song that has haunted me ever since and remained in my memory. Years later the same tune, The Carnival is Over, which I discovered was a Russian folk song, Volga, Volga Ruski, became Number One in the hit parade'. Later in his life Grenville returned to visit the places they marched through.

To borrow Grenville's audio book from Calibre please telephone 01296 432339 or visit website: calibre.org.uk We would like to thank Terry Bullingham for bringing this to our attention.



Picture: Grenville Davies.

By Grace Bittan.

This is the ballad of Erica McFidd.

Whose breast was too large and bottom too big. She went to a surgeon of dubious repute.

Who promised to operate and make her look cute.

The first op cost thousands and was not a success.

While the size was diminished it ended with lopsided breasts.

The right was a B cup and the left double D and after the swelling went down

Everyone could see, that there was a problem.

So back she went and asked the surgeon.

To what extent she could expect satisfaction.

He replied with a grin, "I can see the predicament you find yourself in. So I'll do the bum op and throw the breast in for free. Don't worry yourself, leave it entirely to me!"

The second procedure took 3lbs off her arse. When she woke up and felt, she smiled, "At last! Now I can feel really slim, I'm sure I look great." But there was one problem she didn't anticipate.

By removing the back padding, her stomach did protrude. She said, "I don't mean to complain, or sound very rude but now my left nipple is under my arm. I look six months pregnant and I'm losing my charm."

Both the third and fourth procedures went very bad.

Although her naval had gone and her stomach looked flat, he'd sorted the nipple but her armpits were lumpy.

Her arms were too fat, she was positively dumpy.

In fact there was nothing right about the original 'her' at all.

A top specialist was called in to advise.

He gave her some Botox and saw to her eyes.

He took fat off her legs and muscle from her arms, distributing it evenly to add to her charms.

He pulled back her scalp and lowered her ears. Everyone said that it all took off years.

When she looked in the mirror, whom did she see? Well, not herself, not the original 'Me'.

Her teeth were enamelled and her hair was dyed, with the aid of makeup the scars would hide.

He put in silicone implants so her breasts were huge. Her bottom had padding, so her cheeks could protrude. Then he prescribed hormones to balance it all.

But listen my friends, pride does come before fall!

She went back to the surgeon for one final op. But her heart gave out; it all came to a stop.

And on her headstone in some lonely graveyard it says, "Here lies the body of Erica McFidd. At least part of her lies here, the rest's in a bin, to tamper with nature is really a sin."

To learn this lesson is extremely hard, so be satisfied with how you look.

Or you'll end up like Erica, just a name in my book!

Accommodation charges at the Brighton and Llandudno centres.

We remain committed to providing the best quality and excellent level of service to you, but in order to do so, we employ an annual pricing review for our accommodation charges. We have included the new charges that will become effective from the 1st of April 2018. As the high and low season rates for holiday stays have been abolished there is now only one price all year round.

Clubs using the centres will be eligible for the accommodation discount in 2018, but this is subject to the previously agreed terms and conditions. The cost is also given should you wish to stay at Port Hall, which is a short walk from the Brighton centre.

Respite stays.

Guest type.	Weekly Nursing.	Daily Nursing.	Weekly Residential.	Daily Residential.
War blinded member (WB).	343	49	280	40
Non war blinded member (NWB).	567	81	427	61

Holiday.

Guest type.	Weekly.	Daily.
WB member.	231	33
NWB member.	301	43

Club Weeks.

Bowling, Archery, Computer, Amateur Radio, Fishing and GOAL Group.	Weekly.	Daily.
WB member.	210	30
NWB member	280	40

Port Hall. Brighton only.

	Weekly.	Daily.
Port Hall rate.	196	28
Club discount rate.	189	27

Children.	Weekly.	Daily.
5 to 16 years.	105	15

Permanent Residents (Brighton only).

Self Funders.	Weekly Nursing.	Daily Nursing.	Weekly Residential.	Daily Residential.
Perm WB.	350	50	287	41
Perm NWB.	616	88	518	74

Brighton and Hove Local Authority Funded Rates (TBC April 2018).

Weekly Nursing.	Daily Nursing.	Weekly Residential.	Daily Residential.
726	104	568	81

Intro Weeks are free for all members and their spouses, escort or carer.

Training Weeks are free for members and their spouses, escort or carer, but please see the grid above as this will depend on the type of stay that is booked.

Review Format changes.

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

If you opt to receive the Review in USB format please do remember that you must return it each month. A padded wallet is provided for this purpose, and as it is posted as Articles for the Blind, there is no need to add postage. Put the USB in the wallet, reverse the label so that it shows MRA Studios address in Dronfield, and post.

Reunion dates and venues for 2018.

Date	Reunion	Venue
Thursday 22nd March 2018	Middlesbrough Reunion	Jury's Inn Middlesbrough, Fry Street, Middlesbrough, TS1 1JH.
Friday 23rd March 2018	Edinburgh Reunion	Marriott Hotel, 111 Glasgow Road, Edinburgh, EH12 8NF.
Tuesday 10th April 2018	Central London	Royal Air Force Club, 128 Piccadilly, London, W1J 7PY.
Thursday 12th April 2018	Northern Ireland	Clayton Hotel Belfast, 22 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, BT2 8HS.
Wednesday 18th April 2018	Barrow Reunion	The Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Rd, Barrow-in-Furness, LA13 0PA
Thursday 19th April 2018	Brighton Reunion	American Express Stadium, Falmer Stadium, Village Way, Brighton BN1 9BL.
Wednesday 25th April 2018	Leeds Reunion	Thorpe Park Hotel, 1150 Century Way, Leeds, LS15 8ZB.
Thursday 26th April 2018	Swindon Reunion	The Wiltshire Hotel Golf & Leisure Club, Vastern Wharf, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4 7PB.
Wednesday 2nd May 2018	Eastbourne 1 Reunion	Hydro Hotel, Mount Rd, Eastbourne, BN20 7HZ.
Thursday 3rd May 2018	Derby Reunion	The Hallmark Hotel, Midland Road, Derby, Derbyshire, DE1 2SQ.
Wednesday 9th May 2018	Cardiff Reunion	Cardiff City Stadium, Leckwith Road, Leckwith, Cardiff, CF11 8AZ.
Monday 14th May 2018	Hook Reunion	Tylney Hall Hotel, Rotherwick, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 9AZ.
Thursday 17th May 2018	New Forest Reunion	New venue to be confirmed.

Tuesday 22nd May 2018	Blackpool Reunion	Village The Hotel Club, East Park Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 8LL
Thursday 31st May 2018	Surrey Reunion	Hilton Cobham, Seven Hills Rd, Cobham, KT11 1EW.
Wednesday 6th June 2018	Chorley Reunion	Shaw Hill Golf and Spa Hotel, Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley, Lancashire, PR6 7PP.
Thursday 7th June 2018	West Sussex Reunion	Hilton Avisford Park Hotel, Yapton Lane, Walberton, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0LS.
Thursday 14th June 2018	Eastbourne 2 Reunion	Hydro Hotel, Mount Rd, Eastbourne, BN20 7HZ.
Wednesday 20th June 2018	Portsmouth Reunion	Royal Naval Club & Royal Albert Yacht Club, 17 Pembroke Road, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 2NT.
Thursday 21st June 2018	Llandudno Reunion	Imperial Hotel, The Promenade, Llandudno, LL30 1AP.
Thursday 28th June 2018	Cambridge and Suffolk Reunion	Bedford Lodge Hotel and Spa, Bury Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7BX.
Wednesday 4th July 2018	Essex Reunion	The Lawn Conference & Banqueting, Hall Road, Rochford, Essex, SS4 1PL.
Thursday 5th July 2018	Bristol Reunion	Bristol City Stadium, Ashton Rd, Bristol, BS3 2EJ.
Thursday 12th July 2018	Exeter Reunion	Mercure Exeter Southgate Hotel, Southernhay E, Exeter, EX1 1QF.
Wednesday 18th July 2018	Liverpool Reunion	Liverpool Football Club, Anfield Road, Liverpool, L4 0TH.
Wednesday 1st August 2018	Manchester Reunion	Worsley Park Marriott Hotel & Country Club, Worsley Park, Worsley, Manchester M28 2QT.
Wednesday 15th August 2018	Newcastle Reunion	The County Hotel, Newcastle, Neville St, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DF.
Thursday 16th August 2018	Durham Reunion	Ramside Hall Hotel, Golf & Spa Carrville, Durham DH1 1TD.

Thursday 23rd August 2018	Inverness Reunion	Jurys Inn Inverness, Millburn Road, Inverness, IV2 3TR.
Thursday 6th September 2018	Kent Reunion	Chart Hills Golf Club, Weeks Lane, Biddenden, TN27 8JX.
Wednesday 26th September 2018	Birmingham Reunion	The Copthorne Hotel, Paradise Circus, Birmingham, B3 3HJ.
Thursday 27th September 2018	Norwich Reunion	Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett, Norwich, Norfolk, NR9 3DL.
Tuesday 2nd October 2018	Worcester Reunion	The Whitehouse Hotel, Foregate Street, Worcester, WR1 1EA.
Thursday 4th October 2018	Cornwall and Plymouth	Lanhydrock Hotel & Golf Club, Lanhydrock, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 5AQ.
Wednesday 10th October 2018	Sheffield Reunion	Copthorne Hotel Sheffield, Bramall Lane, Sheffield, S2 4SU.
Date to be confirmed	North London Reunion	New venue to be confirmed.
Date to be confirmed	Northamptonshire Reunion	Venue to be confirmed.



Picture: Trevor Berry who won a bottle of champagne at an ABBA evening as the best Bjorn. He had the audience on their feet and dancing on the tables with his ABBA renditions. Trevor gifted the bottle of champagne back to the club.

Photo: Paul Doyle Prescot Caring Companions.

How about a Nautical Excursion? By Chris Cardwell.

The East Anglian Sailing Trust has, for the last 25 years or so, provided the opportunity for members of Blind Veterans UK and other vision impaired people to experience sailing. It is run entirely by volunteers and thanks to their generosity we can enjoy the experience of sailing whilst also learning new skills. The yachts they use are privately owned and all different, ranging from approximately 25 to 45 foot in length and accommodating several people. A sighted crew accompany one or two vision impaired people on each vessel. They sail out of the Suffolk Yacht Harbour in Levington, near Ipswich.

I joined them in 2016 along with fellow member Brian Eldridge and we spent an invigorating and enjoyable day during which we realised how little we knew about sailing. Did our lack of skill and knowledge matter? Not in the slightest. The crew were welcoming, friendly, supportive and skilled.

The next opportunity to sail will be on one of their "Push the Boat Out Taster Days" which will run from Wednesday 16th May to Saturday 19th May 2018. If you would like to know more about sailing in Suffolk for the vision impaired then do contact the East Anglian Sailing Trust by telephone on 0333 088 3278 or email them at crusingsec@e-a-s-t.org.uk or visit their accessible website at east-anglian-sailing-trust.org.uk



Picture: Chris and Sue Cardwell at the sharp end.

Visiting a Blind Veterans UK Centre. Frequently Asked Questions.

Here's a list of frequently asked questions to help you plan your trip. Please have a read through if you're visiting the centre for training, introductory week, holiday or a themed week.

Question: Do I need to bring towels?

Answer: No, we supply towels for your room and separate towels for the swimming pool if you wish to use it (Brighton only).

Question: Do I need to bring toiletries?

Answer: We supply a small cake of soap and a small hairdryer in the room (or reception if staying at Llandudno), please bring everything else you need.

Question: Do you have a dispensary so I can refill my prescription?

Answer: No, we do not have the capacity to organise or dispense prescribed medication for any visitor to the centres, so please make sure you bring enough medication to last your entire stay. When you're in our care, we need to be fully aware of all medication that you are taking. For this reason, it's really important that you bring the accompanying prescription or the labelled box that has the label on from the pharmacy for us to add to our records in case of an emergency.

Question: I'm independent but are you able to provide assistance in one of the following areas:

To put my eye drops in. To put my tablets in the dosette box or take my medication. To escort me to the dining room or main lounge. To change a dressing during the week. To help put my socks on etc. Support to get up, washed or showered and dressed?

Answer: Of course we can support you with any of these, but it really helps if we know your needs before you arrive for your stay. If you require any form of assistance from care staff please tell the bookings team well in advance of your stay so that we can plan ahead and accurately advise you of the exact cost of your stay, which may include a small charge for any of the above.

Question: Do you have different types of rooms, suited to our preferences?

Answer: Yes, we do and our rooms come with different levels of care. Please talk through your needs and preferences with the bookings team when you arrange your stay. Please let us know if you need a bath, assisted bath, shower or wet room so we can make sure you're booked into the right room for you. If your circumstances change after your initial booking we'd be really grateful if you could let us know as soon as you can. We want to make sure we fully understand your needs before you arrive with us because if we need to increase the level of care you receive this may increase the cost.

Question: What happens when I first arrive?

Answer: You will be given your door card, and told which room you are staying in. If you are familiar with the building, you are welcome to go to the main lounge or straight to your room. A member of the welcome team will catch up with you to check you are happy with your room and answer any questions. If you are a new member or feel any uncertainty about finding your way around, a member of the welcome team will be happy to meet you in the reception area and explain where everything is. Your bags will be taken to your room by a member of staff.

Question: Can I use the gym during my stay at the centre?

Answer: If you plan to use the gym we ask you to complete a PARQ form before you come to stay. You can get the form from the Sport and Recreation instructors and you may need your GP to authorise that you're safe to use the gym.

Question: I'm visiting the centre for a week's training, when are my sessions?

Answer: You will be given a timetable in an accessible format to let you know when your sessions are. Trips and activities are mostly unavailable for this week due to training sessions but there will be some in house activities you can take part in. Please speak to your instructor on Monday if you have any queries on this. Your instructor will meet you in the lounge before your first session on Monday morning.

Question: I'm visiting the centre for a holiday, where can I find out about trips and activities?

Answer: Please sign up to trips and activities at the lounge desk in the main lounge.

Question: I am visiting the centre for a themed/activity week. What is going to happen this week?

Answer: A general description of what to expect on your theme week will be published in the Review supplement. Finalised details of the plans for the week will be sent to you by post three to four weeks in advance. Approximately a week before your stay a member of the Activities Team will telephone you to ensure you have received this, and to go through any necessary arrangements or requirements you may have. On the first morning of your stay a welcome meeting is held for all participants to ensure everyone is clear about the week's activities. Whilst we try to ensure that all our activities and trips are as accessible as possible it is important that we are made aware of any mobility or support needs that you may have; this is so we can adequately plan to make your themed week as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

Other information that may be useful. Please remember to bring your hearing aids and spare batteries. We use a loop system in the centres which may be of some use to you. Also please remember to bring glasses and magnifiers if needed.

Assistance getting around. The centres are large buildings and it is a few hundred yards walk from one end to the other. If you feel you may need assistance getting from place to place, please let us know in advance so we can support you.

Walking aids and mobility devices. If you regularly use wheel chairs, walking frames and walking sticks please bring them to the centre with you and let your driver know when they call. Please note, if you use an electric wheel chair or scooter you will need to contact the centre you are visiting to confirm that you are able to bring it as there may be some restrictions.

Personal information and next of kin details. If this has changed or is not up to date on our records we will need this information from you. Please make sure you bring the name and telephone number of an emergency contact. It is preferable that this is not the person accompanying you to the centre.

Veteran's Gateway.

The veterans on hand to help and ready to listen

Established to be the first point of contact for support, Veteran's Gateway is a 24 hour service that connect veterans, their families and their carers to the right organisations who can help on a range of issues including housing, finance, mental and physical health and employment. Anyone who served or did National Service can get in touch via phone, online chat and text service. Amongst the specially trained operators providing help and guidance are a number of veterans who are using their own knowledge to help others.

Callee Andrew is a Team Supervisor at Veteran's Gateway who joined the Royal Navy as the last class of Operator Mechanic when she was 17 years old. Callee says: "We are geared to help the veteran community with any issues they may have and direct them to the right place. Often, new issues and underlying problems come to light as we are chatting to veterans. We are here to give them the best options available, and many find it very re-assuring to speak to someone who knows about the military life".

Led by a consortium of military charities, Veteran's Gateway brings together over 30 organisations, both military and non-military, as referral partners including Blind Veterans UK. You can contact Veteran's Gateway on phone on 0808 802 1212, access their website at veteransgateway.org.uk or text 81212.



Picture: Callee Andrew.

Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

Theresa May reveals Britain's 2.5 million veterans are to be formally recognised with their own ID for the first time.

The MoD is working with the Department for Transport and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency on the design for the special driving licenses for veterans which will be rolled out in 2018. Veterans who don't drive will be issued with their own separate card that also has a large V on it to highlight their veteran status.

In a twofold purpose, the special IDs will give veterans immediate and easy access to specialist services, which already stretch from priority health care and housing to hundreds of retail discount offers. Secondly, they are intended to be a badge of honour for all ex-Royal Navy, Army and RAF personnel who have served their country. The move, which mirrors the US Veterans Affairs ID card, answers a long standing call by veterans, who often struggle to prove they have served without producing a pile of paperwork. It is the first time the state has ever issued official proof of identity for veterans despite generations making the sacrifice of service over the centuries. The ID was the brain child of Veterans Minister Tobias Ellwood. Tory MP Mr Ellwood explained: "As a former soldier, I am aware of the personal attachment with the service ID. Carried at all times, it becomes symbolic of the responsibility and there is a strange sense of loss when upon departing the Armed Forces, it is taken from you. I'm delighted this initiative, which sits in the Armed Forces Covenant, will help us all better recognise our veterans and their service to our country."

If you would like to run a marathon or half marathon.

The Sports & Rec Team at the Brighton centre have places for members who would like to run in the Brighton Marathon on 15th April, the London Marathon on 22nd April and the Royal Parks Half Marathon in London on 7th October. Don't worry if you don't have a guide to run or train with, as they will be able to arrange one. If you would like to sign up for any of these, please contact Russell Scullion, Sports & Rec Instructor on telephone 01273 391481 or you can email Russell at russell.scullion@blindveterans.org.uk

Please send your articles and letters to the Editor to the Review.

As you will have noticed the majority of the articles in this edition have been penned by members of Blind Veterans UK. Please do continue to send your articles and letters to the Editor, as it is your magazine. 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 or telephone 020 71616 8367.

Articles do not need to relate to your service days, they simply need to be something you feel to be of interest or beneficial to your fellow members. Perhaps you are a technical whizz and you can share your tips in the pages of the Review. Just as Grace Bittan did in 2017 with great success. Or perhaps like our Quiz Master Ron Russell you found an item in a national newspaper, ID cards for veterans, that you can send in to the Review to be shared in its pages. Or you may like to send a message to David Poyner through the Review as he has done so much to showcase blind archery. If you attend the 2018 Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph you may wish to write the report for the Review.

If you would like to be interviewed to feature in the Review please also contact Catherine Goodier. We look forward to reading the articles you send in and your letters to the Editor.

Answers to Ron Russell's Anatomy quiz from page 20.

1. A colon.
2. Nostril hairs.
3. In the eyes. It's the tear duct.
4. On your face. It's the cheekbone.
5. The toes (not the foot).
6. In the neck.
7. The buttocks.
8. The chin.
9. In the ear.
10. False. It's part of the brain.
11. In the armpits.
12. The skin.
13. In the bones.

Family News.

Congratulations to:

Birthdays:

Eric Corner who will celebrate his 102nd birthday on 15th February.

Jim Walters who will celebrate his 102nd birthday on 15th February.

Florence Morgan who will celebrate her 101st birthday on 8th February.

Owen Price who will celebrate his 101st birthday on 15th February.

Lily Jepson who will celebrate her 101st birthday on 23rd February.

John Humphrey who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 23rd February.

Anniversaries:

Platinum 70 years married.

Lionel & Beryl Whiteway of Wallasey, Merseyside on 10th February.

William & Abigail Sansom of Leicester, Leicestershire on 14th February.

Lewis & Vera Trinder of Aldershot, Hampshire on 14th February.

Geoff & Hilda Roberts of Colchester, Essex on 28th February.

Blue Sapphire 65 years married.

Peter & Audrey Edwick of Manningtree, Essex on 5th February.

Ernie & Joan Harrop of Dukinfield, Cheshire on 21st February.

Harold & Mildred Slack of Warrington, Cheshire on 21st February.

Louise & Den Redshaw of Waterlooville, Hampshire on 28th February.

Diamond Yellow 60 years married.

Roy & June Eames of Potters Bar, Hertfordshire on 1st February.

Peter & Maureen Grogan of Middlesbrough, Cleveland on 8th February.

Ralph & Maureen Baines of Chester Le Street, County Durham on 15th Feb.

Albert & Pat Davies of Southport, Merseyside on 15th February.

Derek & Helen Huckle of Leatherhead, Surrey on 15th February.

Derek & Marion Robinson of Weymouth, Dorset on 15th February.

Don & Vera Widdowfield of Epsom, Surrey on 22nd February.

45th wedding anniversary.

Gerald & Bet Gibson on 26th February.

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.

Kathleen 'Lily' Corless who died on 23rd November 2017. She was the widow of the late William Corless.

Janet Cruse who died on 1st January 2018 shortly before her 102nd birthday. She was the widow of the late John Cruse who was blinded in the Second World War during his service in the Royal Air Force.

Jean Girling who died on 1st September 2017. She was the widow of the late Ronald Girling.

Shirley 'Sue' Lea who died on 1st April 2017. She was the widow of the late John Lea.

Valerie Lile who died on 9th December 2017. She was the widow of the late Francis Lile.

Hazel McIntosh who died on 25th December 2017. She was the wife of John McIntosh.

Melba Morris who died on 30th September 2017. She was the wife of John Morris.

Maureen Sabel who died on 10th December 2017. She was the wife of Clive Sabel.

Vina Williams who died on 1st November 2017. She was the wife of Leonard Williams.

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.

Bryan Alexander of Hayling Island, Hampshire died on 6th January 2018, aged 79. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1956 to 1958.

Frederick 'Fred' Baldock of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 30th December 2017, aged 78. He served in the South Staffordshire Regiment in Germany and Wales from 1957 to 1960.

Peter Barrington of Norwich, Norfolk died on 24th December 2017, aged 89. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps in Palestine and Egypt from 1947 to 1949.

Michael Barthorp of St. Ouen, Jersey died on 5th January 2018, aged 90. From 1944 to 1968 he served in the Rifle Brigade and the Northamptonshire Regiment in the UK, Aden, Germany, Korea, Hong Kong and Cyprus, retiring as a Major.

Leonard Beacham of Scarborough, North Yorkshire died on 21st December 2017, aged 90. He served in the UK as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force from 1945 to 1948.

Constance 'Connie' Beattie of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire died on 1st January 2018, aged 88. She served in England as an Aircraftwoman in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force from 1947 to 1949.

Thomas 'Tommy' Brindley of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne And Wear died on 29th December 2017, aged 85. He served in Germany and England in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1953 to 1959.

Arnold Brown of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear died on 2nd January 2018, aged 97. He served in the Black Watch and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders from 1942 to 1946.

Alfred Butler of Solihull, West Midlands died on 1st July 2017, aged 86. He served in the Royal Engineers in Korea, Japan and Austria from 1949 to 1954, discharging as a Sapper.

Norman Cain of Gateshead, Tyne And Wear died on 12th December 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Engineers in Gibraltar from 1950 to 1955, discharging as a Corporal.

Norman Charlton of Barnsley, Yorkshire died on 28th December 2017, aged 93. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps in France, India and Burma from 1943 to 1947.

Mark Cowan of Buckley, Clwyd died on 1st January 2018, aged 89. He served in the Middle East in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1948.

Dennis Crouch of Mildenhall, Suffolk died on 27th December 2017, aged 90. He served in the Royal Artillery as a Gunner from 1945 to 1948.

Terence 'Tim' Dibbs of Southwark, London died on 24th December 2017, aged 85. He served in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry from 1951 to 1953, serving in Korea.

John Dix of Birmingham, West Midlands died on 24th December 2017, aged 90. From 1947 to 1954 he served as a Petty Officer First Class in the Royal Navy in the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

George Donaghy of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire died on 3rd December 2017, aged 92. He served as an AC2 in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Sidney 'Sid' Dougall of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne And Wear died on 4th January 2018, aged 79. He served as a Private in the Royal Artillery from 1956 to 1958 in Hong Kong, Wales and the Isle of Wight.

Leonard Dunn of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 24th December 2017, aged 95. He served as a Flying Officer in the Royal Air Force in the UK and Canada from 1940 to 1946.

Leslie 'Les' Eastwood of Ilford, Essex died on 3rd January 2018, aged 93. From 1943 to 1946 he served in the Royal Navy in Europe, France the Mediterranean and the Far East.

Henry Groom of Stourbridge, West Midlands died on 11th September 2017, aged 97. He served in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1936 to 1946 in Madagascar, India, East Africa and Burma, until demobbed as a Sergeant.

Reginald Harris of Downend, Bristol died on 26th November 2017, aged 97. He served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery in the UK, India and Burma from 1942 to 1946.

Peter Haskell of Haslemere, Surrey died on 3rd January 2018, aged 92. He served in the Irish Guards in Europe, France, Holland, Belgium and Germany from 1943 to 1947.

James Heath of Carnforth, Lancashire died on 27th December 2017, aged 90. From 1944 to 1947 he served as a Writer in the South Pacific in the Royal Navy.

Henry 'Harry' Henson of Durham, County Durham died on 18th December 2017, aged 91. He served in the Royal Air Force in the UK from 1944 to 1948, discharging as a Corporal.

Edwin 'Eddie' Hopkin of Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire died on 6th May 2017, aged 87. He served as a Craftsman in England in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1948 to 1959.

Brian Hopkins of Kings Lynn, Norfolk died on 29th December 2017, aged 82. From 1953 to 1961 he served as an Engineer Mechanic 1st Class in the Royal Navy in Korea, the Far East and Middle East.

Violet John of Glasgow, Lanarkshire died on 15th December 2017, aged 98. She served as a Corporal in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in England, Scotland, Italy and Egypt from 1943 to 1947.

Peter Jones of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died on 1st January 2018, aged 94. He served in the Royal Air Force in Burma and South East Asia from 1942 to 1946.

Barbara Kennett née Darlow of Walton On Thames, Surrey died on 1st January 2018, aged 99. She served as a Corporal in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in England, France and Germany from 1940 to 1949.

George Lewis of Aberystwyth, Dyfed died on 4th January 2018, aged 81. He served as a Corporal in Malaya and Germany in the Queen's Dragoon Guards from 1955 to 1958.

Philip Maberley of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 19th December 2017, aged 91. He served as a LAC in England in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1947.

Alan Manning of Golders Hill, London died on 17th December 2017, aged 86. In 1950 he served in the Royal Air Force in England as an Aircraftman 2nd Class.

James 'Jim' Martin of Inveraray, Argyll died on 13th December 2017, aged 84. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone from 1951 to 1959.

Leo McMahon of Cramlington, Northumberland died on 5th January 2018, aged 84. From 1955 to 1957 he served in the Royal Signals in Germany.

Richard Merrill of Lewes, East Sussex died on 1st December 2017, aged 88. He served in the Royal Engineers as a Lance Corporal in England and Gibraltar from 1947 to 1949.

Silas Morum of Cobham, Surrey died on 19th December 2017, aged 95. He served in England as an AC2 in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1943.

John Morris of Penarth, South Glamorgan died on 13th December 2017, aged 91. He served as a Sergeant in the Welsh Regiment in India and China from 1944 to 1945.

John Morrison of Grange Over Sands, Cumbria died on 11th December 2017, aged 95. He served as an AC1 in India, Burma and Japan in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1947.

Jack Ormerod of Burnley, Lancashire died on 24th December 2017, aged 94. He served in the Arctic in the Merchant Navy from 1943 to 1945.

Dennis 'Den' Parrish of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire died on 24th December 2017, aged 95. From 1941 to 1946 he served as a Flight Sergeant in the Royal Air Force in the UK, South Africa and Belgium.

Jeffrey Phipps of Gravesend, Kent died on 1st January 2017, aged 74. He served in the Royal Signals from 1963 to 1969.

Kenneth 'Ken' Potten of Littlehampton, West Sussex died on 26th December 2017, aged 90. He served in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Army Service Corps in the Middle East and Kenya from 1945 to 1951.

Frederick 'Fred' Quain of Gosport, Hampshire died on 1st January 2018, aged 85. He served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean, Australia, the Far East and Home Waters from 1949 to 1968.

Sydney Raine of Bishop Auckland, County Durham died on 29th December 2017, aged 92. He served in Europe in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1944 to 1948.

Geoffrey Redfern of Rottingdean, East Sussex died on 13th December 2017, aged 92. From 1943 he served in Northern Ireland, Egypt and Greece in the Royal Marines, Buffs, Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Signals, discharging as a Corporal in 1947.

Eric Sanders of Burton On Trent, Staffordshire died on 15th December 2017, aged 90. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt from 1945 to 1948.

Arthur Sarson of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 24th December 2017, aged 99. A Desert Rat, from 1939 to 1946 he served as a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the UK and North Africa.

John Sharp of Pill, Bristol died on 4th January 2018, aged 83. He served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy from 1949 to 1959. He was on a survey ship during the Hydrogen Bomb testing in the Pacific Ocean.

David Steel of Rochford, Essex died on 1st December 2017, aged 81. He served as a Driver in England in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1954 to 1960.

Roy Stewart of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 30th December 2017, aged 82. He served in Germany in the Royal Air Force as an SAC from 1953 to 1955.

Edward Tolan of Harrogate, North Yorkshire died on 2nd January 2018, aged 94. From 1941 to 1975 he served in the Royal Air Force, retiring as a Squadron Leader.

Michael 'Mike' Tullett of Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 7th January 2018, aged 81. From 1955 to 1961 he served in the Royal Sussex Regiment in the UK.

Donald Turton of Alfreton, Derbyshire died on 1st December 2017, aged 87. He served as an AC1 in Egypt in the Royal Air Force from 1949 to 1950.

William Valentine of Maidenhead, Berkshire died on 5th December 2017, aged 89. He served in the Royal Navy from 1946 to 1948.

James Walker of Stourport On Severn, Worcestershire died on 24th December 2017, aged 90. He served in the Middle East in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment from 1945 to 1948.

Kenneth 'Ken' Waugh of Newcastle Upon Tyne died on 31st December 2017, aged 95. He served in the Royal Air Force as an AC2 from 1942 to 1943.

Joseph 'Roy' Weighell of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire died on 9th January 2018, aged 97. From 1940 to 1946 he served in the Royal Artillery as a Gunner in the UK.

John Wilson of Haverhill, Suffolk died on 21st December 2017, aged 79. He served in the Royal Air Force for National Service.

