

# Review



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The journal of  
Blind Veterans UK

June 2025



VE Day

80

## After the Darkness

Your VE Day 80 commemorations

**Inside:**

Rustington Centre Activity Weeks  
London Marathon success



Rebuilding  
lives after  
sight loss





# Nominate a fellow Member for a Founder's Award

Our Founder's Awards are presented throughout the year to those excelling in their endeavours

Our Founder's Awards recognise Members, carers and volunteers who go above and beyond in their endeavours. The awards serve as a wonderful reminder of the boundless spirit of our founder, Sir Arthur Pearson, and give us the chance to celebrate all that's great about our charity.

All those nominated for awards are chosen by you. They are given out on a rolling basis so you can nominate someone at any time between the 1 January and 1 October.



**Member Jules with his certificate**

## The categories

- Inspiring Community Award
- Life Beyond Sight Loss Award
- Creative Award
- Sporting Achievement Award
- Outstanding Achievement Award
- Camaraderie Award
- Volunteers Award
- Carers Recognition Award
- Ted Higgs Prize

## How to nominate

If you've been impressed by a Member, carer or volunteer and would like to give them the recognition you feel they deserve, simply complete our quick Founder's Award's nomination form – telling us why you're nominating them for the category you've chosen.

You can find the form at  
[blindveterans.org.uk/nominate-](https://blindveterans.org.uk/nominate-)

- **Alternatively, you can contact Supporter Services on 0300 111 2233 who will be happy to help you complete the online form on your behalf.**



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## On the cover

**WWII Members John and Harry celebrate VE Day at Petwood Hotel**





# Looking to the future

A message from your Chief Executive, **Adrian Bell**

I have now resumed my full responsibilities as Chief Executive of Blind Veterans UK after a period of time away. My very sincere thanks to all of you who sent kind messages wishing me a good and speedy recovery.

I'm also very grateful to the charity's



**Adrian Bell**

Senior Leadership Team, and all our staff, for all they have done during my absence, particularly Gazala Hurley for stepping in as she did as interim Chief Executive. It's far from easy to assume such responsibilities over such a period.

I know that many of you had questions about the future of the charity, not least because of the recent sad closure of our Llandudno Centre. I understand that our Chair, Barry Coupe, has contacted you all with the reasons behind this difficult decision, but please do let me know if you have any further questions.

As I write this, we are preparing for our Member Conference in Birmingham and I'm looking forward to seeing some of you there. For those of you who wish to contribute but are unable to attend, I hope you will take advantage of the regional pop-up sessions.

Both the conference and many of the



**Our Newcastle Members enjoying afternoon tea in honour of VE Day 80**

regional pop-up sessions will have happened by the time this issue of Review arrives with you and there will be a full write up of all that was discussed in the next issue. You can find out more about these pop-up sessions on page 29.

I hope those of you who wished to be involved enjoyed the national celebrations around the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe last month. I was delighted to see how many Blind Veterans UK events were taking place across the whole country and I'm only sorry I was unable to join in.

You can read a round-up of these events on page 22 and I would like to thank all the staff, volunteers and, of course, all our Members, who worked so hard to make these events a success. I've been told that the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight fly past at our event in the Petwood Hotel in Lincolnshire was spectacular.

I'm very much looking forward to getting back to work and getting to grips with the various issues confronting us all now as well as look to the future. As always, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. 🇬🇧



# News

## Lee's fundraising swim

Huge congratulations to Lee, a blind veteran in Plymouth who completed an amazing challenge in honour of VE Day 80. Lee swam 80 lengths of his local pool in just two hours and 20 minutes!

After an interview on BBC Radio and ITV News, Lee wasted no time getting down to business, cheered on by his fellow Members, plus friends, staff from his residence and our staff.



Lee during his swimming challenge



## The Carrickfergus memorial

Lee, who raised more than £1,500 for Blind Veterans UK, was a true inspiration and made a powerful tribute on this special day.

A massive well done, Lee. We're all very proud of you!

## VE80 extravaganza in Carrickfergus

In Northern Ireland, our staff, Members and volunteers represented Blind Veterans UK at the VE80 Extravaganza in Carrickfergus Town Hall.

Arriving early gave Members time to explore the WWII tank and Garden of Remembrance, which has

columns dedicated to the Battle of the Atlantic, Battle of Britain, the Royal Irish Regiment and many more. Then, once the event was underway, our information table attracted many veterans and children who learnt all about our charity.

It was an incredibly successful event, raising awareness of our mission.

## Westminster Abbey VE Day 80 Service

Our Community Support Worker, Karen McKeown, attended the Westminster Abbey VE Day 80 Remembrance Service on behalf of the

charity in Northern Ireland – and was lucky enough to bump into a couple of our Members.

Karen was delighted to meet Surrey Member Jules at the service – the pair found much to talk about as Jules once served in Northern Ireland. Then, at the Abbey, she met Member John Harlow from Devon, with his volunteer Robin. This was an extra-special occasion for John as the Second World War submariner was also celebrating his 101st birthday!

It was an unforgettable occasion, paying tribute to the generation who showed such resilience during the war – and came through it all with hope. 🇬🇧



From left: Jules, John and volunteer Robin at Westminster Abbey



# In your community

Some of the wonderful VE Day 80 events that have taken place in communities across the country last month

## In County Down

The first VE Day social get-together in the seaside town of Bangor, County Down, kicked off with Members Les and Jack going on a “fishing trip” to track down the best fish and chips in town. They were not disappointed – their fish and chips were huge!

## In Plymouth

We were delighted to be joined by the Mayor of Plymouth for our VE Day 80



**County Down Members Les and Jack sample the Bangor fare**

celebrations in Plymouth. Members gathered to honour the remarkable generation who lived and died throughout the war. The atmosphere was lifted by the wonderful Queens Dock Ukelele Players, who had everyone laughing, dancing, singing along and tapping their toes.

## In Newcastle

We had a fantastic afternoon tea in the north east of England. Joined by RAF



**Plymouth Members enjoy a VE Day celebration**



**Torbay Members gather in Paignton to enjoy chatter and cake**

Boulmer and MHS Calliope, the event was a huge success. We were proud to present long-standing volunteer Graham with a Founder's Day Award, while Member Frank Taylor played the Last Post on his bugle after two minutes of Remembrance silence.

Our very own Sharon Brown got the crowds flags waving with an amazing singing set. She was even joined on stage by Member Ken Smith, who was happy to join in the celebrations.

## In Torbay

Our local Members, staff and volunteers gathered in Paignton, Torbay, to mark VE Day 80. Joined by the Deputy



**Wirral Members Olly and Margaret at the Day lunch**

Mayor of Torbay, who read a heartfelt poem, and the Armed Forces Champion for Torbay Council, it was a fantastic morning filled with chatter, laughter and, of course, lots of cake!

## In the Wirral

We had a wonderful gathering at The Wirral lunch group to celebrate VE Day 80, which 16 people attended including Second World War veteran, Olly.

The 102 year old served in the WAF for Churchill's Cabinet Office in the war, and told us about her memory of standing at the gates of Buckingham Palace, waving at the Royal Family on VE Day. A fantastic gathering. →





**Swansea Members at Christ Church**

## In Warwickshire

The Warwickshire VE Day lunch was held at The Royal British Legion where the lovely laid tables and decorations were topped off by jaunty hats and flags, which Members greatly enjoyed. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful lunch together, followed by a rousing sing-along of all the wartime greats.

## In Swansea

There was a wonderful turnout for the VE Day service, held at Christ Church in Swansea. The service collected

over £300 to be shared between Blind Veterans UK and the Swansea Veterans' Hub.

We were honoured by the presence of Lord Lieutenant, The Mayor and Mayoress, and representatives from the Senedd, the council, cadets, and local schools. Songs, buffet, and even a TV camera crew made the event and it was truly memorable for us all.

## In Cornwall

Member John from St Cleer, Cornwall, hosted a VE Day 80 commemoration at the local war memorial on behalf of Blind Veterans UK. Members joined him for the occasion, and there was a fantastic turnout from the community, who paid their respects, shared stories and learnt about the charity's work.

## In Portsmouth

Members visited the National Museum of the Royal Navy to launch *After the Darkness: VE Day Memories* from the Royal Navy a deeply impactful and interesting exhibition.

Curator Will Heppa and community producer Joanna Valentine showed Members around and even allowed them to handle wartime artefacts, which was a brilliant tactile way of experiencing the exhibition.



**Neena celebrating her 100th birthday with The D-Day Dolls in Hailsham**

## In Hailsham

Members joined Bowes House Care Home for VE Day 80 celebrations featuring the D-Day Dolls. What's more, special guest Neena turned 100 on the day, adding even more joy to an already unforgettable experience.

**Do you want to know what's going on in your local area? Contact your local community team who can tell you everything you need to know.**

It was an exciting birthday for Neena. After her memories of VE Day were shared on Facebook in our charity's 'After the Darkness' campaign, she received hundreds of birthday wishes!

## Thank you!

Beyond the joyous events captured here, there have been many more celebrations in communities across the country and we would like to say a big thank you to all staff, volunteers, Members and external partners who made these events so magical. 🇬🇧



# Rustington dates

We are delighted to share our calendar of activities at our Rustington Centre from June to December 2025

**We have some fantastic activities available for you at our Rustington Centre this year. Alongside our renewed focus on rehabilitation, we invite you to join us for a wellbeing week or one of our specialist activity weeks. The seafront location is fabulous, and the delightful village**

**high street full of shops, restaurants and pubs is just a short stroll away. So come and spend some time at our 'home from home', and we will do everything we can to ensure your stay by the sea is truly one to remember. We look forward to welcoming you!**



**Members paddle boarding at Rustington water sports activity week**

## What's available? Wellbeing weeks

Unwind and relax on a wellbeing break with us in Rustington. Get outdoors, explore, eat great food, and enjoy fantastic trips and entertainment.

You are welcome to book onto any wellbeing week. For this year, due to current high demand, we need to restrict bookings to one wellbeing break per Member in high season. If you wish to book a second break, you'll be invited to go onto the waiting list for the low season. Selected weeks throughout the year will focus on special events such as Military week or Turkey & Tinsel.

■ **Please also see the calendar over the page for details of our specialist activity weeks.**

### Activity Weeks

Our activity weeks are adventurous fun-filled weeks. There couldn't be greater proof that sight loss doesn't have to limit your horizons! Bookings for activity weeks are limited to Members only.

**Fishing week:** An opportunity to fish and relax with fellow anglers. Share the thrill of a first catch or the stunning scenery of a new waterway, as you spend time with fishing buddies new and old.



**Blind veterans and guides on their walk from Ovingdean to Rustington**

**Hiking week:** Get your hiking boots, backpack and poles ready. Step into Summer and enjoy a week of hiking! We'll take you on a multitude of terrains in a stunning setting, covering around 9-15 miles each day. From meandering paths to challenging slopes, you'll need a reasonable level of fitness to enjoy it.

**Golf week:** Enjoy some of the best golf courses in Sussex and improving your game with great golf professionals at the driving range! A great week for beginners and scratch golfers alike.





Date	Week	
16 – 22 June	Wellbeing week	Activity week: <b>General Activities</b>
23 – 29 June	Military week	Activity week: <b>Fishing</b>
30 June – 6 July	Wellbeing week	
7 – 13 July	Wellbeing week	
14 – 20 July	Wellbeing week	
21 – 27 July	Wellbeing week	Activity week: <b>Hiking</b>
28 July – 3 Aug	Wellbeing week	
4 – 10 Aug	Wellbeing week	
11 – 17 Aug	Wellbeing week	Activity week: <b>Golf</b>
18 – 24 Aug	Wellbeing week	
25 – 31 Aug	Wellbeing week	
1 – 7 Sep	Wellbeing week	
8 – 14 Sep	Wellbeing week	Activity week: <b>Bowls</b>
15 – 21 Sep	Wellbeing week	
22 – 28 Sep	Wellbeing week	
29 Sep – 3 Oct	Activity Week: <b>5 day Out-of-Centre Residential in Cumbria</b>	
29 Sep – 5 Oct	Wellbeing week	
6 – 12 Oct	Wellbeing week	Activity week: <b>Adrenaline</b>
13 – 19 Oct	Wellbeing week	
20 – 26 Oct	Wellbeing week	
27 Oct – 2 Nov	Wellbeing week	
3 – 10 Nov	Military week	
10 – 16 Nov	Wellbeing week	
17 – 23 Nov	Wellbeing week	
24 – 30 Nov	Wellbeing week	
1st – 7 Dec	Turkey & Tinsel	
8 – 14 Dec	Turkey & Tinsel	
15 – 21 Dec	Turkey & Tinsel	



Our Rustington Centre

**Bowls week:** Blind Veterans UK Bowls Championships returns! From beginners to frequent bowlers, everyone will be warmly welcomed to join in the competition. Shoes and woods can be provided if you don't have your own.

**Cumbria Residential:** Join us for a five-day outdoor adventure break in beautiful Cumbria! For those of all ages and abilities wanting to step away from their comfort zone, we'll enjoy a week of outdoor activities at Calvert Lakes. You'll need a level of physical fitness to try these new experiences.

**Adrenaline week:** This week, for all you adrenaline junkies, is packed full of accessible outdoor adventure activities for all ages and abilities. You'll need a level of physical fitness to try these new experiences.

**Military weeks:** Our Military weeks are a celebration of our military culture. Share stories from your days in the Armed Forces, compare modern military lifestyles and get hands on with equipment and vehicles. In November we focus on Remembrance.

**The cost of your stay**  
Our costs vary depending on whether or not you need care and if you lost your sight as a result of your service. Please note, Blind Veterans UK has a comprehensive grants policy, so should you feel that cost is a barrier to you coming to stay please do speak to your community team. All trips and activities are included in the cost of your break.

■ **To book or for more information, please call the Rustington Centre on 01903 945300** 📞

**Booking an activity week**

**To register your interest in an activity week at our Rustington Centre, please contact us on 01903 945300.**

**For more information about our centre breaks and register your interest, go to [blindveterans.org.uk/centrebreaks](https://blindveterans.org.uk/centrebreaks).**





Listen here

MRJSPENCE AT ENGLISH WIKIPEDIA



Celebrating crowds at Piccadilly Circus in London on 8 May 1945

# From D-Day to VE Day



As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, we share the wartime diary of D-Day veteran Peggy, who sadly passed away earlier this year

## Peggy's Story

Navy veteran Peggy worked as a linguist during the war and kept a diary throughout that time.

On the night before D-Day, Peggy was on duty alone in the direction-finding tower near Dover. Then just

22, her job was to record intercepted radio messages and take down pages of four-figure code that were sent on to be translated – she was never told where. Her work was so secret that her parents died without knowing about it.

That night, Peggy wrote about her

worries for her future husband Geoff, who was a prisoner of war.

In her entries over VE Day, she described their long-awaited reunion, which we share with kind permission from Peggy's family.

## Peggy's diary of VE Day

"Geoff came up in the morning, we went to get petrol coupons then looked for coffee but everything was shut on account of VE Day. Yes, the war is over but the agony has been so prolonged that it is rather an anti-climax.

"Had lunch with Geoff, heard Mr

Churchill announce the end of the war at 3pm. Had intended to go to the flicks but it was pleasanter to just sit and talk. Geoff is so entirely unchanged it seems impossible he was away so long. Three of the most eventful years of my life and it is as though they have never been.

"After tea, which Geoff produced swiftly while I was studying, we went for a walk. Heard the King speak at 9 o/c, set off home about 10pm... Got home and found a party in progress... Bonfire, piano in the road, all very jolly. Stayed until after 12, so much for my good intentions of not keeping Geoff up." 🇬🇧



Peggy shortly before she passed away and, right, during her service





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Get to know other Members online from the comfort of your home

# Join a Virtual Interest Group

Ignite your passion by joining one of our online groups

Our virtual interest groups are a fantastic way to meet your fellow Members online, swap ideas, share tips and support one another.

The groups meet monthly over Microsoft Teams and are facilitated by our staff and volunteers.

If you'd like to connect with other Members who understand your experience of sight loss and have a similar interest to you, our virtual groups are for you.

Here, you can find out what's on offer and find out how to get signed up.

## Virtual gardening group

This group for all amateur gardeners, including those who've joined our gardening projects, offers support with VI friendly gardening, whatever the size of your garden, greenhouse or window sill. Whether you're a total newbie or an expert, here's your chance to meet other green-fingered friends.

■ **Meeting time: First Tuesday of the month at 11am.**

## Virtual painting group

A group for artists of all abilities. Whether you're just starting out or have lots of experience of drawing or painting, this is a space to chat with other vision-impaired creatives to share ideas, tips and support.

■ **Meeting time: Second Tuesday of the month at 11am.**

## Virtual knitting group

If knitting, crochet or weaving is your thing, this friendly group offers the chance to chat about your wool projects and gives you the support you need to feel inspired to keep going.

■ **Meeting time: Third Thursday of the month at 10am.**

## Virtual woodwork group

For anyone interested in woodwork, woodturning, wooden modelmaking

This is a space to chat with other vision-impaired creatives to share ideas, tips and support

and more, this group offers a chance to chat about your projects and share support, tips and encouragement.

■ **Meeting time: Last Thursday of the month at 11am.**

You also have the chance to join the following Blind Veterans UK →



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A woman holding an iPad



Facebook groups. These are private groups led by our Members in our Facebook community. You will need a Facebook account to join these groups. Setting up an account is free.

The groups include:

### Photography Group

Share your photos, learn new techniques like how to frame and edit, discuss images and pick up tips. An inclusive group for all budding photographers!

### Computer Support Group

Help and advice with computers from your fellow blind veterans.

### General Chat Group

Chit-chat and social networking with other beneficiaries.

### Family and Carers Group

A Facebook group for all those who support our blind veterans.

■ You can sign up to our virtual interest groups at [blindveterans.org.uk/join-a-virtual-interest-group/](https://blindveterans.org.uk/join-a-virtual-interest-group/) or call MESH on 0300 111 2233.

For the Facebook groups, simply search the name of the group alongside “blind veterans uk” on Facebook and request to join. 🐾



A man using a laptop



A woman chatting via her computer



# Have your say on the Government's welfare reforms

The Government has announced major reforms to disability benefits and employment support, which could have a significant impact on people with sight loss

Even though the new disability benefits reforms won't come into effect for at least a year, the Government is currently running a consultation and has pledged to listen to the voices of disabled people. So now's the time to have your say!

Working with other sight loss organisations, Guide Dogs has launched a survey to find out more about how these reforms could impact people with sight loss and how they could be improved. Your response to the survey will help Guide Dogs and other sight loss organisations respond to the consultation, and campaign for improvements to the Government's proposals.

You don't need to claim specific benefits to complete this survey, but you may be asked fewer questions if you don't claim certain benefits or haven't used Access

to Work. The survey is accessible and designed to be completed on a computer or mobile device.

Please take some time to complete the survey by 11.59pm on Sunday, 15 June. Every response will make the voice of people with sight loss louder!

■ Go to <https://bit.ly/4kmT0da> to complete the survey or contact Guide Dogs on 08007811444 🐾





# After the darkness



Celebrations and commemorations 80 years after VE Day

**Blind Veterans UK marked the 80th anniversary of VE Day in style with a series of heartfelt and memorable events across the country, honouring the bravery and sacrifice of veterans**

**who served during the Second World War. The celebrations were a testament to the resilience and spirit of those who fought for freedom and continue to inspire us today.**



**Members John, Ted and Harry arriving at Petwood Hotel on WWII vehicles**

On 8 May, the historic Petwood Hotel, once the headquarters of the 617 Dambusters RAF squadron, hosted a vibrant event. Guests of honour, WWII veterans John Ryan, 99, Ted Wilson, 98, and Harry Wade, 97, arrived in style, leading a fleet of 1940s military vehicles which then went on display for all to enjoy.

The air was filled with music creating a nostalgic atmosphere reminiscent of the 1940s, while all the guests, including more than 60 blind veterans, enjoyed a hog roast and celebration cake made by the baker to HM The

King. But the real highlight of the event was a special Battle of Britain Memorial Flight flypast of a Spitfire and Hurricane. You can read more about the Petwood celebrations on page 39.

The charity was also proud to host an event at Manchester Piccadilly train station on the anniversary, coming together with the local community for the two-minute silence. The Military Wives Choir gave a fantastic performance and Member Bryan Naylor showed off his unbelievable painting ability live as he produced beautiful art for lucky passersby. →



**VE Day 80 celebration cake**



**Lighting the beacon at Rustington**





### Members observe the two-minute silence at Rustington

Member John Nicol proudly carried the standard – serenaded by the choir – as the anniversary fell on his birthday, while many other Members helped out with money collections and speaking to the public, including Jim Percy who was on hand to be interviewed by ITV.

Staff and Members at our Rustington Centre also enjoyed a packed day of commemorations. Kicking off with Member Alan Walker raising the VE80 flag at 09:00 sharp, everyone paused to mark the national two-minute silence at 12:00 and again at 21:00 as Member Kevin Alderton lit our beacon – one of 1,000 shining brightly across the country.



### Our 'After the Darkness' VE Day 80 exhibition on display at Rustington

There was also a fun tea party with games, and we were proud to display the stunning portraits and illustrations of 13 of our Second World War veterans who had generously shared their extraordinary memories of VE Day with us.

Up and down the country, Blind Veterans UK organised various events to honour the 80th anniversary of peace in Europe. You can see more of these in our In Your Community Section on page 8.

As we shared in the last issue of Review, we were delighted to be able to collaborate with award-winning



### Wayne Pope training for his VE80 fundraiser, Worthing Runfest 10k

illustrator Martin Impey for our special VE Day 80 exhibition, 'After the Darkness'.

Bringing to life the fascinating memories of some of our Members who served in the war – which we shared with you in the last few issues of Review – Martin's illustrations were displayed at The Cartoon Museum in London from April to June, and the Royal Navy Museum in Portsmouth for the month of May.

Martin and his work with us was also featured in The One Show VE Day Special broadcast, and published in several national newspapers and

magazines, including the Sunday Times and Sunday Mirror.

### VE Day 80 also prompted many of our supporters and Members to mark the event with impressive fundraising efforts.

Member Wayne Pope raised over £1,400 by taking on the Worthing Runfest 10k just two-and-a-half years after he was diagnosed with a rare sight loss disease that turned his life upside down. Incredibly, Wayne crossed the finish line in one hour and one minute.

Also, Lee Whitfield was overwhelmed with the support he received for his VE Day 80 fundraiser. He took to his local swimming pool to complete 80 lengths, which took him just over two hours. He has raised over £2,500 for Blind Veterans UK.

All in all the day was amazing. Every one of these special events allowed our Members, volunteers, and staff to honour the resilience and bravery of Second World War veterans, while also raising awareness and support for those veterans living with sight loss today.

We would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the anniversary so special. 🇬🇧





Alan Lock and guide



Steven Dixon and his sister



Andy Leitch



Mark Maddock and guide



Blind veterans and their guide runners

# London Marathon 2025

At this year's iconic event, which took place on 27 April, we cheered as 38 of our supporters, plus four Members and their guides completed the whooping 26.2-mile course

Congratulations to all those who ran the London Marathon for us this year – including four of our incredible Members! All our intrepid runners helped generate a huge increase in awareness for Blind Veterans UK.

## Andy Leitch

**Definitely no stranger to the London Marathon, for 50-year-old Andy this was his tenth marathon this year. Andy says:**

"This year was hot and it was a struggle

from start to finish, but number ten is in the bag! My guide, Wayne, and I felt very proud to put on our Blind Veterans UK T-shirts once again as we ran through the streets of London.

"We met a few supporters on our way round. I might not be the fastest, but it means a lot to me to be able to thank those wearing a Blind Veterans UK T-shirt and give them a boost."

Andy joined the Army in 1992 and

spent 19 years with the Royal Logistics Corps. But at the age of 37, the genetic eye condition, retinitis pigmentosa, caused a gradual decline in his sight and forced him to retire early.

Despite the difficulties though, Andy definitely doesn't let his sight loss stop him from going for his goals: "I now have ten London Marathon medals. Those of us with a visual impairment should never be written off. We can live full and active lives."

## Steve Dixon

**Steve, 46, ran his first London Marathon in 2022 and clearly wasn't put off! Steven returned this year to run again with his sister by his side as his guide. He says:**

"It was an honour to run for the charity,

although it was tough. My sister got a hip injury at around mile 11, but she soldiered through until the last five miles when she had to give in.

"We did a mixture of walking and running for the final part of the course and crossed the line in five hours and 38 minutes. It was hot and I didn't have a hat so I was sun burnt... It was a relief to finish, I was ecstatic and emotional."

Steve joined the Army at the age of 17 and served with the 1st Battalion King's Regiment for six years. Around ten years ago, he started to get flashes and dark spots in his eyes which turned out to be burst blood vessels in his central vision. He was registered blind eight years ago.

While Steve says his outer vision is →



“perfect”, his central vision has all gone. But this hasn’t deterred him from doing what he loves. In fact, just three weeks after the London Marathon, he ran the Great Manchester Run with his partner Janine.

Steve says: “The charity has helped me in a lot of ways including training with IT, magnifying equipment and being introduced to exercise weeks which put me on a step-by-step plan to running a marathon.”

### Mark Maddock

**For Mark, 51-years-old, this was his sixth London Marathon – and one of the toughest he says he’s ever experienced. He says:**

“This was, by a large margin, the most physically and psychologically demanding of all the marathons I’ve run – ten in total.

“I trained in similar conditions in Austria – where I’ve lived for nearly 20 years – in the few weeks before the marathon. However, with the added water saturation that the air contains in England, and the extreme heat, it was impossible to maintain the marathon pace that I’d prepared myself for.

“By the halfway point the energy was sapped out of my legs and my speed dwindled rapidly. My legs felt

heavy and started to cramp... I had to adopt a slower and more conservative pace, which unfortunately moved my personal best out of reach, finishing at a modest 3:49:10 – my second fastest marathon.”

Mark served in the Royal Artillery for just over nine years. He trained in Nuneaton and then spent time based in Germany and in Salisbury. At the age of 23, Mark was involved in a car accident, which resulted in damage to his optic nerve.

Running alongside his guide in London, Nick Vradis, Mark was grateful to have the opportunity to take part. He says: “Total respect and thanks to Nick who led me through the streets of London for the third time in consecutive years, despite the unbearable scorching temperature.”

■ **If you’re interested in a Member’s place for the 2026 London Marathon, please email Richard Phinbow at [richard.phinbow@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:richard.phinbow@blindveterans.org.uk) to register your interest.**

■ **If you have any family members or friends who want to run the London Marathon in support of Blind Veterans UK, they can find out more information at [blindveterans.org.uk/londonmarathon/](https://blindveterans.org.uk/londonmarathon/)**



Listen here



Members at the Blind Veterans UK conference last year

## Member Conference: Ask a question

If you missed the opportunity to attend our Member Conference at the end of May, fear not, you can still send your questions in before 28 June 2025 and attend one of our local events to have your questions answered

We’ll be putting on local community events across the country to give you the opportunity to hear the latest information from our Executive Leadership team.

Please liaise with your local community team to find out what’s going on near

you. Alternatively, you can contact MeSH on **0300 111 22 33**.

■ **If you have a question you’d like to ask, please telephone MeSH for support or complete the online form at [blindveterans.org.uk/member-conference-ask](https://blindveterans.org.uk/member-conference-ask)**





LUCADP ADOBE STOCK

Artificial Intelligence is commonplace throughout the home

# Everyday AI

How to use Artificial Intelligence in your day-to-day life

Think you've never used Artificial Intelligence (AI)? Think again. AI has fast become integrated into our daily lives and applications are vast and varied, from enhancing convenience to improving digital efficiency. So how can we make the most of it?

## Voice Assistants

Most smart phones, tablets and smart

speakers have a voice assistant feature like Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant. These AI-powered tools can perform a whole range of tasks, from setting reminders and sending messages to playing music and controlling smart home devices, and their ability to understand and process our language makes interacting with technology more intuitive and hands-free. For lots

of people, these voice assistants have become a household staple.

## Smart home devices

These days, there are lots of smart devices for the home that utilise AI, like the Nest Learning Thermostat, which can learn your schedule and preferences to optimise heating and cooling, saving energy and reducing utility bills.

Smart lights can adjust brightness and colour based on the time of day or your activities, enhancing comfort and ambiance, while security cameras with AI capabilities can distinguish between humans, animals, and inanimate objects, reducing false alarms and enhancing home security.

There are even washing machines that use AI sensors to determine the right settings for your wash based on the weight and softness of the fabric in the load. It then alters the settings for you, saving time and saving your clothes from damage.

## Online shopping personalisation

Online shopping has been also transformed by AI. Retailers use AI algorithms to analyse browsing history, and preferences to recommend products. This personalisation enhances the shopping experience,

making it more efficient and enjoyable – and may also help you find the best price. Additionally, some websites have AI-powered chatbots providing instant customer support, answering queries and assisting with purchases.

## Navigation and travel

AI is at the core of modern navigation apps like Google Maps. These apps use real-time data and machine learning to provide optimal routes, public transport delays and cancellations. They can also predict travel times and suggest the best departure times, making commuting more efficient. In the travel industry, AI helps with booking flights and accommodations, offering personalized recommendations based on past behaviour and preferences.

## Content recommendations

Streaming and podcasting services like Netflix, Audible and YouTube rely on AI to suggest content that aligns with your interests. By analysing your viewing or listening history, these platforms curate personalised playlists, book suggestions and video recommendations which not only enhances user satisfaction, but also helps you discover new content that you might enjoy.

## Financial fraud detection

Banks and financial institutions are now using AI to monitor





transactions and detect unusual activity. Algorithms analyse patterns in spending behaviour and flag anomalies that could indicate fraud. This proactive approach helps protect customers and enhances security.

### Health and fitness

Wearable devices like Fitbit and Apple Watch use AI to track our physical activity, heart rate, sleep patterns and more. These devices provide insights into your health and fitness, offering personalised recommendations to improve well-being. AI-powered apps can also guide workouts, suggest meal plans, and even monitor chronic conditions, making health management more accessible.

### Customer service

AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants are transforming customer service. Available 24/7, they can handle a wide range of inquiries, from troubleshooting technical issues to processing returns. This not only improves customer satisfaction but also frees up human agents to handle more complex tasks. For some this may mean less time in the dreaded 'on hold' waiting time for customer service.

### Email Management

Managing an overflowing inbox can be daunting, but AI can help!

Email services like Gmail use AI to filter spam, categorise emails, and prioritise important messages, while features like Smart Reply and Smart Compose suggest responses and complete sentences, making email communication more efficient.

### Photography

Modern smartphone cameras use AI to enhance our photography by adjusting the exposure, focus and colour balance to capture the best possible image. Features like 'portrait mode', 'scene recognition', and 'low-light enhancement' can make it easier to take quality photos without the need for advanced photography skills.

These everyday AI applications can make life more convenient. And as technology continues to evolve, its role in our daily lives is set to expand, offering even more innovative solutions to everyday challenges. Whether you're making the most of voice assistants, smart home devices, or personalised content recommendations, AI is here to stay – so maybe it's time to see how it can work for you?

**If there's anything you think AI and digital technology may be able to help you with, please ask your community staff or contact the MeSH helpline. They'll refer you over to us in Digital Inclusion and we'll be happy to help. 🤖**



# Footcare for people with sight loss

As we head into summer, now's the time to think about your feet. Our Rehabilitation Officers share the following footcare tips...



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**Always wear shoes or slippers indoors to avoid slips**

**Wearing suitable footwear**  
If you have sight loss, you're at a greater risk of tripping or slipping, so wearing suitable footwear is crucial. Think about the following:

- Never walk indoors in bare feet, socks or tights. To avoid slips, always wear shoes or slippers.
- Wear shoes that fit well. High-sided shoes with low heels, thin soles and a good grip are a good choice.
- Wear slippers that have a good grip and fasten up. Loose or worn-out slippers may cause you to trip.
- Make sure your socks fit properly, paying particular attention to the width for your foot and ankle. If you have swollen feet, look for socks designed to accommodate your swelling. Elastic-free socks are available to help prevent them cutting into your leg.
- If you have difficulty feeling your feet properly (neuropathy), →





### It's important to keep your feet clean

make sure there are no knobbly seams inside your socks that may rub and damage your skin. Turning your socks inside out can help prevent rubbing.

### Keeping your feet clean

**It's important to keep your feet clean and dry. Follow these tips for people with sight loss:**

- Wash your feet every day in warm soapy water, but don't soak them as this might destroy your skin's natural oils. If you are vision impaired, the safest way to do this may be to simply have regular baths or

showers, whichever you find easiest.

- Sit in a chair to dry your feet thoroughly after washing them. Make sure they are dry between the toes, which is where fungal infections like athlete's foot can develop.
- If your skin is dry, apply moisturising cream all over the foot, except for between the toes.
- As well as changing your socks regularly, wear socks made of cotton, wool or bamboo. These allow your feet to breathe and help keep them at the right temperature.

- If finding matching socks is difficult, a good tip is to buy multiple pairs in the same colour. Read our guide, [Getting ready for the day with low vision](#) for more tips on dressing.

### Keeping your toenails short

**Good nail care can help to keep feet feeling comfortable. Nails that are too long can press against the end of the shoe and cause soreness. These tips are for people with sight loss:**

- Be very careful when cutting toenails – with a vision impairment it can be easier to accidentally cut the toes. Toenails that have been poorly cut can become ingrown and small cuts on the foot can become easily infected.
- If possible, get your toenails cut by a friend or family member, or book an appointment with a podiatrist, which has the added advantage of frequent expert foot inspections.
- Many local Age UKs offer toenail-cutting services. This service operates from a number of clinics. Visit [ageuk.org.uk](http://ageuk.org.uk) to find out more.

### Inspecting your feet

**A regular foot inspection can pick up common issues like corns and ingrown toenails. This is crucial if you have a condition such as diabetes, arthritis or circulation issues. The following tips can help:**

- If you have low vision you may be

**As well as changing your socks regularly, wear socks made of cotton, wool or bamboo**

able to use a lighted magnifying mirror to inspect your feet.

- If you can't rely on your vision to see problems on your feet, you can make use of your other senses, such as your sense of touch and smell. An exceptionally bad smell on the feet is often associated with an infection. Sometimes the smell of the feet changes before any other sign of an infection is present.

### Tactile foot inspection

1. Sit and lift a bare foot to your lap if you can.
2. Using the balls of your fingers and thumbs, search your feet all over for irregularities of texture and shape, and any areas of pain.
3. Turn your hand over. The back of the hand is more highly sensitive to temperature changes. You can use it to find any spots that are unusually warm, which may indicate an inflammation.
4. Feel the entire top and bottom surfaces of your foot and toes, and the sides of your foot with the back of your hand.
5. Repeat with your other foot. →





## Footcare in hot weather

- Never walk barefoot on the beach, at the pool or inside your home. This will help you avoid sharp objects, burns from hot pavement or sand and contact with viruses or bacteria, which can lead to fungal infections or other foot problems.
- Apply sunscreen to the tops and bottoms of your feet to protect against sunburn.
- Use caution when walking near campfires or barbecues.
- Wear support stockings and elevate your feet when possible if you experience swelling. This can help to prevent impaired circulation and nerve function.

## Footcare in cold weather

- Invest in warm winter boots with a good grip for wet or icy conditions.
- When indoors, wear warm slippers with a good grip which fasten up properly so you won't trip over them.
- If your feet get cold in bed, invest in an electric blanket rather than a hot water bottle which could burn you. Electric blankets are generally easy to operate and have built-in timers.
- As the winter months are colder and darker than usual, you may be less inclined to check your bare feet. Making regular appointments with a podiatrist will make sure your feet are looked after all year round.



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**It's a good idea to get your feet checked by a chiropodist**

### Where can I get my feet checked?

If you are concerned about your feet, or you have a foot condition which is affecting your health or mobility, you may be able to have a routine chiropody appointment on the NHS. A chiropodist (also known as a podiatrist) can treat most common problems successfully.

Contact your doctor to see if you are eligible for NHS treatment. You can also pay privately. 🐾

# Member voice

Our Member Engagement and Military Lead, **Tim Eckersley**, shares your latest news and updates

## Annual Members Conference

This year's annual Member Conference took place last month in Birmingham, and was a great success.

We appreciate that not all Members were able to attend, so we're organising local community events to give you the chance to hear the latest charity information from our Executive Leadership team.

Please liaise with your local Community team to find out what's going on near you. Alternatively, you can contact MeSH on **0300 111 22 33**. The deadline for submissions is the 28 of June 2025.

- **If you have a question you'd like to ask, please call MeSH for support or complete the online form at [blindveterans.org.uk/question](https://blindveterans.org.uk/question)**

## Remembrance Weekend - Cenotaph 2025

There will be four main events in London for Blind Veterans UK over Remembrance Weekend in November 2025. Members have →



**Members at Remembrance 2024**





**Member Ted enjoys learning about wartime weaponry from the Military Vehicles Trust at the VE Day 80 commemorations at Petwood Hotel**

the opportunity to register for as many events as they like. However, due to limited spaces available for the Festival of Remembrance and Remembrance Parade, names will be chosen via a random ballot later this year for these events.

- **Sir Arthur Pearson Memorial Service** at Hampstead Cemetery, London on Saturday, 8 November

between 11am to 12pm.

- **Festival of Remembrance** at the Royal Albert Hall, London on Saturday, 8 November, arrival from 1pm.
- **Informal evening social event** at the Victory Services Club, London on Saturday, 8 November between 6-10pm.
- **Remembrance Parade** at the London Cenotaph on Sunday, 9



**Top: Members with Mark Sugden  
Bottom: With some of the children**

November between 9am to 1pm.

- **For further information and to register, go to [blindveterans.org.uk/cenotaphweekend](http://blindveterans.org.uk/cenotaphweekend)**

## VE Day 80 event at Petwood Hotel

On 8 May, the Member Engagement Team (MET) organised VE Day 80

celebrations at Petwood Hotel in Woodhall Spa.

More than 100-guests attended this special event, including our Members, Forces personnel and corporate sponsors. We also welcomed three WWII Members, as well as Squadron Leader, Mark Sugden – the Officer Commanding for the Battle of Britain Flight Memorable Flight (BBMF) – and Flt Lieutenant Simon Parker, Chief of Staff.

Over 25 Second World War jeeps, trucks and motor bikes were on display – some of which guests even had the opportunity to take a ride in. And we also welcomed 64 school children from St Andrew's Church of England Primary School who met with our members and read VE-Day stories to everyone, which was brilliant.

Founders Awards were presented to two Members and, to finish off, Mark Sugden flew a Hurricane plane over head. What a day!

## National engagement events

- **To book a place at any of our national engagement events, please visit [blindveterans.org.uk/events](http://blindveterans.org.uk/events) or call MeSH on 0300 111 22 33.**



# National Creative Project

This month's VI-friendly creative activities you can take part in – all from the comfort of your own home

Here's the programme of VI friendly creative activities for June, to take part in from home. Please call **01273 391447** and leave a message on the NCP answer machine to request a project pack. You can also request a pack via the Members' area of the website. All projects come with VI friendly instructions and the option of audio instructions on a USB stick or by email if you request it.



**Our Taj Mahal model**

There may be a short delay on dispatch this month. Please bear with us as we should be back to normal soon.

## Summer mandala mosaic

For the last of our seasonal mandala mosaics, we have chosen rich, warm summer colours for this design made up of concentric circles. Your tiles will be pre-sorted for you into labelled bags and you'll receive everything else you need for your mosaic, along with a step-by-step guide.

## Taj Mahal

A few of you have requested models of buildings – so we hope you love this Taj Mahal model. Despite having 171 pieces, it's extremely symmetrical and a lot of parts are repeated so it's easier than it might seem. You'll receive a step-by-step graphic guide to help you complete it with some glue and sandpaper. The dimensions of the finished model are 18cm x 22cm x 22cm.



**Spring mandala mosaic**

## Butterfly house

We're delighted to share this woodwork project with you, which once constructed acts as a safe haven for butterflies and other insects when hung in a sunny spot in the garden. To support with this project, we've labelled the pieces and added high contrast stickers to help you identify the pre-drilled holes, along with a step-by-step guide. You will need a hammer, Philips head screwdriver and a bradawl.

## Also available

### Woodland trio – mouse

This is part of our woodland trio of simple model kits which will be available throughout 2025. You can pre-order for the hedgehog now if you like and these will be sent out from July.

## Join our distribution lists

We have automatic distribution lists for our mosaic, wooden model and indoor gardening projects. If you'd like

to be added to one or more of these lists, please get in touch to let us know which you'd like to receive.

Once on the list, you will be automatically sent our new projects for that craft as soon as they're ready. If your circumstances change and you'd like to be taken off the list, or pause your projects, you can just get in touch at any time to let us know.

■ **We always love hearing from you, whether it's to share photos and feedback or just to have a chat about your crafting activities. Please don't hesitate to email us at [ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk](mailto:ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk)**



**Woodland trio – mouse**



# Your crafting stories

We love showcasing our Members' creative talents. This month, Members **Brian Hole** and **Barry Woon** talk about the delights they've been busy making



**Brian shows off his colourful paracord macrame creations**

## Brian Hole

"I was originally introduced to the art of macrame by another Member. This is a textile artform based on making decorative knots – its origins lie in knotting techniques used by sailors. I decided to try using paracord to make things with as the bright and cheerful colours are more decorative, but also easier for me to see since losing my sight.

I now make all sorts of things, like bracelets and key chains. I like making these as gifts to share with my loved ones. I have also recently been selling

**"I've also recently been selling these at local events to raise funds for Blind Veterans UK"**

these at local events to raise funds for Blind Veterans UK.

I think it's important to keep busy and I like doing all sorts of crafts – I also make mosaics and wooden models. I'd encourage every Member to give it a go – no matter how easy it seems!"

## Barry Woon:

Like many of you, Barry has been busy building the dragon boat wooden model from the National

Creative Project as he enjoys the challenge. He loves building these models independently and has built many over the years.

Whether you build models on your own or with some support, we'd encourage you to give it a go. As our dragon boat model has been really popular it will now be available permanently, so nobody misses out. If you're looking for something easier, our woodland trio models might be a good place to start. 🐉



**Barry with his amazing dragon boat model**





# Quiz time

Our Members test your general knowledge.

1. Who was the first woman in the House of Commons?

2. Which President of the US was sworn in on Air Force One?  
a) John F Kennedy  
b) Richard Nixon  
c) Lyndon B Johnson

3. Which animated movie released in the '90s featured the song, 'A Whole New World'?

4. What art movement does Salvador Dalí belong to?
5. What star sign is symbolised by a pair of scales?

6. What's the main ingredient in tofu?

7. Who is the most decorated Olympian in Olympic history?

8. What's the capital of Australia?

9. Who was the lead singer of the '90s grunge band Nirvana?

Answers are on page 51



Air Force One... where a US president was sworn in



# Family news

**Charles Beck** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 9 June 2025.

**Edward Shipley** who celebrates his 101st birthday on 10 June 2025.

**George Bleasdale** who celebrates his 100th birthday on 29 June 2025.

**Joan Grocott** who celebrates her 102nd birthday on 13 June 2025.

**John Lacey** who celebrates his 103rd birthday on 13 June 2025.

**Joseph Jervis** who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 19 June 2025.

**June Franks** who celebrates her 101st birthday on 12 June 2025.

**Kenneth Neil** who celebrates his 104th birthday on 17 June 2025.

**Raymond Robers** who celebrates his 101st birthday on 27 June 2025.

**Stephen Goodall** who celebrates his 103rd birthday on 18 June 2025.

## Condolences

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following, and we offer our heartfelt condolences.

**Pauline Beacroft** who died on 1 April 2025. She was the wife of James (Jimmy) William Beacroft.

**Maureen Hartburn** who died on 28 April 2025. She was the wife of Gordon Hartburn.

**Sheila Massey** who who died on 9 May 2025. She was wife of Kenneth Massey.

**Chris Pollard** who died on 6 May 2025. She was wife of Ivor Metcalfe Pollard.

All birthday information was correct at the time of going to press





Listen  
here

# 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

**Brian Austin** of Cleckheaton who died on 9 April 2025 aged 77. He serves as a Sergeant in the Royal Airforce.

**Edmund Bailey** of Hornchurch who died on 19 April 2025 aged 95. He served as a Lance Bombardier in the Royal Artillery.

**Kenneth Batt** of Loughton who died on 30 April 2025 aged 103. He served as a Private in the Royal Armoured Corps.

**John Brandon Bodkin** of Bexhill-on-sea who died on 12 April 2025 aged 96. He served in the Royal Airforce.

**William Brand** of Kikcaldy who died on 1 May 2025 aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers.

**Benjamin Chipchase** of Haltwhistle who died on 1 May 2025 aged 93. He served as a signalman in the Royal Signals.

**Stephen Daly** of Malvern who died on 8 May 2025 aged 61. He served as a Sailor 1st class in the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment.

**Ronald Debins** of Redruth who died on 16 April 2025 aged 87. He served as a Guardsman in the Coldstream Guards.

**James Dougan** of Carlisle who died on 28 March 2025 aged 92. He served as an S.A.C in the Royal Airforce.

**Brian Driscoll** of Farnham who died on 28 April 2025 aged 97. He served as an A.C.2 in the Royal Airforce.

**Ronald Dutton** of Whitley Bay who died on 30 April 2025 aged 86. He served as a Guardsman in the Coldstream Guards.

**Peter Edden** of Ipswich who died on 14 April 2025 aged 87. He served as a Private in the Royal Signals.

**Godfrey Elliott** of Beccles who died on 9 April 2025 aged 88. He served as an S.A.C in the Royal Airforce.

**John Endres** of Ellesmere Port who died on 1 April 2025 aged 96. He served as a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Dragoon Guards.

**Constance Evans** of London who died on 20 March 2025 aged 103. She served as a Private in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

**William Fish** of Forest Row who died on 1 April 2025 aged 96. He served in the Royal Airforce.

**Brian Fitzsimons** of Westbury who died on 10 May 2025 aged 89. He served as an L.A.C in the Royal Airforce.

**Robert Fletcher** of Manchester who died on 28 April 2025 aged 89. He served as a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Artillery.

**David Frost** of Uckfield who died on 19 April 2025 aged 97. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Service Corps.

**Donald Grocock** of Scunthorpe who died on 27 April 2025 aged 92. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

**Henry Joseph Hall** of Sevenoaks who died on 2 May 2025 aged 94. He served as a Leading Seaman in the Royal Navy.





**Alfred Hall** of Morecambe who died on 1 April 2025 aged 106. He served in the Royal Engineers.

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**Eric Fred Henderson** of Dinas Powys who died on 1 April 2025 aged 93. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

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**Robert Hilton** of Bury St Edmunds who died on 1 April 2025 aged 90. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

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**Allan Hodson** of Colchester who died on 23 March 2025 aged 93. He served as a Warrant Officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

---

**Raymond Hogbin** of Hove who died on 30 March 2025 aged 96. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

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**Duncan Hone** of Stockport who died on 22 April 2025 aged 60. He served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy.

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**Derek Huckle** of Leatherhead who died on 16 April 2025 aged 92. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Army Service Corps.

---

**Fredrick Jewett** of Newcastle-upon-Tyne who died on 25 March 2025 aged 101. He served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy.

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**James Johnston** of Bishopton who died on 1 March 2025 aged 72. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

---

**John Jones** of Llandrindod Wells who died on 4 April 2025 aged 95. He served as an A.C.1 in the Royal Airforce.

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**Cyril Martin** of Gillingham who died on 1 April 2025 aged 99. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Armoured Corps.

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**Valerie Maskell** of Newbury who died on 1 April 2025 aged 101. She served as a Private in the Voluntary Aid Detachment.

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**Robert McCann** of Millisle who died on 17 April 2025 aged 74. He served as a Warrant Officer 2nd Class in the Royal Irish Regiment.

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**Sydney McCluskey** of Bolden Colliery who died on 24 April 2025 aged 90. He served as a Substantive Corporal in the Royal Airforce.

---

**Martin McDonald** of Derby who died on 1 April 2025 aged 63. He served in the Prince of Wales Division.

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**Dorothy Morgan** of Oxted who died on 29 April 2025 aged 98. She served as an L.A.C.W in the Women's Royal Airforce.

---

**Graham Ody** of Windsor who died on 28 April 2025 aged 91. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals.

---

**Wilfred Osbourne** of Dorchester who died on 8 March 2025 aged 103. He served as a Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy.

---

**Alec Price** of Aberdare who died on 4 April 2025 aged 86. He served in the Royal Artillery.

---

**Charles Rhodes** of Helston who died on 23 April 2025 aged 87. He served as a Trooper in the Royal Armoured Corps.

---

**Eric Sayce** of Rugby who died on 5 May 2025 aged 90. He served as an S.A.C in the Royal Airforce.

---

**David Scott** of Tunbridge Wells who died on 5 May 2025 aged 100. He served as a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy.

---

**Harold Slack** of Preston who died on 14 April 2025 aged 97. He served as an Air Mechanic 1st class in the Royal Navy Air Service.

---

**Edward Swan-Wilkins** of Torquay who died on 3 May 2025 aged 96. He served as a Private in the Army Catering Corps.

---

**Alan Taylor** of Hastings who died on 12 May 2025 aged 87. He served as a Marine in the Royal Marines.

---

**Roger Thomas** of Bristol who died on 29 April 2025 aged 97. He served as a Trooper in the Royal Armoured Corps.

---

**Joshua Thornton** of Berwick-upon-Tweed who died on 4 May 2025 aged 90. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

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**Clive Tonks** of Wrexham who died on 15 April aged 88. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

**Kenneth Vivash** of North Anston who died on 1 February 2025 aged 83. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Airforce.

**Eric White** of Northampton who died on 17 April 2025 aged 98. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Airforce.

**Andrew Wright** of Upminster who died on 12 April 2025 aged 87. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

**Doreen Yousif** of Stafford who died on 21 April 2025 aged 85. She served as a Private in the Womens Royal Army Corps.

**George Zagrofos** of London who died on 1 May 2025 aged 99. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

**Did you know that we can set up online Tribute Pages for the loved ones of staff, Members and Supporters? Find out more about setting up a Tribute Page here: [blindveteransuk.muchloved.org](https://blindveteransuk.muchloved.org)**



## Contact details

**Contact address** Blind Veterans UK,  
126 Fairlie Road, Slough, SL1 4PY  
**0300 111 22 33**

**Member Support Hub (MeSH):**  
**01273 391 447**

**New Members:** Anyone who may be eligible to join Blind Veterans UK, can phone our Membership Department on freephone **0800 389 7979**.

**Rustington Centre: 01903 945 300**

**Llandudno Centre: 01492 868 700**



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### Quiz answers – from page 40

1. Lady Nancy Astor 2. Lyndon B. Johnson 3. Aladdin 4. Surrealism
5. Libra 6. Soybeans 7. Michael Phelps
8. Canberra 9. Kurt Cobain

### A different format?

If you would like to receive your copy of Review in a different format, please contact your Community Support Worker or ROVI for more information.



