

June 2018

# Review

Blind Veterans UK | St Dunstan's since 1915





**Picture:** His Royal Highness Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex and Her Royal Highness Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex as they leave St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle on Saturday 19th May 2018. Good wishes from all at Blind Veterans UK. **Photo credit:** Neil Hall/UPI/PA Images.

# From the Chairman.

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

My mum was a great one for homespun wisdom. She died in 2015 but there is barely a day goes by without some familiar expression reminding me of her. As you would hope and expect she was a major influence on all our family and unsurprisingly I now find myself repeating many of her idioms to my children and grandchildren. As a youngster a lot of what she said was aimed at controlling my enthusiasm, exuberance and energy. You know the sort of thing: "Good things come to those that wait" when trying to instil a little patience. Or as I rampaged around the house, "You'll have someone's eye out with that". It didn't matter what I was wielding, a cutlass or some candyfloss, it always elicited the same warning. It was also invariably closely followed by the much more common, "Just you wait 'til your father gets home!" as we surveyed the wreckage on the sitting room floor.

Later these aphorisms tended to centre on the very reverse, as I moped around the house being a teenager. "Life is not a rehearsal, young man," was a familiar rejoinder to get me to commit to something. Or as I failed in yet another romantic endeavour, "There are plenty more fish in the sea". Although I was actually looking for a girl, not a haddock, it turns out there was one, Sue, who ended up being a keeper and still is after 45 years. You could call her my sole-mate (sorry about that).

This week I was alerted to something that brought back forcefully one of her sayings that I thankfully took to heart from the moment she first uttered it: "The world won't come to you" and the unspoken implication "You need to go to the world". In my case it was related to my ambition to fly, to be a pilot. She was telling me to get off my backside and do something about it because nobody else was going to magically make it happen. So I did.

The 'something' that brought it to mind was Catherine, our editor telling me about a stunning exploit that one of our members is embarking on in June. The person concerned is Steve 'Sparky' Sparkes, who has been a St Dunstaner since 1992. And the exploit is to take part in the Great Pacific Race 2018, rowing over 2,700 miles from California to Hawaii in Bojangles, a 24-foot-long purpose-built boat. If successful, rowing with Mick Dawson (a fellow fully sighted ex-marine

who already holds a world record for ocean rowing), Sparky will become the first vision impaired rower to cross the Pacific.

Catherine told me this: The pair met briefly in 1980 at Sparky's passing out — he was Kingsbadgeman — as Sparky trained with Mick's older brother. They both fought in the Falklands war when Sparky was given a field promotion on Mount Harriet (possibly the first field promotion since the Second World War). I thought you might be interested in what Mick said about the bond they share and why not having met since was no big deal. "Although we didn't meet for 37 years from 1980 until 2017, as Royal Marines we have a connection from before. Even in today's generation of Marines you could put them on a boat with either of us and we would function as a team. It just works. We speak the same language and we have the same standards and expectations and know how to deal with problems. It's conditioning that never goes away."

Now if that's not waiting for the world to come to you, I don't know what is. The pair are fundraising for Blind Veterans UK and the Royal Marines charity and anyone can support them at [www.cockleshell-pacific.com](http://www.cockleshell-pacific.com)

The other thing that struck me because of Sparky's story, was how much the ethos of Blind Veterans UK is about getting off one's backside and reawakening what we all had when we were active in the Services: the sense of self-worth, self-belief, self-reliance, self-confidence. As importantly, and despite all that 'self' stuff, it is crucially about not being alone, about being part of a community and succeeding within it. Clearly what Sparky is doing is right at the top end of this. But time and again I discover similar tales of how many of you are dealing with the blow that blindness has dealt you and finding new ways of remaining active and engaged — sometimes kindling interests that might never have happened had you not become part of the Blind Veterans UK family. If you ever wondered what encourages your Trustees to play the role they do, look no further than the inspiration that your endeavour gives us.

On the subject of Trustees, as we are recruiting for two new member Trustees details will follow should you wish to apply or propose a fellow member.

But back to my mum. Whenever we got together around the dinner table in later years, at some stage my mum would feel the need to make a list. Typically, it would be about the places we had lived as kids, or to name all our cousins

or some other thing related to our extended family. We would all egg her on, because when she did this, she would write her mental list with her finger on the tablecloth. More bizarrely, when she got something wrong, she would then cross it out with her finger as well. There's always a place for gentle teasing and banter in any family. And that's another thing I like about St Dunstan's — um — I mean Blind Veterans UK.



**Picture:** Mick Dawson and Sparky at the Brighton centre where the staff have held many events to raise money for their Great Pacific Race challenge.

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

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## **Member Trustees — Air Vice Marshal Paul Luker CB OBE AFC DL.**

Do you have what it takes to be a member Trustee of Blind Veterans UK? Have you previous experience that would benefit the Council and would you like to serve our organisation in this way?

You will probably know that we have, for a number of years now, had several member Trustees on the Council, as our constitution was revised in December 2011 to allow for three member Trustees. Colin Williamson, one of the member Trustees of Blind Veterans UK will continue as your President. He holds office ex-officio for as long as he remains President. The other two member Trustees are selected from the wider membership and will be appointed for a period of three years, following which they may be appointed for a further term of three years. No Trustee will hold office for more than two terms of three years unless specifically asked to do so by an 80% majority of the Council.

Our existing member Trustees Paul Palmer and Kerry Levins will step down in December of this year, so we are looking to fill those Trustee positions from our membership. Under the auspices of the Council, the Nominations Committee considers the suitability of all applications or nominations for people wishing to become Trustees and will put its recommendations forward to the Council for ratification. Colin as President and myself as Chairman form the Nomination Committee.

When member Trustees were first appointed, prior to the change of Constitution in 2000, there was a pool of approximately 400 war blinded St Dunstaners who were eligible. We now have thousands of members of Blind Veterans UK who are eligible and I am hoping that members will wish to either put themselves forward or nominate others who they feel would make good Trustees.

The role of member Trustees is very important to the Council as it ensures that the Council is kept in touch with the views, wishes and feelings of the members and other beneficiaries of Blind Veterans UK and that decisions will always be made with the best interests of beneficiaries in mind. This crucial role does entail a time commitment with meetings in London and an expectation that member Trustees will attend some Reunion lunches in an official capacity and other ad hoc charity events. Our Council meetings happen four times a year at Harcourt Street in London and it is hoped that Trustees would attend the

majority of these. In addition to the Council we have five Trustee committees that report to the Council on the various areas of the charity, so if you have background experience in finance, fundraising, corporate affairs or health and social care these would be valuable attributes for sitting on any of these committees which also meet up to four times a year. Papers for the council and committee meetings are sent out in advance and we make every effort to ensure that they are accessible for member Trustees. All reasonable travel expenses are refundable so that no Trustee is out of pocket for this voluntary work.

Any member wishing to nominate either themselves, or someone else, as a Trustee should first ensure that they have the consent of the person concerned to do so and should then write to or e-mail Nick Caplin, Chief Executive, who acts as Secretary to the Nominations sub-committee, with a brief description of any relevant experience and saying why they think they would make a good member Trustee of Blind Veteran's UK. If you are interested but would like to know more information please contact Sarah Gray, Executive Assistant to Nick Caplin who is happy to assist with any queries.

You can contact Nick Caplin on email [nick.caplin@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:nick.caplin@blindveterans.org.uk) or write to him at Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB, Blind Veterans UK, 12 - 14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD. You can contact Sarah Gray on telephone 020 7616 7913 or email her at [sarah.gray@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:sarah.gray@blindveterans.org.uk)

I know, from my own experience, that being a Trustee of this organisation is both interesting and enjoyable and I do hope that a number of you will want to contribute to the continuing development of the work that was started in 1915 by Sir Arthur Pearson and is now continuing to help more and more blind and vision impaired veterans.

With best wishes to you all.

Paul Luker,  
Chairman.

## Two men, a boat and 2,700 miles to row.

When Steve 'Sparky' Sparkes steps from the rowing boat Bojangles and onto the shores of Honolulu, Hawaii, he will enter into the record books as the first vision impaired person to have successfully completed the Great Pacific Race, rowing the 2,700 miles from Monterey Bay in California. From 2nd June the former Royal Marine Commando will row as part of Cockleshell Endeavour with Mick Dawson, who also a former Royal Marine Commando, is a professional sailor. Mick is the holder of a Guinness World Record for his successful crossing of the North Pacific with Chris Martin when they became the first team to row the Pacific between Japan and San Francisco.

Sparky and Mick's story is one of courage and determination that shows the bond between Royal Marines. In training with Mick's older brother Steve, in July 1980 when Marine Sparkes passed out as Kingsbadgeman of 141 Troop he was introduced to Mick, who was two weeks behind him in basic training. Mick joined their celebrations, but it would be 37 years before they met and shared another beer. In the years between 1980 and 2017, both men distinguished themselves as Royal Marines. Both fought in the Falklands war, when Marine Sparkes was given a field promotion to Corporal on Mount Harriet following the death of his friend and comrade, Lawrie Watts. It was the only field promotion to have been awarded since the Second World War. Following a diving incident for SBS selection that robbed him of most of his sight Sparky left the Royal Marines. Mick, who served for 11 years, left the Royal Marines to become a professional sailor, motivational speaker, author and film maker.

From 2nd June, with five other crews, they will compete in the Great Pacific Race as Cockleshell Endeavour to raise money and awareness for Blind Veterans UK and the Royal Marines charity. You can sponsor them at [www.cockleshell-pacific.com](http://www.cockleshell-pacific.com) If you would like to send them messages, or read their updates as they row, please go to [www.cockelshell-pacific.com](http://www.cockelshell-pacific.com) You can send free messages through the project website on their iridium phone and as Mick will celebrate his birthday on 12th June, his fourth on the Pacific, you can send a birthday message.

Speaking of why he became an ocean rower Mick Dawson said, "After the Royal Marines as I tried to navigate my way through Civvie Street I started to search for something extra that had meaning. I found that meaning while watching a

documentary about Reg Perrin, a Marine I'd joined with and served with. Reg was wounded in a hand grenade incident, and although partially blind and paralysed on one side of his body, he attempted to scale Mount McKinlay. As I watched Reg's attempt to scale the mountain I realised that if someone who was vision impaired and partially paralysed was doing something that was beyond 99% of the population, I had to get off my backside and do something that mattered. Initially I thought it was to climb Everest, as that seemed doable in a relatively short period of time. I then found out about the Atlantic rowing challenges, and as only a few dozen people had completed them, took up rowing. I was amazed at how fast the ocean becomes your home and living on land seems alien. It will be great to compete in the Great Pacific Race with Sparky and raise money for two important charities. Although we didn't meet for 37 years, as Royal Marines we have a connection from before. Even in today's generation of Marines you could put them in a boat with either of us and we would function as a team. It just works. We speak the same language, have the same standards and expectations and know how to deal with problems. It's conditioning that never goes away."



**Picture:** The ocean in front of Mick and Sparky as the sun rises ahead of a day training on Bojangles.

In 2001 Mick rowed the Atlantic from Tenerife to Barbados with his brother Steve. Then in 2003, as it hadn't been done before, he attempted a solo row from Japan to San Francisco. Within two weeks his boat had been smashed to pieces by three storms and he was forced to return to Japan, his boat in tatters. He returned the following year to again attempt a solo row from Japan to San Francisco. This time he had rowed two thirds of the way when he capsized in 50 foot waves when two storm system collided, and his boat was lost. Putting aside all thoughts of how easily the mighty ocean can take a life, he built a new boat, determined to conquer the seas that when angered are like Heaven and hell colliding. He secured work with the Atlantic rowing races and travelled to the island of La Gomera near Tenerife. On the first night of the race, when he was informed that one of the boats was in trouble 18 miles out to sea, Mick went out, rescued them and brought the boat and crew safely back to La Gomera. When one of the crew was too scared by the ordeal to continue with the race, Mick stepped in as a last minute replacement and they successfully rowed across the Atlantic to Antigua. In 2009 he returned to Japan with his new boat Bojangles, and with Chris Martin they rowed the 7,000 miles to San Francisco becoming the first to ever do that and earning a Guinness World Record. Mick didn't really consider rowing again until he met up with Sparky in 2017.

Continuing Sparky said, "After the incident that took most of my sight I left the Royal Marines and went to work in Malta as that's what bootnecks do, we take what is thrown at us and get on with life. I was really struggling with the sight loss when Blind Veterans UK contacted me. I returned to England for training at the Brighton centre and the rest is history, as thanks to their training they gave me back my life. With the skills they taught me I'm able to live independently and lead a full life and sight loss is something I can deal with. By competing with Mick in the Great Pacific Race I'm able to do something for a charity that has done so much for me.

"Mick isn't phased by my vision impairment as we know how to work together as a team. We're also at least 20 years older than the other crews and we don't see that as a challenge either! As Mick says in his motivational speeches, 'If you work hard and you concentrate there's no reason you can't fulfil your dreams'. We know the ocean could kill us if we get it wrong, but we've done everything possible to ensure that doesn't happen. I can't quite believe it's real and that D-Day is almost upon us. I think back to Mick's famous words from seven months ago when this began and he said, 'We'll have to hit the deck running'

and never have truer words been spoken as the time has flown by. Mick has worked countless hours to re-fit Bojangles and install equipment that I can use. He's done the admin, secured sponsors and the fundraising has been full on. To think we're now at the point when we'll start this challenge is incredible. Part of me is apprehensive, but mainly I'm excited about the whole adventure, as it's something completely new. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are Mick's playground, they're where he comes alive, and I'm excited to discover what it's all about and he assures me I'll soon forget about land and the ocean will become home. This is not anything I ever considered as I was ambushed into taking part. Mick lives close to Blind Veterans UK's training centre and at his local pub, the Coach House in Rottingdean, the landlord Darren had told him about me. As I'd completed Royal Marines training with Mick's brother, and he remembered me from the pass out parade of 1980, they hatched the plan for us to compete in the Great Pacific Race. The first I knew was when I walked into the pub and as they'd planned everything I had no choice but to say yes. If I'd known I would have gone into the pub across the road! Joking aside, Mick has worked tirelessly and as we've done everything we can to train for the race, we both just want to get to Monterey Bay and the June 2nd start."



**Picture:** During a training row on-board Bojangles Mick rows and Sparky stands as they pass the Brighton centre.

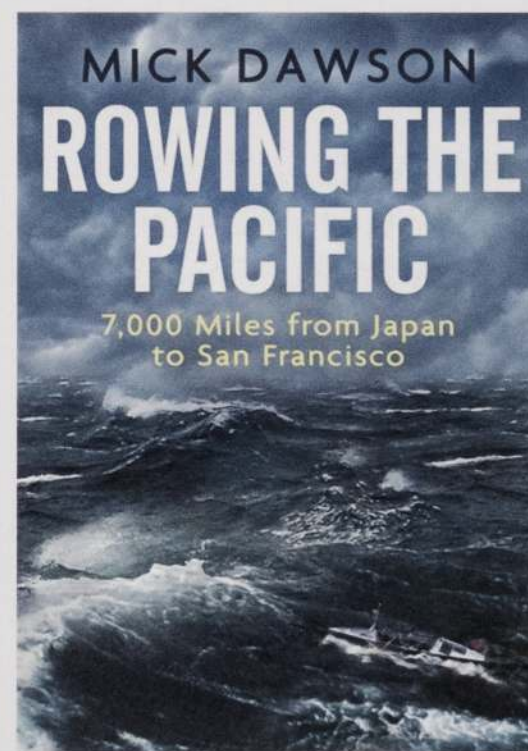
Speaking of their routine during the Great Pacific Race rowing veteran Mick, who will be the skipper said, "It should take us between 50 to 60 days, but if we're slower than we expect, we have provisions for three months. From Monterey Bay to Honolulu is 2,400 miles as the crow flies, but we'll probably row closer to 2,700 miles. Setting off from Monterey Bay at 1500 hours on Saturday 2nd June I expect it to be a slow ride as the weather is not reliably consistent blowing in one direction, and it will be difficult for the first ten days. That's where the real challenges will be, as we'll be hit by lows and probably stopped a few times, but that should be to our advantage, as the worse the weather the better we should do. I've had the most rowing experience in bad weather, so perversely we'll benefit if the weather is bad, but I'd rather it was nice all the way across. Then, providing the weather is predictable, which it never is, we should hit a point when it will become like a sleigh ride and when the trade winds kick in we should have consistent winds that take us to Hawaii. As it's a migratory route there should be whales and with the warm water plenty of sharks, and there will be a thousand other things I've never seen. That's the best thing, as every time you do this there's a chance of seeing something new, perhaps that no-one has ever seen before. I'll be amazed if within a week we're not taking pictures of Sparky petting whales."

Their boat Bojangles is fitted with autopilot, which means the rudder will self-steer and this will be a huge advantage for Sparky. Bojangles has the same navigational aids as an ocean going yacht and with three months food on-board that was supplied by Expedition Foods, and 1,400 teabags, they are totally self-sufficient. In Mick's words "It's a very compact survival orientated ocean going rowing boat." Rowing round the clock from Monterey Bay to Honolulu they will follow the bench mark routine of two hours on and two off, when one person rows for two hours while the other person sleeps. The only variation to that is the dog watch from the hours of six to eight, when they will row for one hour to ensure they don't get the same shift each day. Four times a day Mick will prepare their food on a high speed stove, and to ensure they do not become two solo rowers in the same boat they will take five minutes to eat their meals together and chat. Things will happen that they need to deal with, as they will have to go over the side to clean the bottom of the boat and fix anything that breaks. Mick will watch for sharks as Sparky cleans the bottom of the boat, but as Sparky can't do the same for Mick he'll have to be extra vigilant. Again, that has to fit in around their two hours on, two hours off system, but if it's the best way to get them to Hawaii in the fastest possible time, they may

potentially row together.

We will keep you updated with news of Sparky and Mick's progress in the Great Pacific Race but you can monitor their progress and keep in touch with them on their project website at [www.cockelshell-pacific.com](http://www.cockelshell-pacific.com) or sponsor them.

Sparky and Mick would like to thank Darren and Hayley of the Coach House in Rottingdean for acting as project HQ and holding many fundraising events. Sponsors Dragon Coin, founded by former Royal Marine Paul Moynan. Frank Considine at FC Media. Geoff Hall and his company 26. FDM global tunnelling experts. Brighton Tools and Fixings. Richard Pain, owner of the Wagon & Horses in Brighton. And the huge number of people who have crowdfunded them. And of course staff at the Brighton centre who organised fundraising events at the centre.



**Picture:** Mick Dawson's audio book of his adventures rowing the 7,000 miles from Japan to San Francisco.

Mick Dawson's book, Rowing the Pacific, 7,000 miles from Japan to San Francisco is available in audio format on Audible at [www.audible.co.uk](http://www.audible.co.uk) It is available in print from Amazon [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) and in store at Waterstones and all good bookshops. You can listen on audible as Mick speaks of overcoming perilous hurricanes, life-threatening electrical storms, 50 foot waves, near starvation and a fire that almost took their lives as Mick and Chris Martin set a new world record when they rowed 7,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean.

## Blind Veterans UK Calendar

### Activities from the Brighton centre in 2018.

#### June.

Archery Club 3rd to 9th. GOAL Group 11th to 15th.  
Homes & Gardens Week 24th to 30th.

#### July.

Paddle Around The Pier 7th & 8th. Race Week 15th to 21st.  
Music Week 22nd to 28th. Fishing Week 29th to 4th August.

#### August.

Widows' Week 12th to 18th. Activities Week 12th to 18th.  
Archery Club 19th to 25th. Adrenaline Weekend 31st to 3rd September.

#### September.

Driving Week 2nd to 8th. Fishing Week 9th to 15th.  
Dance Week 23rd to 29th. Amateur Radio Week 30th to 6th October.

#### 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.

#### June.

Shooting & Archery Week 10th. Potting and Planting Week 25th.

#### July.

Adventure Week 1st. Technology Week 8th. Hill Walking Week 29th.

#### August.

Strolling Week 6th. Amateur Radio Week 6th. Creative Crafts 13th.  
Water Week 19th.

#### September.

Recreation Taster Week 17th. Music Week 3rd. Sea Fishing Week 9th.  
Cycling Week 23rd.

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

For further information or to book your place please telephone: 01492 868700. If you have care needs please first speak with your Team Leader or Community Support Worker.

### Join the Amateur Radio Week at the Llandudno centre from 6th to the 13th August and at the Brighton centre from 30th September to 6th October 2018.

Would you like to become an amateur radio ham and communicate with people across the globe? Then please join us at the Llandudno centre from 6th to 13th August and at the Brighton centre from 30th September to 6th October, when we will also hold our AGM. During these weeks you will learn how to operate the systems and create networks with support from long standing members of the group. It's a great opportunity to make new friends and learn new skills with your fellow members.

For more information please contact Ray Peart, Chairman Blind Veteran UK's Amateur Radio Society on 01452 533839 or email:

[Raymond.Peart@btinternet.com](mailto:Raymond.Peart@btinternet.com)

To book for the Amateur Radio Week at the Llandudno centre please contact the Bookings Team on 01492 868700. To book for the Brighton centre Amateur Radio Week please contact the Brighton centre's bookings team on 01273 391500. If you have care needs, please contact your Community Support Worker. In 2019 they will meet at the Llandudno centre from 10th to 24th March 2019.



**Picture:** From right to left Ray Peart, Dick Hardy and Alistair McGoff take to the airwaves.



## Dr Renata Gomes launches partnership with Oxford University into circadian sleep patterns.



Chief Executive Nick Caplin signs the research collaboration agreement with Nigel Jones, Managing Director and COO of Circadian Therapeutics. Also pictured are Prof. Russell Foster and Prof. Aarti Jagannath, Founding Academic Directors, Circadian Therapeutics. Colin Williamson, Blind Veterans UK's President and Dr Renata Gomes, Head of Blind Veterans UK's Research and Innovation Department.

The research project is in collaboration with the University of Oxford and Circadian Therapeutics. Dr Renata Gomes and the team established the study as one of the major complaints from members relates to your irregular sleep patterns. You can listen to Renata in the Talking Review as she speaks of this important partnership.

Renata will contact everyone through the Review to find out if you would like to take part. If in the interim you would like to contact Renata and her team please email them at [research@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:research@blindveterans.org.uk) or telephone 020 7723 5021.

## Ron Russell's Quiz for songsters.

1. Who wrote and sang Candle in the Wind?
2. Tommy Steele sang a song about a little what?
3. Who sang the song Goldfinger in the film of the same name?
4. Who had a boomerang that wouldn't come back?
5. Who asked the postman to return to sender?
6. Who was the fastest milkman in the West?
7. Long haired lover from Liverpool was sung by whom?
8. Queen made history by doing what?
9. As he crossed the state line who shouted out "I got all pig iron!"
10. West Ham football fans sing which song?

**Answers on page 29.**

## 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](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) You can receive the Review in both print and audio. It is available as a large print magazine, in MP3CD, please note it is not an audio CD and you will need a Daisy player, your PC, or other specialist equipment to listen to it. It is also on USB, email or Braille, and on the Sonata National Talking Newspapers website. If you would like to listen on Sonata please email Catherine Goodier the editor and she will email the link to you. Her email is [revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk) 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.

## GOAL Group Adventures at Llandudno, April 2018. By John Brice.

Monday, 16th April, Llandudno Junction railway station. Mid-afternoon and eight members and two guide dogs of the GOAL Group assembled for this year's event at the Llandudno centre. First to arrive, Carole Sharpe with guide dog Layla, Diane Mountford and a new member to our events, Derek Thomas. Next were Graham Ward with guide dog Clyde and Lindy Elliott and, finally, another new member to our events, Rod Murchison. Already at the Llandudno centre was John Cantwell, who would welcome arrivals and lastly, myself, John Brice.

As the lift was out of action, Al, from the Rail Assistance Team, was kept busy taking luggage and members across the bridge to the exit, where they were despatched in taxis for the trip to the centre. After our evening meal we adjourned to the annexe atrium, where we had a briefing on the week's events, followed by a surprise party for Di, who had an important birthday on Friday, 13th. It seemed to be enjoyed by all and what better way to start the week?

Tuesday dawned grey, cloudy and showery. Undaunted, we headed down the drive to wait for the open top tour bus to Conwy, where we were to follow the Conwy Town trail through the beautiful, picturesque, UNESCO World Heritage site. On arrival, there was the obligatory cry of, "Coffee, coffee!" which became the standard chant for the event, even taking the place of 'cheese' for photos! It started to rain again, my Conwy Town trail notes got damp and the ink ran! Not to worry, Keith, our volunteer, knows the town and led us to Lancaster Square, where I picked up the trail. We saw the wet walls of Conwy Castle, the Town walls, Plas Mawr (Great Hall, more later), the Royal Cambrian Academy, Aberconwy House, Britain's smallest house and the many landmarks along the quay, all interspersed with lessening and lighter showers. During one of these we made a stop for coffee, conveniently passing the Methodist Church Hall where they were holding a coffee morning. We were made very welcome and had welcome cups of coffee and biscuits too. Rested and fortified, we continued our walk. It had stopped raining, but we decided to catch an earlier open top tour bus back to Llandudno Pier.

Arriving at Llandudno Pier, alas, we found the sun had not arrived, but it was dry, if rather windy, so we walked along the Promenade seeking a good place to

eat our packed lunches. Finding a large shelter everyone crowded in, resulting in a very cosy group for lunch. Lunch done, the cry for coffee rang out again, so we headed for our next venue, the Home Front Experience in New Street, having coffee on the way.

When we reached the Home Front Experience, we were greeted by Michele, who kindly took a group photo at the entrance (shown below). Adrian, the owner, had told me it was just a small collection of things from WWII that he had built up to show the life of civilians in Llandudno during the war. I don't think so, Adrian! Your museum is like a Tardis and has much to interest everyone. A reproduction of a front room, posters for theatre and cinema, plus such 'war' posters as 'Dig for Victory', reproductions of shop fronts, with all the authentic items on show (why was the KitKat wrapper coloured blue?), equipment and uniforms, tools and household items of the time, remember the tin bath or the home-made go-cart, I do! Plus, so much more, ably explained, described and demonstrated by Michele, who did a superb job of keeping us entertained, amused and learning for the whole duration of our visit. Brilliant! If anyone finds themselves in Llandudno with a couple of hours free, go and visit the Home Front Exhibition, you will not be disappointed. The blue wrapper on the KitKat is because it was covered in plain chocolate. Well, there was a war on! From there it was back to Llandudno Pier to catch the open top bus for the last



journey back to the bus stop by the centre and later, our evening meal.

Wednesday was cloudy with sunny intervals and a stiff breeze. We boarded the transport to Llandudno to catch the tram to the top of the Great Orme, where we were to meet Park Warden, Sion Dafis, who was to be our guide on a tour of the Great Orme. The tram was an experience, winding through the streets of Llandudno before climbing up the slopes of the Great Orme to the halfway station, where you get out, walk through the passage and take the next tram to the summit. On each half there are two trams going in opposite directions, as they did all those years ago when they were first built. The views of Llandudno and the bay are stunningly beautiful, especially in the sunlight. The sight of the rocks and hills as you continue to the summit show the wild ruggedness of the terrain, emphasised by the peace and stillness all around. Birds and birdsong surround you, crystal clear in the air until you reach the windier heights, but still able to be heard. Flowers, shrubs and gorse bushes dot the landscape, giving an ever-changing feast for your eyes and senses.

Meeting Sion at the visitor centre, we were given a safety briefing, a briefing on our route for the day and off we went. So much was done and seen that I cannot recollect the order in which they came. Suffice to say that we were told about the flora and fauna on the Great Orme, some of which you will not find elsewhere; the unique animals and birds to be seen and the calls of birds identified; we saw fossils from the Ice Age, learnt how, during the Ice Age, the glaciers scoured the soil from the Great Orme, leaving nothing but the limestone rocks and what has since grown in the earth and debris held in the ice deposited as the ice melted, including huge pieces of rock encased in the ice; the remains of ecclesiastical buildings, now being gradually claimed by the sea, that had once been a gift from the King to the local Bishop, the WWII gun emplacements, the Swallow Hole in the limestone pavement, (a huge limestone rock area, once flat, now eroded by acidic rain), that rain drains into creating chasms and caverns below and a great deal more. Around halfway, we stopped for lunch at the picnic site, with fantastic views over the sea, across the landscape and up to the summit, where we were to return to! After lunch and making sure we had left nothing behind, not even a crisp, we continued and saw the 'concrete road', which was the access to the gun emplacements, up to the 'limestone pavement' where the 'Swallow Hole' is. Four of us climbed into the hole for a photo session but I'm pleased to say we were not swallowed! We were now making our way back to the summit and summit café! Our



completion point for the tour. As it got steeper a few of us, myself included, found it quite challenging for a variety of reasons. Our volunteers did a stalwart job of guiding their charges up to the summit, whilst the remaining few plodded on, taking a break when needed and carrying-on again. Gradually the top came into view and we all gained the flat terrain, much, I am sure, to Sion's relief! I think most of us would have found the last bit a slight challenge, others more so but in true GOAL style, we met the challenge and conquered it, my congratulations to you all. Speaking to Sion, we have the option of a flatter, less challenging tour, to a different area of the Great Orme, for next year! Thanks for a brilliant tour, Sion.

After coffee and a break, we were ready to continue but our adventures did not stop there! Moving down to the visitor centre and tram station below we caught the 16.00 tram to meet the transport at 16.30. The trams on the top section carry more passengers than the lower one, so when we got to the halfway station we were asked to wait for the next tram, as they had a large party of foreign students to take down. We obliged, of course but I was concerned that the transport driver would not know why we were late. No problem, someone who went on the tram asked if he was waiting for a load of blind people and told him what had happened. So ended our days adventures on the Great Orme and, tired but elated, we returned to the centre for our evening meal and a well-deserved rest.

Thursday started sunny but not as hot as Wednesday. We boarded the transport to Conwy and set off to visit Plas Mawr, the Great Hall and Conwy Castle. Not a particularly imposing building from the outside, you could be forgiven for passing it by with little comment. Thick white walls with no windows at street level, a set of steps to the old, thick wooden doors, it is obviously old but reveals nothing of the splendour awaiting visitors inside. Built between 1576 to 1580 for Sir Robert Wynn, it is more of a fortified mansion than a great hall. In those times there was such poverty within Conwy that riots would happen, so although lavish internally one can understand the more austere exterior. Entered through an arch behind the front doors, the entrance originally served as a guardhouse, maintaining security and leading into a courtyard. In front of you are some steps, leading up and along to the front door. Another imposing wooden door, with the date 1576 and the coat of arms of Sir Robert above to impress his visitors and show his importance and wealth. Into a large room that is covered in brightly coloured plasterwork decorations, more coats of arms over the huge fireplace and windows everywhere. A true sign of the family's wealth, even windows in the rooms where the servants worked. On into the kitchen where bread was made weekly and placed into a suspended bread locker to keep rodents out, the pantry, the brewery for all the ale that was consumed, as the water was not safe. In a passage, a huge door leading in from the street, so that a horseman could enter and ride through a door opposite.

Another courtyard to the garden and outbuildings, giving access to the well. The Castle has a well, so do two other dwellings, this being the fourth and final well in Conwy! How's that for one-upmanship! Up the stairs to the family rooms, the dining room with its massive old table, the cloth wall-hangings, plasterwork on ceiling and walls and large chests and dressers. Sir Robert's bedroom, where even I would be unable to lie down. Apparently, in those days, they slept sitting up as they believed the devil would enter their body if they lay down! Then came the smaller steward's room, normally a poor relation, who would not cheat or betray the family. Next door was the Lady's bedroom, equally as well decorated and, like Sir Robert's, complete with a 16th century toilet! We did not see the attic, but I am sure that would have been just as interesting. Our guide, Irene, was a mine of information about the house, the Wynn's and life in that era, who regaled us with stories that are not suitable for reporting on life in the Court at London, the meaning of some of the plasterwork on the walls and a great deal more, certainly more than I can recall.

We had our lunch in the courtyard between the house and the guardroom, with hot drinks from the little office and shop. Plas Mawr is a real gem, hiding behind a plain front. Go and see for yourself and give yourself a treat.

From Plas Mawr we turned left, heading towards the Quay and Conwy Castle, our next port of call. The Castle is covered in scaffolding and plastic hessian type sheeting, as it undergoes restoration of the cement and limestone blocks of the outer walls. This will take about three months to complete, depending on what is found on closer inspection. We met our guide for the afternoon, Lorna, who escorted us to the entrance. The portcullis is no longer in place, but you can still see where it once fitted and the huge thick, wooden gates, alas, again no longer there but the place where the foot square beams would have been held in place are still there. Lorna took us through the Great Hall where the banquets would have been held, pointed out the cellars where all the provisions would have been stored and the remains of the Chapel, only identifiable by the remains of a window. On past the well, with its ninety-two-foot drop. Another of the four wells in Conwy, and into the Royal Apartments. Not a lot remains, other than the walls but one can see the outlines of rooms. Out into a courtyard and the entrance that would have been used by the King when arriving or departing the Castle, via the quay below. As the towers are being restored and renovated we could not access them as they had no hand-rails or ropes to guide us but on the return, we were able to get views of Telford's railway bridge and the bridge across the Conwy estuary. I wonder if they will still be there in a hundred years' time, let alone the age of the Castle! Having bid farewell to yet another invaluable, informative guide, we had time for a quick cuppa before making our way back to the pick-up point for the transport back to Llandudno.

That evening we had decided to forgo the evening meal and make our own arrangements to mark our event at Llandudno. We chose Carlo's, a cosy little Italian restaurant, with an extensive menu and reasonable prices. We had a pleasant couple of hours and enjoyed our meals

Friday, the sun shone and there was a pleasant breeze for our last day. Today we were going to visit the National Trust's Bodnant Gardens, a world renowned garden. The GOAL Group had never visited a garden before, world renowned or otherwise.

Arriving at Bodnant Gardens, we were met by our guide, Daphne, who is a volunteer for Blind Veterans UK, as well as Bodnant Gardens, how lucky can one be. A great deal of the pleasure we all experienced is down to the skills, knowledge and professionalism of Daphne. Her first question was to enquire about the sight levels of the group and upon finding that some were almost blind, but some had limited sight, Daphne went into dual commentary. One a detailed description of what we were seeing for the benefit of those with no or almost no sight and a 'point and see' for those with some sight, when Daphne would say, "for those of you who are able to see a little", as naturally and seamlessly as speaking English and then moving to French for two different groups. Daphne's skill and knowledge of vision impaired people is truly remarkable. Equally, her knowledge of the flora and fauna could not be faulted, or her knowledge of the gardens, the best places for views and photographs, and paths to avoid ensuring we were safe.



Keeping an appropriate pace for the group and checking at intervals, Daphne guided us around, ensuring we had breaks for refreshments at the bottom café and at the Dell, where we were fortunate enough to see the dipper, a shy river bird, perched on a rock. Something many people do not achieve but with

Daphne's assistance, some of us did. We saw poets, the family burial vaults and the pet's graveyard, in addition to some of us crossing the stepping stones across the small river. Moving upwards we saw where the weddings are held, what a beautiful venue on a nice sunny day! On to the tulip beds, the rockery and back through the garden centre to the pavilion with enough time for an ice cream before our transport arrived to take us back to Llandudno! All seemingly achieved with no effort at all. Brilliant day, Daphne, thanks.

Saturday and off to Llandudno Junction, onto our trains, a final greeting called, and it was the journey home. Another GOAL Group event over!

On behalf of the GOAL Group may I give our grateful thanks to all at the Llandudno centre, without whose unstinting co-operation and dedication we would not have had a successful event. To transport and our intrepid drivers, Pete and Andy, whose local knowledge and helpfulness made it great. To our brilliant volunteers, without whom we would not have functioned with such a high percentage of members needing guiding. Your skills at guiding and your friendliness was exemplary. To catering for ruining our waistlines and the many others, unseen, unsung, who contributed to making our stay memorable. Last and by no means least, Nicola Clough, whose willing, cheerful, dedicated, co-operation in being my 'gopher', oiling the cogs for me, made organising the event so easy, you're a star, Nicola! Our thanks to you all, we look forward to seeing you all next year. Unless we find the centre empty!

Members of Blind Veterans UK who wish to obtain further information about the GOAL Group should email or telephone any of the members below, who will be only too pleased to help:

John Brice [john.brice@tesco.net](mailto:john.brice@tesco.net) Tel: 01934 261783.

Chris Humphrey [chrisandhazel3@gmail.com](mailto:chrisandhazel3@gmail.com) Tel: 01603 701402.

Dave Hazelgrove [dhazelgrove@hotmail.com](mailto:dhazelgrove@hotmail.com) Tel: 01754 896617.

John Cantwell [john.cantwell1947@gmail.com](mailto:john.cantwell1947@gmail.com) Tel: 01295 273105.



**Picture:** David Poyner, Billy Baxter and Hugh Megarry walk to Rhos on Sea to enjoy their sporting hobby of fishing. **Photo by** Jane Hume Poyner.

## Trouting by touch. By Jock Scott.

Sir Arthur Pearson said: "We learn anew to work at St. Dunstan's and we also learn anew to play. I attach almost as much importance to the one as to the other, for normality is our goal, and to become once more a normal citizen under the disability of blindness requires that one should be able to do other things than make a satisfactory livelihood." As you learn anew to continue your hobbies, or learn new ones, we bring you an extract from *Trouting by Touch*, by Jock Scott that featured in the April 1918 Review.

The photograph of David Poyner, Billy Baxter and Hugh Megarry that was taken by Jane Hume Poyner at Rhos on Sea as they head out to fish bought to mind Jock's article. David had been an angler since the age of seven, and like Hugh and Billy after sight loss he had to re-learn how to continue. Jock wrote:

Among the community of St Dunstan's there are no doubt many who in the past have been anglers, more or less enthusiastic and more or less successful. Some of these may have felt that one of the greatest hardships of their present lot is that never again can they know the joy of the riverside which aforetime

meant so much to them. The things which a man does in his own time and for the recreation of his mind and body are more precious to him than the vocation which he follows because it is necessary for him to earn his living. Therefore the pursuits of one's leisure time are more hard to surrender. To 'chuck up' work is comparatively easy to most of us, to give up play is another story.

Angling, is admittedly an ideal recreation for the contemplative man. We of St Dunstan's are compelled by force of circumstances to be contemplative if we can. It is therefore a very hard thing if those of us who have the angling temperament are to be cut off altogether from indulging it. Experience has proved that the blind man may still angle in spite of his blindness, and what is more important, that he may catch fish.

A well loved stream: First of all it should be explained that the stream fished since the day when one qualified for St Dunstan's is one that was known and loved well in the days of old. It yields good baskets of trout and occasionally a salmon may be met with. Our concern, however, is with the lesser game of the stream, for the lordly salmon is beyond one's now limited powers. There are blind men who can catch salmon, but they are of the class of mighty hunters. The plucky trout is good enough for him who now addresses his fellows of the bright dark world. Every angler who has fished a stream fairly often has a very good picture in his mind of its main features, and when he can no longer see, if he will but walk warily at the outset he will soon know the banks and the pools and the bushes and trees. He will come to know these so thoroughly as to surprise any sighted spectators of his movements. Much of this knowledge will be bought by dire experience, by such accidents as falling into holes in the bank, catching trees and portions of one's clothing, and much losing of hooked fish. The golden rule by which the number of untoward happenings may be lessened, and by the observance of which confidence and proficiency may be most easily attained, is very clear and very short. It is 'go slow'. This applies to every department of the sport, from the tying on of flies and the fitting up of the rod onwards. Most of all it applies to the method of progressing along the bank. The blind angler will not cover nearly so much stream as his sighted compeer, but it is not the man who lashes most streams who catches most fish, and probably many who follow this advice will be surprised at the results that can be obtained from thorough and systematic fishing of the waters where, our experience tells us, fish must be — this article is continued in the Talking Review.

## Blind Veterans UK's Masonic Group. By W.Bro Clive Jones.

From Friday 27th till Monday 30th April, the Masonic group met at the Brighton centre for their annual weekend of fun, laughter and masonry. The weekend started with the usual meet and greet and getting to know those new members who attended for the first time. In total ten members of the group attended. Those in attendance were W.Bro's Clive Jones the group's Chairman and Secretary, Eric Jackson, Tom Broughton, Harry Murray, Stan Wolfe, Nick Chambers and Bro Ron Cross MBE. Also in attendance were three invaluable members of the group, who are our friends and sighted guides in W.Bro's Doug Gregor, Don Oliver and Dave Morgan.

Saturday morning was taken up by the group's Annual General Meeting, where obituaries were given of former members of the group who had sadly passed away since we last met. W.Bro Clive gave the eulogy for both W.Bro Billy Miller and Ken Barratt MBE. These two brethren will be sadly missed.

On Saturday afternoon, the group were guests of the Temple Lodge in Brighton, where they enjoyed their meeting and the food and wine afterwards. The group has formed great friendships over the past years and the gentle hum of laughter and conversation was very audible.

On Sunday the group held its annual luncheon where members of the Temple Lodge, Blind Veterans UK and the Province of Sussex attended. The Chairman Air Vice Marshal Paul Luker and his good lady Sue attended. Paul said, "Sue and I had a really relaxed and wholly enjoyable day on Sunday. For Sue it was rather special, as it was her first visit to the Brighton centre, so she got a very good impression of what we do as a charity. But for both of us it was a real pleasure to see yet another facet of blind veterans' life and meet people within and associated with the charity. I confess that I knew very little about Freemasonry before lunch. By the time lunch was over I knew a little more. However, the big takeaway for me was discovering how generous the Freemasons have been in supporting us — and how much more they do as well. In all it was a day really well spent, in the company of really nice people. Thank you for inviting us and for all you do in adding extra dimensions to the Blind Veterans UK community."

The Rt Worshipful Provincial Grand Master Rt.W.Bro Chris Lincon Moore and his good lady Veronica also attended along with W.Bro Graham Turner and his

good lady Lisa Dennis and their one week old son Ted.

In total 50 people sat down to dine. The meal was superb and a massive thank you must go to Sue Knevitt and her team from TNS for their commitment and professionalism. Several presentations were made by Clive of bullet shaped pens. These were made by W.Bro Bill Mooney, a fellow member of Blind Veterans UK. These pens had masonic symbols and two of the pens had the Royal Air Force crest on it as a personal gift to the Worshipful Master of the Temple lodge W.Bro Graham and the Chairman as they both served in the RAF.

A fantastic weekend was had by all.

If you are a Freemason and you wish to attend in April at the Brighton centre or in February at the Llandudno centre, please contact W.Bro Clive Jones on mobile 07854 800256 or email [dragoneye67@sky.com](mailto:dragoneye67@sky.com)

## Did you Serve with?

Joan Maxwell is keen to trace anyone she served with in the REME Medical Records Office in Leicestershire between 1939 to 1948. If you served with Joan please telephone Joanne Hart, Blind Veterans UK's Regional Administrator on 0151 259 7040 or email [joanne.hart@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:joanne.hart@blindveterans.org.uk) If Joanne isn't in the office please leave a message on her answer phone.

Rowland Edwards, who served with the 29th Armoured Brigade HQ 11th Armoured Division in Europe, is also keen to find people he served with during the Second World War. If you served with Rowland please telephone his sister, Cynthia Wheatley on 07980 970248 or email [wheatley007@btinternet.com](mailto:wheatley007@btinternet.com)

## Answers to Ron Russell's Songsters Quiz from page 17.

1. Elton John. 2. White Bull. 3. Shirley Bassey. 4. Charlie Drake. 5. Elvis Presley. 6. Ernie sung by Benny Hill. 7. Jimmy Osman. 8. They were the first group to make a video and enter into the Guinness Book of World Records. 9. Lonnie Donegan. 10. I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles.

## Blind Veterans UK President Colin Williamson answers the Review's 10 questions.

**1. Where was the most exciting place that you served and whom did you serve with?** During a period of civil unrest commonly referred to as 'The Troubles' in Belfast, Northern Ireland as an 18 year old in 1975 with 25 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery and again with the same regiment in 1977. Exciting times for a young, indestructible teenager!

**2. What's your favourite memory?** Taking my two daughters and my wife Brenda away on an exciting road trip to Switzerland when the girls were both young and I could still drive! We stopped in a campsite in France for a couple of nights and then drove down to Susten, a small village in the Valais region of the Swiss Alps where we booked into a campsite for ten days. It was beautiful, lovely sunny days and pitch black nights when we would sit outside the tent and have a BBQ and look at the stars in the clear night sky.

**3. How do you unwind?** I get rid of my frustrations and stresses in the gym most days and I've built a bar in my back garden complete with Sky TV, music and lighting system and all of the things that you'd find in your local, so it's a great place to relax on a weekend when I'm not working. I also like to travel and I've visited some amazing countries.

**4. What qualities do you admire in others?** Honesty, respect and kindness. Wasn't it Mark Twain who was credited with saying "Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see."

**5. What's your irrational fear?** Buzzing sounds in my ear during the night from flying insects! Mosquitoes are the worst, nasty little things and I can't see the little minxes to swat them!

**6. What makes you happy?** Seeing my two little grandsons, Leon aged five and Noah aged four. We have some great times playing together and socialising so that's when I'm most happy!

**7. What's the biggest challenge you've overcome as a blind veteran?** Accepting the fact that I can no longer do some of the things that I used to love; like riding my motorbike, going on driving holidays and playing squash and other sports. You can't let your sight loss define you and you must try and retain

your individuality and your uniqueness, it's what makes you who you are.

**8. What is the most useful piece of training or equipment?** Definitely learning to touch-type and use the software on my PC. My computer is my lifeline and I rely on my IT skills each and every day.

**9. What three things could you not live without?** My immediate family, Jack Daniels Tennessee Honey Bourbon and Indian curry!

**10. What's your favourite smell?** The scent of flowers, particularly Jasmine, has to be my favourite. One of my favourite walks when we are on holiday on the Greek island of Zakynthos is along the river that divides the two resorts of Alykes and Alykanas and the path is overhung with Jasmine trees; it's a beautiful walk made even better by the smells. But I must confess that I'm curiously addicted to the smell of nail polish remover!



**Picture:** Colin and Brenda Williamson at the first of three garden parties at Buckingham Palace hosted by Her Majesty The Queen, HRH The Duke of York and HRH The Countess of Wessex to recognise and reward people for their public service.

Colin became President of Blind Veterans UK in 2017 following the retirement of Ray Hazan OBE. Colin is the founder of Project Gemini, the transatlantic peer to peer support programme with the Blinded Veterans of America that now includes St Dunstan's South Africa, and many spin offs that help working age members of all three charities.



## Blind Veterans UK's Zip Wire Challenge. By Graham Forshaw.

For the weekend of 21st and 22nd April a group of serving Royal Marines set up the zip wire that ran from the top of the Brighton centre's five storey building — fine views of the sea and surrounding countryside — down to the grassy slopes above the coast road. On a sunny Sunday I arrived at the Brighton centre and checked in. Once I was kitted out I was given a few simple instructions. My group of members contained men aged 85, 83 and 80 years old and a lady recovering from cancer. The lift took us up four floors. We climbed the stairs to the fifth and emerged onto the flat roof of the building. We were told to sit on the parapet wall and wait whilst the Marines prepared for our departure. Far below our nearest and dearest waved and clicked their cameras. At this height we were sitting on top of our local world. Splendid views out to sea. Once the Marines had clipped us onto the wire each individual shuffled along the parapet wall, dropped off into a holding position just below the wall and then — released. The feeling as you slide into space is exhilarating. A long smooth descent — at speed! A great day for all who took part or watched the show. The Zip Wire Challenge raised £12,000 for Blind Veterans UK so well done to Rachel Chitty and her team at the Brighton centre and to everyone who took part. I enjoyed it so much I went back for a second go. Here's to next year!



**Picture:** A dramatic leap from the Brighton centre. **Photo** by Mark Pile.

## Nominate for the One Team Awards.

We are delighted to announce that nominations for Blind Veterans UK's One Team Awards will open on Monday 25th June! The One Team Awards recognise staff, volunteers and teams who have made an exceptional contribution to our charity. These awards were introduced last year and proved very popular with 144 nominations received and 33 team and individual awards given. As we really value your opinions if you know a person or team of staff or volunteers who have gone above and beyond the requirements of the job in the areas that demonstrate innovation, caring, trust and teamwork for Blind Veterans UK please do nominate them. That can of course include members who are on the staff or act as volunteers. If you require assistance to fill in the form please telephone Alice Dibblin on telephone 020 7616 8373 and she will fill it in with you. You can also go to our website [blindveterans.org.uk/nominate](http://blindveterans.org.uk/nominate) where you will find the form. All nominations, either via the website or by speaking with Alice Dibblin, must be completed by 25th July. Good luck nominating!



**Picture:** The winners of The One Team Awards in 2017 when staff and volunteers were recognised for their outstanding service to Blind Veterans UK. The photograph includes John and Elaine Cantwell who were recognised for their Banbury Lunch Club.

## Norman Perry 30th November 1919 to 16th April 2018. Memories of Dad, by Ian Perry.

Norman was a very quiet and private man and was not very forthcoming with past aspects of his life, even to the family, and therefore this account has been gleaned over many years, from him and various other sources.

Norman, was born on Sunday, 30th November 1919, in the home of his Aunt in May Street in Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire. Norman's Grandfather had been a very successful skipper of a sailing smack called The Rippling Wave and worked out of the port of Grimsby. Those of you who have been in Norman's room, will have seen a line drawing of The Rippling Wave. His parents were Arthur Clifford Perry and Ada Kate Bowering, she came from Salisbury and they had met when Arthur was in that area in the Army, they married in 1917, and eventually had a girl and two other boys — four children altogether.

Norman went to Elliston Street School in Cleethorpes and was in the Boys Brigade. On leaving school he was apprenticed to be a joiner at Grimsby Docks. We still have his tool chest and some of the tools in the shed at home.

His father had been an Artillery man in the First World War, in the era when they used horses to move the guns. There must have been a degree of encouragement to follow in the tradition because Norman enlisted in the local Territorial Artillery unit in 1936 and was a Gun Sergeant by the age of 18. When War was declared in 1939, as a member of the T. A., he was immediately called up and sent with the British Expeditionary Force to France and Belgium. He was there for some time and then, as they retreated, eventually evacuated through Dunkirk. Norman's story being that, unlike many other soldiers, who had to wade into the sea to get onto boats, he "Never got his feet wet". They had called for volunteers to be stretcher bearers to move the seriously injured onto a Hospital ship moored on the jetty. Norman, of course volunteered, carried out his orders and when he was surplus to requirements, wandered down the quay and talked his way onto another moored boat.

On his return to England he was sent to Bovington Army base and was eventually allocated to defend the south coast at Lulworth Cove and Lancing College. He practiced gun towing up Ditchling Beacon. In January 1941 he and his gun crew were sent to Egypt, by a very circuitous route, with refuelling

and provisioning stops on the way. All the men and equipment were sent up to Gourock on the Clyde. The men went on the requisitioned Cunard liner Scythia, the guns and ammunition loaded onto a separate ship and they sailed across the North Atlantic to the coast of Canada, down the eastern seaboard of America, across to Freetown in Sierra Leone, on to Cape Town in South Africa, round the Cape of Good Hope to Durban, then up the east coast of Africa, Straights of Yemen, Red Sea and disembarked at Port Taufic (now Port Suez) at the Southern end of the Suez Canal, a journey of some eleven weeks.



**Picture:** Sergeant Norman Perry.

When they arrived in Egypt there was a period of acclimatisation and training. My father had his photograph taken in Alexandria, which turned out to be the last one with his sight. Eventually, with other regiments they gathered just outside Cairo. These units went at speed to the Suez Canal and then crossed over a temporary wooden bridge that had been constructed over the waterway. They drove into the sandy wastes of Jordan then over the border to Iraq to secure an oil pipeline. Then there was a 700 mile journey in the direction of Damascus and Fallujah where there was heavy fighting against the Iraqi Army at various places on the way. Eventually, an Armistice was signed for the area on the 1st June 1941. The Troops proceeded further north-east into Syria and were involved in fighting in places that are in the news in recent times, Palmyra and Aleppo.

Norman was in the 60th Field Royal Artillery and they were incorporated into the 7th Armoured Division which became part of the 8th Army, becoming

involved in the North Africa campaign. They were hidden in the West Egyptian desert ready for the push to defeat Rommel's Afrika Korps. After about three weeks of no action and waiting around, on the 18th November 1941 they travelled west into Libya and eventually engaged the enemy, firstly Italian Tanks and then a few days later a Panzer Division in the battle for an airfield at Sidi — Rezegh. It was there that my father received his injuries, those of a piece of shrapnel entering one eye socket, going through the bridge of his nose, and severing the optic nerve of his other eye, together with a leg wound. The latter was partly his own fault because he had a small glass whisky bottle in his pocket, to celebrate my mother's 21st birthday on that day (22nd November). The glass went into his leg when he fell on the gun carriage and caused even more injuries.

Then information is scant, he was patched up in the field hospital and eventually sent to Alexandria by 6th December 1941. When he was well enough he was sent to Orabi hospital near Durban in South Africa. Mrs Collins was the newly appointed St Dunstan's representative in the area and Norman was her first client. So new to the role was she, that she said to my father, much later, that she had to look through the window of the ward to ascertain what horrific sight she might be facing.

Eventually he recovered sufficiently to start facing the future as a blind person in his early twenties. He was encouraged by the philosophy of St. Dunstan's to be independent and earn a living. The job possibilities were telephonist, cobbler or chicken farmer or if he had a school certificate he could be trained as a Physiotherapist. In his own inimitable style he weighed up the options. He did not have a school certificate, but thought, "It was war time who is going to check?" Probably the records buildings might have been bombed. So he chose Physiotherapy. He was transferred to St Dunstan's Tembani, near Cape Town and started his training at the University.

He would not return to England until all his visible wounds had healed and he looked presentable. During this time he had contacted my mother who was his sweetheart before the war and gave her the option of not continuing the relationship. But her telegram back to him was that she would stick by him "like glue". He returned to England eventually and continued his training with St Dunstan's, at first at Church Stretton, where he was egged on, by others, to ride a bicycle down the High Street. Eventually he went to the RNIB Physiotherapy School, London for final training.

My parents were married at Old Clee Church in Cleethorpes on 27th December 1943 and they moved to Bristol where my father's first job was Physiotherapist to the British Aircraft Corporation at Filton, in the days when firms looked after the medical needs of their employees, that is pre NHS. Eventually, my mother became pregnant and with the prospect of a new baby they moved back to Grimsby. Father had obtained a position at the local hospital and eventually was promoted to Superintendent Physiotherapist over the whole department. He retired in 1979 when he could not face the prospect of moving to a brand new Hospital building and having to learn his way around.



**Picture:** Norman Perry with a young patient who stayed as a patient of Norman's until old age. Photo by David Castleton.

In my early years all five of us lived in a semi detached house in town, then my parents had the urge to have space and when I was ten we moved to a bungalow in a rural village, which had an acre of land and the family took to the good life and self sufficiency. My father never had private patients because he said he did not want to be disturbed from his gardening by someone knocking at the door with a problem and having to go in doors, wash and change to treat them. People would be amazed to see Norman out in the garden planting potatoes in the dark; to aid him he had a string that had knots at the required distance apart. As with all aspects of his life he would adapt, improvise and do things in a way as near as possible to a sighted person.

He frequently went to the Brighton centre for Physio courses and other events. He would sometimes travel independently, mother putting him on the train at

Grimsby, a driver from London St. D's meeting him at Kings Cross and transporting him across to Victoria, putting him on the Brighton train, then he was driven to Ovingdean. But on one occasion the London driver was late, so father decided to walk to the platform gate on his own, and fell on to the line, he was uninjured — just exercising his independent streak again!

St Dunstan's was male only accommodation in those years, so my mother, with the rest of the wives had to stay out of house in hotels, the White Horse, Rottingdean; The Ocean, Saltdean, but for a period of time Norman's mother and father and aunt lived in Beaconsfield Villas in Brighton and then I would come and stay as well. So we have had a long and very pleasant association with the town, now city of Brighton.

Having been trained in the Army and now a Physiotherapist, Norman was always keen on physical activities and would "have a go" at anything as long as he was fairly independent. There were always conditions to the things that he would do, he had to do it nearly the same as a sighted person with the minimum of adaptation. He would not be pulled or manoeuvred around, so that is why he did not attempt golf because it meant he was too dependent on other people lining him up and choosing the clubs. Archery gave him freedom, setting up and assistance was only allowed for the first six sighters and then it was up to him, receiving only information as to the result of the last arrow, then he could alter his body position for the next release. Subsequently he started about spreading the word and cajoling people to set up the Archery Club at St. D's and then the world was his oyster – many competitions in England, Wales, Cyprus, France, Germany and some special shoots at Buckingham Palace and the Moat of the Tower of London.



His second passion was the sea. When my wife stopped crewing for me in racing dinghies, Norman stepped into the breach and we had some great times and moderate success, that is some trophies. Eventually, I decided to give up sailing small boats and joined the crew of a 45 foot ocean racer. On some occasions Norman came with us for a trip. I have received a message, since my father's death, from a fellow crew member who was amazed to be told by the Skipper when we were out at sea that he was totally blind and had just helmed us out of the River Humber. Association with that boat ceased and when Norman came to Ovingdean, Jackie Greer brought a leaflet to his attention about the Jubilee Sailing Trust, which had two square riggers suitable for all people with disabilities. So he had the urge to have a go and I was recruited to go as escort, sailing from Nice to Sardinia then on to Monaco, where I had one of my many, many embarrassing moments with him. On the Sunday that we were in port, it was European day of Culture, when public buildings were open to the public. We went to the Law Courts and then on to the Prime Minister's house, where I described the surroundings. No audio guides for Norman ever! In the dining room I mentioned that there were cane seats around the table. Then comes the request 'could he have a look/feel'. There were no barriers so we sidled across, and I just expected him to feel the top, no, Norman lifts it up, turns it over and examines how it is made from the underside. This was when he was in his split cane weaving period, renowned for bed heads, settees and a complicated oval chair back, which we cherish at home.

Trips on Tenacious then became a regular feature of holidays, three times to the Caribbean, also a trip from Gibraltar to Grand Canaria.

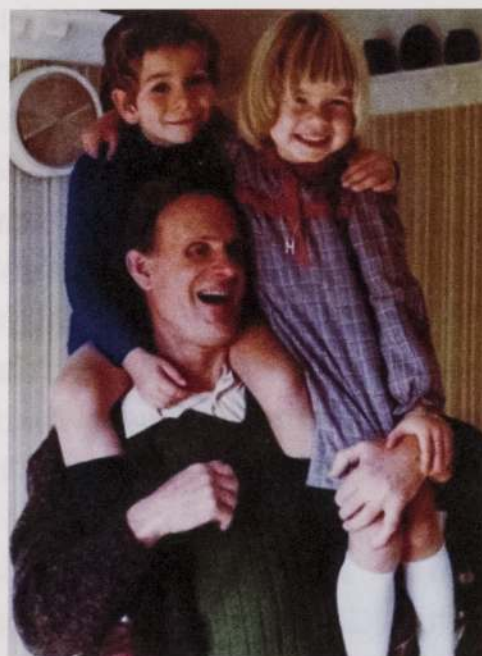
Probably, one of the lesser known facts is that Norman was a Freemason and served in every position in his Lodge in Cleethorpes, including Worshipful Master and eventually received Provincial Honours. All brethren, who saw him in the Lodge were full of admiration for the confident manner with which he would walk around the room and performed his ritual. He resigned from Masonry before he came to Brighton and never became involved again.

His move to the Brighton centre was planned in his head many years before and he organised everything, the disposal of the bungalow, the room he wanted, the transport, etc. When he moved he was asked by my cousin, why. The reply was that he had come here to "live" because at home he was waiting to die. He lived next door to us, but he felt beholden to Deirdre and I for doing

the shopping or if he wanted a haircut, asking when we could take him into Grimsby. Whereas here he could ask for a CA to take him anywhere, when he wanted. So he took to being a Brightonian, joining the Volks Electric Railway Society to listen to historical talks, for example, about the spider railway, then passing on this information to us when we visited.

I eventually trained as an Art Teacher. I think I can give my father's situation credit for making me more visually aware, by taking him around and doing a running commentary of our surroundings etc.

He was a loving and proud father, grandfather and great grandfather.



**Picture:** Ian with his mum and dad and family dog.

And Norman with his grandchildren Helen and Adrian.

And, finally, I would like to thank from the bottom of my heart all the staff of St Dunstan's Blind Veterans UK, throughout the years for all their hard work, dedication, caring, advice and enthusiasm to both Norman and our whole family — we are most grateful and appreciative for everything.

So, Norman's life has been full and meaningful, despite his 76 years with no vision. All this was achieved by the help of this wonderful organisation, his own thoughtful planning, awkwardness, setting his own requirements from those around him and dogged determination — to virtually the very end. His legacy has hopefully encouraged and inspired those he has met in all walks of his life.

We salute him for this.

**On the cover:** Mick Dawson of Cockleshell Endeavour, and Skipper of Bojangles, is shown rowing past the Brighton centre.

**Back page:** Steve 'Sparky' Sparkes is shown on Bojangles as he and Mick pass the Brighton centre. Together they will compete in the 2018 Great Pacific Race as Cockleshell Endeavour. Pages 8 to 13.



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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 bookings 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 Review Editor, Blind Veterans UK, 12 - 14 Harcourt Street, London W1H 4HD.

# Noticeboard.

Dates for your diary and useful information.

## RNIB's Talking Book Service.

Our second Chairman Lord Fraser of Lonsdale was a founder of the Talking Books service that celebrated its 80th Anniversary in 2016. If you haven't already done so you can now register to receive free Talking Books from the RNIB. There are thousands of titles to choose from that you can listen to on MP3CD, USB or digital download. To sign up to Talking Books and select from 24,000 titles, telephone the RNIB's helpline on 0303 123 9999 or email [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk) or go to [www.rnib.library.org.uk](http://www.rnib.library.org.uk)

This month's Talking Review includes a podcast on the history of the Talking Books by Robert Kirkwood of RNIB's Insight Radio. The report includes a historic interview with Lord Fraser of Lonsdale and a recent interview with our Archivist Rob Baker. It is well worth listening to.

## Pamper week Monday 17th to Friday 21st September at the Brighton centre.

The pamper week in the Brighton centre has been running for a few years now. The week was started by blind veteran Iain Millard who is the therapist at Ovingdean as a way of giving back to the charity. The week started as a themed week with the proceeds of any treatments being donated to fundraising. Two years ago it was changed from a themed week to a fundraising week so that more people could take advantage of the treatments on offer.

There are a number of our members and volunteers who are qualified therapists who also join us for the week offering treatments such as Indian head massages, head, shoulder and leg massages, balabachi or a facial to name but a few.

If you want to join us for the week you just need to book in as a holiday maker. During your week you can still take full advantage of the facilities at the centre but with the added benefit of (for a small charge) being pampered for the week. Telephone bookings on 01273 391500.

# Family News.

Congratulations to:



**Picture:** Congratulations to the happy couple, Angie Blake and Iain Millard, who were married on the 3rd of May in Gibraltar. You will know them from the Brighton centre where Angie is the cashier and Iain a therapist who delivers massages, reflexology and many other treatments. His pamper week will take place at the Brighton centre in September.

Do be sure to congratulate them when you visit the Brighton centre.

## Birthdays:

**Emlyn Morgan** who will celebrate his 104th birthday on 10th June.

**Alan Coburn** who will celebrate his 102nd birthday on 7th June.

**Eleanor Wales** who will celebrate her 102nd birthday on 21st June.

**George Haigh** who will celebrate his 102nd birthday on 29th June.  
**George Walter** who will celebrate his 101st birthday on 30th June.  
**Dennis Callaghan** who will celebrate his 100th birthday, on 8th June.  
**George Johnston** who will celebrate his 100th birthday, on 9th June.  
**John Powell** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 9th June.  
**Rupert Smith** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 10th June.  
**David Hughes** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 10th June.  
**James Lane** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 20th June.  
**George Dean** who will celebrate his 100th birthday on 27th June.

**Anniversaries:**

**Diamond 75 years.**

**Ronald & Audrey Marsden** of Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire.

**Platinum 70 years married.**

**Grahame & Joan Bridges** of Clevedon, North Somerset on 19th June.

**George Worden** of Seaham, County Durham on 26th June.

**Blue Sapphire 65 years married.**

**Harold & Lillias Welton** of Poole, Dorset on 1st June.

**John Grout** of Harleston, Norfolk on 6th June.

**Jim & Helen Archibald** of Pathhead, Midlothian on 12th June.

**William & Marjorie Fearnley** of Wirral, Merseyside on 20th June.

**Bert & June Hallett** of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire on 20th June.

**Brian & Maureen Burrows** of Ellesmere Port, Cheshire on 29th June.

**Diamond Yellow 60 years married.**

**Jim & Pat Baker** of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire on 7th June.

**Joan & Brian Braybrooke** of Wilmslow, Cheshire on 20th June.

**Pat & Glenys Halpin** of Luton, Bedfordshire on 7th June.

**Charles & Leona Pither** of Bracknell, Berkshire on 24th June.

**Alan & Marjorie Parr** of Ormskirk, Lancashire on 28th June.

**Michael & June Moore** of Matlock, Derbyshire on 30th June.

**Golden 50 Years married.**

**Edmund & Anne Wharmby** of Nottingham, Notts on 1st June.

**Donald & Hazel Maclean** of Broxburn, West Lothian on 8th June.

**Ruby 40 years married.**

**David & Mary Fyfe** of Johnstone, Renfrewshire on 8th June.

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

**Brenda Beeson** who died on 1st May 2018. She was the wife of Reginald Beeson.

**Peggy Blockley** who died on 30th April 2018. She was the widow of Charles Blockley, a war blinded member of the charity who served in the Far East during WWII.

**Gwennie Charlton** who died on 17th March 2018. She was the widow of the late Norman Charlton.

**Gladys Clayton** who died on 30th November 2017. She was the wife of Percy Clayton.

**Margaret Davies** who died on 1st December 2017. She was the wife of Ronald Davies.

**Frank Dewhurst** who died on 7th April 2018. He was the widower of the late Doris Dewhurst.

**Betty Freeman** who died on 1st May 2018. She was the widow of the late Dennis Freeman, a war blinded member of the charity.

**Anne Hassack** who died on 1st April 2018. She was the wife of William Hassack.

**Betty 'Bet' Llewellyn** who died on 7th April 2018. She was the wife of Alfred Llewellyn.

**Olive Meakin** who died on 1st December 2017. She was the wife of Spencer Meakin.

**Doreen Simcock** who died on 1st October 2017. She was the wife of John Simcock.

**June Williamson** who died on 1st April 2018. She was the wife of Carl Williamson.

# 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.**

**Margaret Ashman née Crossley** of Redditch, Worcestershire died on 1st May 2018, aged 94. From 1942 to 1946 she served in England in the Women's Royal Auxiliary Air Force, discharging as a Sergeant.

**Ronald 'Ron' Ashton** of Hyde, Cheshire died on 9th April 2018, aged 95. He served in West Africa and the UK as an LAC in the Royal Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

**Francis 'James' Bailey** of St. Clement, Jersey died on 28th April 2018, aged 83. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers from 1957 to 1959 in the UK.

**Stanley Bates** of Stroud, Gloucestershire died on 20th March 2018, aged 89. From 1946 to 1981 he served in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Singapore, Korea and the Suez Canal Zone, until discharged as a Staff Sergeant.

**Richard Benham** of Ilkley, West Yorkshire died on 1st May 2018, aged 90. From 1945 to 1948 he served in the Royal Artillery in Italy and Germany, discharging as a Corporal.

**John Bennett** of St. Helens, Merseyside died on 11th April 2018, aged 93. From 1946 to 1948 he served in the East Lancashire Regiment in Germany.

**James 'Jim' Brettell** of Poole, Dorset died on 30th April 2018, aged 100. He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1940 to 1946 in Singapore and India, discharging as a Sergeant.

**Wilfred 'Bill' Carre** of St. Ouen, Jersey died on 26th April 2018, aged 90. From 1945 to 1947 he served in the Army Air Corps in Egypt, Palestine and the UK.

**Dulcie Carter née Bailey** of Devizes, Wiltshire died on 14th April 2018, aged 92. From 1946 to 1948 She served as a Corporal in England in the Royal Army Pay Corps.

**Robina Chivrell née Yule** of Kettering, Northamptonshire died on 1st April 2018, aged 97. From 1944 to 1946 she served in the Women's Royal Naval Service in Somerset, leaving as a Leading Wren.

**William Clodd** of Norwich, Norfolk died on 2nd May 2018, aged 94. He joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and served on North Atlantic convoys, but after his ship was torpedoed during the Normandy landings he transferred to the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and served as a Trooper until 1947.

**Edgar Cowperthwaite** of Galgate, Lancaster died on 8th May 2018, aged 94. He served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1942 to 1946 in the UK and USA.

**Michael Dann** of Paulton, Bristol died on 16th May 2018, aged 87. From 1950 to 1951 he served as an AC1 in the Royal Air Force in England.

**Graham Davies** of Port Talbot, West Glamorgan died on 20th April 2018, aged 84. From 1954 to 1956 he served in the Royal Artillery as a Lance Bombardier in Germany and England.

**Doris Dewhurst née Cox** of Llandudno, Gwynedd died on 1st April 2018, aged 93. From 1945 to 1946 she served in the Women's Royal Naval Service in England.

**Evan 'Gwyn' Evans** of Llandudno, Gwynedd died on 7th April 2018, aged 87. He served in the Royal Welch Fusiliers from 1948 to 1950 in the UK and Austria, discharging as a Lance Corporal.

**Audrey Farwell** of Brighton, East Sussex died on 3rd May 2018, aged 95. From 1942 to 1946 she served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service in the UK.

**Douglas Francis** of Peacehaven, East Sussex died on 15th April 2018, aged 87. From 1949 to 1955 he served as a Private in the Queen's Regiment, Middlesex Regiment and the Royal Artillery in Germany, Korea and later Hong Kong.

**Peter Garnett** of Bradford, West Yorkshire died on 1st May 2018, aged 81. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the UK from 1955 to 1958.



**Roy Gower** of Lincoln, Lincolnshire died on 18th April 2018, aged 89. He served in Singapore, USA, Malaya and Canada in the Royal Air Force from 1946 to 1973, leaving as a Chief Technician.

**Richard Gregory** of Woodbridge, Suffolk died on 1st April 2018, aged 95. From 1945 to 1968 he served in the Royal Air Force in the UK and Europe, retiring as a Flight Lieutenant.

**Kenneth Grierson** of Llandudno, Gwynedd died on 1st April 2018, aged 98. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1941 to 1946 in the UK and Germany.

**Bernard Hadley** of Whitby, Cheshire died on 16th April 2018, aged 96. From 1942 to 1946 he served in the Royal Navy in Australia, Canada and Iceland, attaining the rank of Electrical Mechanic 4th Class.

**Gilbert Halls** of Stowmarket, Suffolk died on 16th April 2018, aged 91. From 1945 to 1948 he served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery in Egypt and Wales.

**William 'Bill' Hassack** of Lincoln, Lincolnshire died on 24th April 2018, aged 100. From 1940 to 1946 he served as a Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant in the Royal Artillery in the UK, India, Burma, Thailand, Malaya and Singapore.

**Andrew Hay** of New Milton, Hampshire died on 1st April 2018, aged 94. From 1942 to 1946 he served in the Royal Navy in Australia, the North Atlantic Convoys and the Mediterranean.

**James Hill** of Leeds, West Yorkshire died on 1st May 2018, aged 82. He served as an Aircraftman Second Class in the Royal Air Force in the UK from 1956 to 1958.

**John Hooper** of Shaftesbury, Dorset died on 24th April 2018, aged 86. From 1949 to 1953 he served as a Corporal in the Royal Armoured Corps, Queen's Bays and the Royal Dragoon Guards in England, Germany and Egypt.

**James 'Jim' Jones** of Peterculter, Aberdeenshire died on 1st December 2017, aged 82. He served in the Royal Air Force and posted to RAF Buchan, he worked with radar and later on Bloodhound missiles. He served from 1951 to 1965.

**Kenneth Kettle** of Catherington, Hampshire died on 30th April 2018, aged 96. He served as an LAC in the Royal Air Force from 1941 to 1946 in the Middle East.

**Roy Knott** of Deeside, Clwyd died on 22nd April 2018, aged 83. He served as an LAC in the Royal Air Force in England from 1952 to 1955.

**John Leslie** of Borehamwood, Hertfordshire died on 6th May 2018, aged 96. From 1943 to 1946 he served in the Royal Artillery and the Army Catering Corps in the UK and North Africa.

**James 'Jimmy' Lincoln** of Houghton Le Spring, Tyne And Wear died on 1st May 2018, aged 93. From 1943 to 1946 he served in the Royal Navy in Bermuda, Europe and the Atlantic.

**Roy Ludlam** of Southminster, Essex died on 1st January 2017, aged 99. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers from 1940 to 1946, serving in England, Gibraltar, Singapore and Burma, until discharged as a Sergeant.

**Edward Lyon** of Dereham, Norfolk died on 26th April 2018, aged 93. From 1946 to 1948 he served in the Seaforth Highlanders and the Royal Army Service Corps in the UK and Germany.

**Gerard 'Gerry' Madden** of Wadebridge, Cornwall died on 4th May 2018, aged 90. From 1944 to 1948 he served in the Army Air Corps and the Parachute Regiment in Palestine.

**Donald Matthews** of Preston, Lancashire died on 30th April 2018, aged 85. From 1950 to 1952 he served in the Royal Air Force in Northern Europe.

**Charles Miller** of Woodley, Berkshire died on 17th April 2018, aged 92. From 1943 to 1946 he served as a Naval Airman in the Royal Navy in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian Oceans.

**Peter Moseley** of Edinburgh died on 1st April 2018, aged 90. From 1944 to 1970 he served in the Scots Guards in Europe, the Far East and Middle East, discharging as a Warrant Officer 2nd Class.

**Donald Moon** of Luton, Bedfordshire died on 27th March 2018, aged 81. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1954 to 1967, leaving as a Sergeant.

**William 'Bill' Neno** of Leigh On Sea, Essex died on 17th April 2018, aged 91. From 1944 to 1946 he served in the Fleet Air Arm in Scotland as a Flight Mechanic.

**George Oliver** of Woodingdean, East Sussex died on 13th May 2018, aged 87. He served in Egypt and the Middle East in the Royal Engineers from 1949 to 1950.

**Stanley Pape** of Sidcup, Kent died on 19th April 2018, aged 100. From 1940 to 1946 he served as an LAC in the Royal Air Force in India and the UK.

**Bernard Parkin** of Leeds, West Yorkshire died on 28th April 2018, aged 99. He joined the Royal Navy in 1939 and served on aircraft carriers as aircrew and parachute packer; he served on HMS Canton in the Far East. He was demobbed in 1945 with the rank of Leading Seaman.

**Harold Pallister** of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 1st May 2018, aged 93. From 1946 to 1948 he served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Military Police in Europe.

**George Peters** of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on 19th April 2018, aged 95. From 1938 to 1946 he served as a Private in the Gloucestershire Regiment, Royal Artillery, South Staffordshire and Worcestershire Regiment.

**Arthur Pitt** of Blucher, Newcastle Upon Tyne died on 14th February 2018, aged 93. He served as a Sapper in England and Norway in the Royal Engineers from 1942 to 1947.

**Ronald Porter** of Stamford, Lincolnshire died on 24th April 2018, aged 91. He served in Malta, the Mediterranean and the North Sea in the Royal Navy from 1944 to 1947.

**Sarah 'Sally' Preston** of North Shields, Tyne And Wear died on 18th May 2018, aged 93. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service from 1943 to 1946 in the UK, discharging as a Leading Wren.

**Glynn Roberts** of Bath, Somerset died on 23rd April 2018, aged 94. From 1942 to 1944 he served in the Home Guard in Cheshire.

**Dorothy Senior née Bailey** of Woodley, Berkshire died on 1st May 2018, aged 89. She served in the Women's Royal Air Force in Stanmore and Oxfordshire as a Leading Aircraftwoman from 1947 to 1950.

**Edward 'Maurice' Sherman** of Tring, Hertfordshire died on 29th December 2017, aged 93. He served in the Royal Marines from 1942 to 1945 in France.

**Eric Smith** of Eccles, Manchester died on 4th May 2018, aged 95. He served as a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Army Service Corps from 1942 to 1947 in Europe.

**Robert 'Bob' Smith** of Basildon, Essex died on 1st April 2018, aged 83. From 1952 to 1961 he served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the UK, leaving as a Lance Corporal.

**Linley Stephens** of Billingham, Cleveland died on 29th April 2018, aged 85. From 1951 to 1953 he served as a Pilot Officer in the Royal Air Force in the UK and Canada.

**Sidney 'Gordon' Stephens** of Kidderminster, Worcestershire died on 1st April 2018, aged 92. He served as a Sergeant in Italy in the King's Royal Rifle Corps from 1945 to 1948.

**Betty Storey née Connell** of Rottingdean, East Sussex died on 18th April 2018, aged 92. From 1944 to 1946 she served in the Women's Royal Naval Service in England.

**Keith Terry** of Ryde, Isle Of Wight died on 29th April 2018, aged 91. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Armoured Corps and the Queen's Bays from 1944 to 1948 in the UK and the Suez Canal Zone.

**David 'Graham' Williams** of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan died on 7th April 2018, aged 87. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force at RAF Lyneham from 1949 to 1951.

