

Review

Blind Veterans UK, St Dunstan's since 1915,
2015 Centenary Buckingham Palace Garden Party.



One amazing day. Our sublime Centenary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

Thursday 4th June was an outstanding and unforgettable day in the history of our charity as thousands of blind veterans with their families, our Trustees and guests, enjoyed the first of our two main centenary celebrations of 2015.

It was, of course, the Centenary Garden Party in the grounds of Buckingham Palace when we were graced by the company of HRH The Countess of Wessex, who represented HM The Queen and the Royal Household. The Countess spent the afternoon taking her time to speak with as many blind veterans and their families as was possible.

It was a joyous day as the sun shone, the band of The Royal Household The Band of The Coldstream Guards and The Band of the Queen's Division played as 10,000 cups of tea were drunk, along with 450 litres of iced coffee and Sandringham apple juice. The sandwiches and 47,000 cakes were delicious, and there was good company to be had in abundance as friends caught up with one another, and new friendships were made.

It was quite simply, a sublime afternoon, and it was thanks to the hard work of Hilary Fox, Buckingham Palace Centenary Garden Party Manager, and her team of Abby Tarrant and Cameron Purse.

Chris Kirk, Head of Transport and his department ensured that everyone was where they should be on time to enjoy this wonderful once in a lifetime, never to be forgotten Centenary Garden Party.

In the pages of this very special edition of the Review we have great pleasure to bring you photographs and extracts from the many letters of thanks as so many of you wrote to express your appreciation for a wonderful afternoon.

One amazing day, the DVD of our Centenary Garden Party, is available to buy for £10, which includes p&p. You can buy it at our online shop at <http://shop.blindveterans.org.uk> or telephone 0300 111 0440 for credit or debit card orders. When you place your order please quote the reference Review. If your photograph is not included in this Buckingham Palace Garden Party special edition of the Review you could quite possibly find yourself in the DVD.



Picture: Arriving at Buckingham Palace for our centenary Garden Party.



Picture: Nigel and Jacqui Whiteley and Jennie and Roger Hammond make their way to the gardens.



Picture: Taking the steps from Buckingham Palace into the gardens.



Picture: The arrival of HRH The Countess of Wessex.



Picture: HRH The Countess of Wessex is escorted to meet the family of Blind Veterans UK by our Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB.

HRH The Countess of Wessex meets the team responsible for the Centenary Garden Party.



Picture above: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with Hilary Fox, Blind Veterans UK Events Manager Buckingham Palace Garden Party, who so superbly organised the Centenary Garden Party. Also pictured from left: Blind Veterans UK Membership Manager Mike Purse, Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB, Chairman Tim Davis and Abby Tarrant Centenary Events Assistant.

Picture following page top left: HRH The Countess of Wessex is introduced to Blind Veterans UK Chairman Tim Davis.

Bottom left: HRH The Countess of Wessex is introduced to Abby Tarrant, Centenary Events Assistant.

Right top: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with Blind Veterans UK Transport & Bookings Manager Chris Kirk.

Right bottom: HRH The Countess of Wessex meets Barry Coupe, son of the late Des Coupe, a Second World War blinded veteran who trained as a physiotherapist. All were integral members of the team who worked with Hilary for eight months to ensure the perfect Centenary Garden Party was enjoyed by everyone.





Picture: Alan Saunders with his daughter Sue Saunders-Miller, Tony and Mitch Harbour, Mark Threadgold and Harry and Joan Beevers.



Picture: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with blind veteran Alan Saunders, a former Royal Marine Commando who took part in the Dieppe Raid.



Picture: Jamie Cuthbertson, above right.



Picture: Mike Tetley MBE, Val Male, Edna McGoff and Kenneth and Margaret Rawcliffe.



Picture: Nick Caplin escorts The Countess to meet more members of the family of Blind Veterans UK.



Picture: Blind Veterans UK President Ray Hazan OBE and Roberta Hazan, Bob Strickland and Roger Williams.



Picture: Watching the Countess as she meets blind veterans and their families.



Picture: With Dot Madgwick, Anne Moore, Joyce Parkinson and Patience Hobday whose late husbands were WWII war blinded veterans.





Picture: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with the Project Gemini group. Colin Williamson, Tom Zampieri, Peter Hall and Rob Long.



Picture: Speaking with Constance Halford-Thompson and her daughter Lulu Lodge.



Picture: Rob Long, who was blinded in Afghanistan, laughs with HRH The Countess of Wessex.



Picture: Blind veteran Constance Halford-Thompson with her daughter Lulu Lodge. Constance served with the Women's Auxiliary Service of Burma during WWII. She is one of only a few WASBs, wonderful women who drove mobile canteens to the troops. Appearing from nowhere in their trucks they brought tea, cakes, Brylcream and supplies to the troops. But most important of all — they brought a breath of home.



Picture: Mark Brewin, Carl Williams, Neil Graham and Vicky Stewart from the ski group.





Picture: Sharing a laugh with Joan Osborne whose father Joe was a First World War blind veteran. Joan worked at Church Stretton where she met her late husband Bob who was blinded in Normandy in WWII. Joan is pictured with her daughter in law Linda.







Picture: Time for tea.





Picture: Chosen to represent the Brighton centre Dan Skinner Security, Sheila Cockain Housekeeping, Krasimir Ivanov Housekeeping and Sue Kaulsi Bookings.



Picture: For the Sheffield centre: Terry Heaton, Chris Clark, Gaye Atkins and Russell Price.



Picture: With the Llandudno centre group. Mark Lovatt, Cath Klaces, Peter Davies, Rachel Roberts and Billy Baxter.





Picture: Mike Scholes.



Thank you.

As we know how eager you are to see the photographs from the Centenary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace we have kept your messages of thanks to just four pages in this very special edition of the Review.

I would just like to say a big thank-you to you all for organising our visit to the garden party at Buckingham Palace.

The many happy memories will always remain with me; it was a perfect day especially mixing with so many interesting people; listening to their varied stories; and enjoying the beautiful surroundings and perfect weather. My only sadness was that my husband wasn't here to enjoy it with me but Blind Veterans UK will always be a big part of my life in the future.
With thanks again

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Christine Toms and Anne Lathbury.

We wanted to thank you for the wonderful afternoon at Buckingham Palace, the organisation was excellent and people were really helpful & kind. On behalf of my sister and myself thank you

To All at Blind Veterans we just had to say tell you how much we enjoyed our day at Buckingham Palace on the 10th Jun. It was such a lovely day everybody was in good spirits we walked all around the grounds and spoke to everybody we met next to all what a wonderful day. The Countess

It was such a lovely day, everybody was in good spirits and we walked the grounds and spoke to everyone we sat with or walked past. The Countess of Wessex looked beautiful. Where we live our friends and neighbours and shopkeepers are still asking us about our day at Buckingham Palace.

To Everyone at Blind Veterans UK I am so grateful to you all who made it such a lovely occasion on 10th Jun at Buckingham Palace. My daughter I had to say was very proud to be with you all. My husband Gordon Bolton died on 10th July 2014 & we thought it was such a lovely day. The afternoon spent in such a lovely setting and everything including the weather was wonderful. Thank you all so much.

To everyone at Blind Veterans UK and all who made it such a lovely occasion. My daughter and I were very proud to attend this occasion. My husband Gordon Bolton died on 10th July 2014 and we thought of how much this would have meant to him. The afternoon spent in such a lovely setting and everything including the weather was wonderful. Jean Bolton.

I was privileged to enjoy a perfect day at Buckingham Palace as a guest of Blind Veterans UK. The weather was so very kind, the food and drink and the organisation could not have been better. I enjoyed a lovely walk around the gardens. I am sure everyone felt as I did — so many thanks to all concerned.

So, I am privileged to enjoy a perfect day at Buckingham Palace as a guest of Blind Veterans UK. The weather was so very kind, the food and drink and the organisation could not have been better. I enjoyed a lovely walk around the gardens. I am sure everyone felt as I did — so many thanks to all concerned.

Dear Hilary, I am advised by Officers that you are the one who made it such a truly memorable visit to Buckingham Palace. My wife Margaret and I are so grateful to you for all the hard work and organisation that went in to arrange this. Thank you also for the generous financial help you gave us. It was truly a day to remember. I am very lucky to belong to such a great organisation.

Dear Hilary. Thank you and all your staff for a truly memorable occasion on our visit to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. My wife Margaret and I appreciate all the hard work and organisation that went in to arrange this. Thank you also for the generous financial help you kindly gave us. It was truly a day to remember. I am very lucky to belong to such a great organisation.

Thank you so much for your kind invitation to tea at Buckingham Palace last Thursday. I enjoyed every minute, the music, the very efficient members of HM Forces who helped me down and up the stairs, they were very charming. My daughter was with me and found a wheelchair and I was taken around the garden, which I so enjoyed. My thanks to all who worked so hard.

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VERY GOOD SO
"BETTER - WE SAY"
"OUR SPECIAL DAY"
KNOW - AND THAN

We shall be talking about our special day for many weeks. All thanks to Blind Veterans UK. With these thanks, a special thought for all the happiness you have brought from my sister and I for a day to remember. Betty Martin and Gladys Grove.

Dear Nick Caplan (blind track)
I would like to take this
thank you and all the
me a widow of a St Dunstan
also my son, the privilege of
being able to attend that
Buckingham Palace Garden
Thursday. A day we will
remember with happiness.
when I had the honour
presented to the Countess
as a member of Blind Veterans
Amateur Radio Club.
Thanks also for all the
you all give to blind
and women to enable them
independent lives.

Thank you and all your team for giving me, a widow of St Dunstaner Jim McGoff, and my son the privilege and pleasure to attend that most wonderful Buckingham Palace Garden Party. A day we will both always remember with happiness. Especially when I had the honour to be presented to the Countess of Wessex as a member of Blind Veterans UK Amateur Radio Club. Thanks for all the care you all give to blind ex-Service men and women.

I would like to express my sincere thanks for a truly wonderful afternoon at the garden party, and to congratulate you, plus all concerned, with the wonderfully organised occasion. I felt so proud of the blind veterans, and proud to be British. Daphne Partridge, ex ATS WW2.

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Dear Friends A huge thank you for our wonderful trip to the garden party. It was certainly a winning and well organised trip that will keep our moral up. One feels so humble to be with all the blind veterans. God bless you all Margaret Blaber.

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I would like to express my thanks and admiration to everyone who helped to organise last Thursday's centenary event at Buckingham Palace. Both my daughter and I enjoyed every minute because everyone was so helpful which made the day such a success. Fay M Longman.

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Thank you all once again.

Thank you so much for the lovely day my daughter and I enjoyed at Buckingham Palace, you must have worked so hard to arrange it all. The coach to take us to the station was a great help. We tell everyone about our trip to the Palace thanks to you! Doreen and Sue Sparksman.

Dear All,
Thank
for the lovely day
and I enjoyed a
Palace, you must
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the coach to take
us to the station
a great help.

We must write to extend our gratitude for what was a most memorable day at the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to celebrate the centenary of your wonderful organisation. We felt honoured and privileged to have attended such a wonderful occasion in the presence of HRH The Countess of Wessex. We will have lasting memories of this event and felt that we had to make our feelings known to you of how truly special the day was. Florence Slade, widow of the late Morris Slade.

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Dear Blind Veterans
Many thanks for a wonderful Buckingham Palace garden party. The organization was first class, with plenty of food, seating, music, and a beautiful setting. Whoever ordered the weather should get an even bigger pat on the back. There was even lots of lovely ice cream to keep us cool. We sat down for only a short time as we didn't want to miss seeing all of the wonderful garden. By the time six o'clock came around we were glad of the well organized buses to the various stations. We arrived home exhausted but elated after a

My daughter and I had the most magnificent day. The ladies all looking so chic, the music, the food and the company were magnificent. It must have taken so very much effort to organise, 'WOW.' It was worth all the hard work. Thank you for a day we will both never forget. Anne Burry.

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day on the 4th June 15. The Ladies,
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We felt that we could not let the centenary celebration go by without writing to thank all those involved in the organisation and negotiation with Buckingham Palace. It must have added greatly to your normal workload and you must be pleased that the day went so well. We could not have had better weather or a more magnificent setting. Thank you all. Ray and Joan Thomas.

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Picture: With this year's Founder's Day Award Winners. Anne Radcliffe Welfare Support Officer, Kathryn Jones Romain Art & Craft Brighton and Mike Crawford IS Operations Manager.



Picture: For the North West and South West Community Hubs. Adrian Hewitt, Jill James and Sue King.



Picture: Adrian Hewitt, Jill James, Sue King and Penny Williams.



Picture: Chris Nowell with two members of the BVA during Project Gemini.









Picture: David Castleton, former Review editor, pats a chum on the back as he chats with HRH The Countess of Wessex.



Picture: John Evans standing. Left Sarah and Kelly Ganfield seated far right.



Picture: Six very special friends of our charity who have volunteered for many years. On the far right are Eric Brotherton and Kevin Rixon.



Picture: John and Sylvia Robinson above right.





Picture: The Chairman and Chief Executive escort HRH The Countess of Wessex to the Royal Tea tent.



Picture: Back row Shelley Cooper, Roberta Hazan, Ray Hazan OBE, Janet Nixon. Front row blind veterans Anthony Cooper, who was wounded in Afghanistan, next to Steve Nixon who was injured in the First Gulf War.



Picture: Shelley Cooper and Isobel and Nick Caplin.



Picture: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with Simon Brown Blind Veterans UK Communications and Engagement Officer, who was injured in Iraq, losing much of his sight.



Picture: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with June Tufnell, whose late husband Denis was a WWII blind veteran who trained at Church Stretton.



Picture: Enjoying a great laugh with Clifford Gower. Listen to the Talking Review to find out what Clifford said.



Picture: Blind veteran Stefan Ciesla, who celebrated his 103rd birthday this year, is shown with his daughter Anne as he presents HRH The Countess of Wessex with a bouquet.



Picture: The party's almost over. HRH The Countess of Wessex waves and stops to chat to blind veterans as she leaves after many hours of speaking to so many members of the family of Blind Veterans UK.





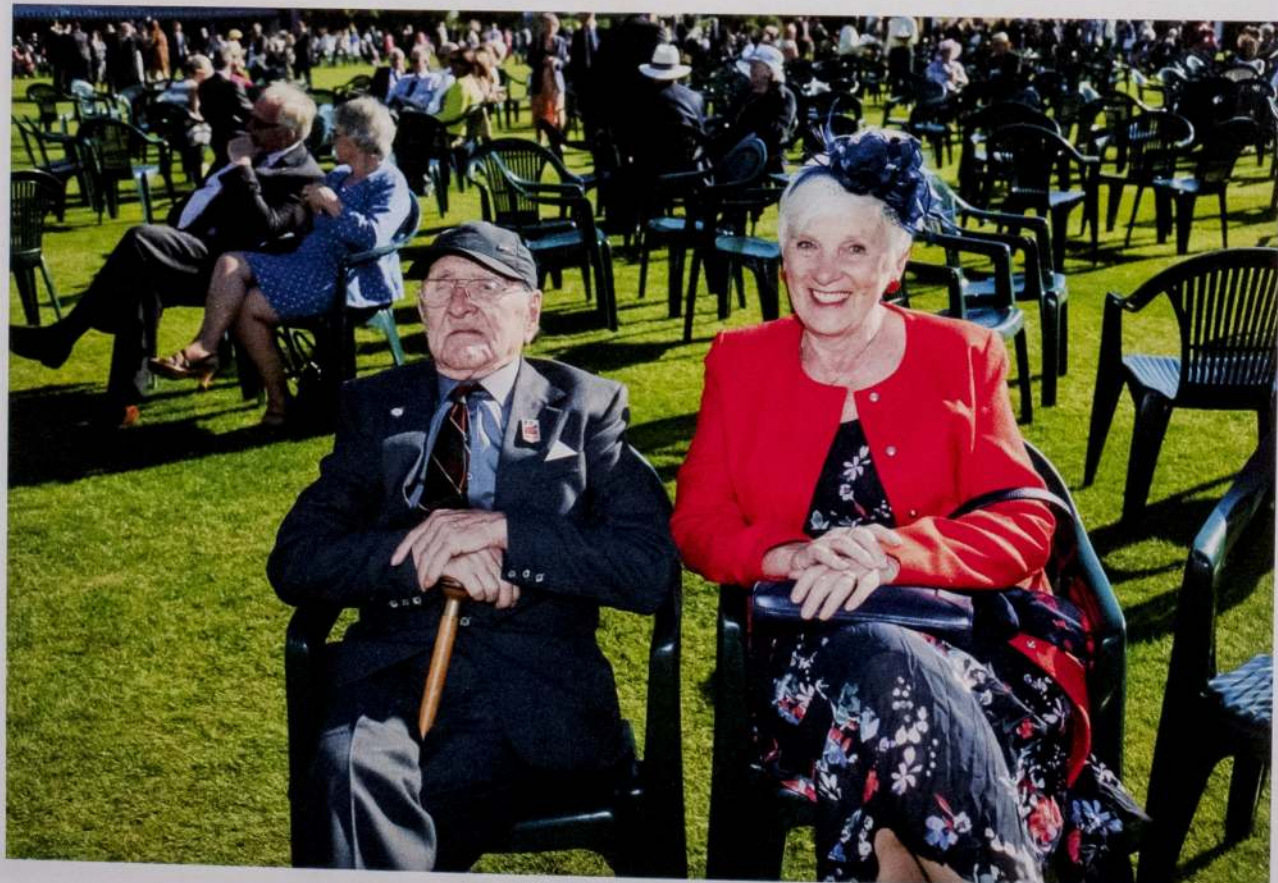


Picture: Stopping to chat.



Picture: Watching the Countess.





Picture: And the band played on.





Picture: Abby Tarrant, Hilary Fox and Cameron Purse, kneeling front, with Chris Kirk, Head of Marketing & Communications David Bassom (far right) and all the wonderful Blind Veterans UK staff who helped at our wonderful, never to be forgotten, 4th June 2015 Centenary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.



Picture: Dressed to impress, the Blind Veterans UK staff who worked with Hilary Fox to make the day such a great success. **Photos:** Keith Harness.



Picture: Leigh Gibbins, Art & Craft Instructor at the Brighton centre, and his partner Sally Sanderson in the gardens at Buckingham Palace.

They had great reason to celebrate as Leigh proposed at the Centenary Garden Party — and Sally accepted.

Congratulations Leigh and Sally.

Cover: HRH The Countess of Wessex speaks with members of Blind Veterans UK at our very special Centenary Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 4th June 2015.

Cover: Blind Veterans UK Chief Executive Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB, Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC and blind veteran Paul Jacobs GM in The Lord Ashcroft Gallery at the Imperial War Museum for our very special centenary feature.

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Patron: Her Majesty the Queen.

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