

Review



Listen
here

The journal of
Blind Veterans UK

February 2025

The legacy of Sir Arthur

**Celebrating 110 years of
our dedicated service**

Inside:

Remembering Operation Herrick

Roan's story of retinitis pigmentosa

Help with the cost of living



Rebuilding
lives after
sight loss



VE-Day 80 celebrations - Petwood Hotel

This event offers a unique experience to share memories, celebrate together, enjoy a delicious buffet and explore over 15-WW2 vehicles and equipment which will be on display during the event, courtesy of The Military Vehicle Trust.

A 1940's DJ and singer will be providing entertainment throughout the event. Don't miss out on this



unique opportunity to savour our military traditions. Mark your calendars and get ready for a military event to remember.

Please note: This event is free to registered Members.

Venue

Stixwould Road, Woodhall Spa
LN10 6QG

Ballot tickets

Due to the expected high level of interest for this event, Members expressing their interest to attend will be chosen via a random ballot.

The deadline to register interest is 7 March and we will let you know if you've been successful via email, letter or phone call by Wednesday 19 March 2025 (Please note, letters may take slightly longer).

■ **Find out more and register your interest in attending by visiting www.blindveterans.org.uk/petwood instead or by phone on 0300 111 2233.**



Contents

- 04** A message from our CEO
- 06** News
- 09** Jamie Weller, 1970 – 2023
- 10** In your community
- 14** Operation Herrick: ten years on
- 17** Roan's story: From dark to light
- 20** We're 110 years old!
- 23** John awarded British Empire Medal
- 25** Syd's portrait crowned Portrait of Britain
- 26** Get involved in VE80!
- 28** Cost of living assistance
- 30** Member voice
- 33** National Creative Programme
- 35** New year, new start for the NCP
- 37** Quiz time
- 38** Family news
- 39** In memory
- 47** Contact details
- 48** Portrait Photograph of Sir Arthur Pearson

On the cover

A photograph from the Blind Veterans UK Archive showing three year old Ruby guiding a blinded first world war soldier through the garden at St Dunstons.



A significant year in our proud history

A message from your CEO, **Adrian Bell**

Although it will be February when you read this, I would still like to wish you all a Happy New Year. I do hope you all had an enjoyable and restful festive break.

Both the Chair of Trustees, Barry Coupe, and I have written about the charity's significant annual financial



Adrian Bell

deficit (presently about £12 million pounds per year) and the work the charity must undertake to reduce this and balance the budget to ensure that the charity is financially sustainable for the long-term and, vitally, in the best position possible to continue supporting our Members.

As I write this, we have been working with Board committees to allow Trustees to scrutinise, test and challenge the information and evidence we have provided prior to a full Board meeting shortly thereafter to allow initial decisions to be made. More decisions will need to follow in due course as we take the actions necessary to put the charity on a steady footing.

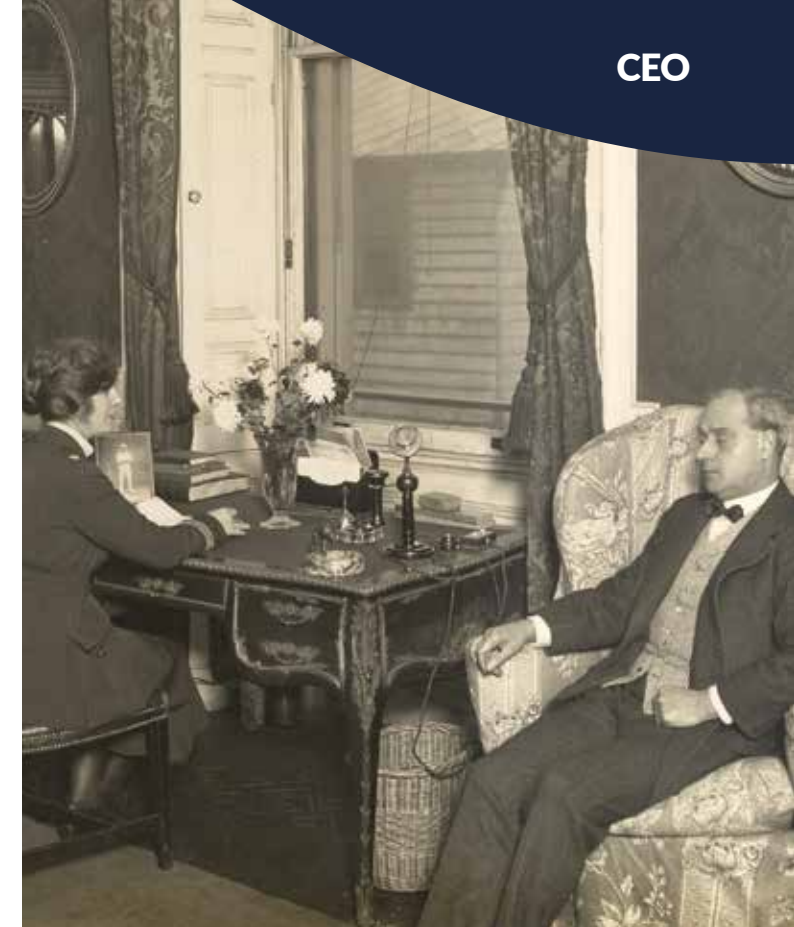
The Member Conference and Member Survey have been critical elements in this work, and I am hugely grateful to all of you who contributed. We will be holding another Member conference, in Birmingham in the

spring I hope to see as many of you there as are able to come and information about how to register over the page.

This month also marks the 110th anniversary of our wonderful charity. You can read more about our earliest history on p.20. I have studied many of the Annual Reports from the charity's earliest days and I very much hope that if Sir Arthur Pearson or Lord Fraser were alive today, they would approve of what we are doing to ensure the longevity of the charity. On that note, in considering the volatile nature of the world we inhabit today and the war that continues in Eastern Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we are reviewing our plans and preparations for the care and support of future war-blinded service personnel. I sincerely hope that we never need to enact such plans but we do need to be prepared.

On a personal level, at the end of January I am having to step back from my role as Chief Executive for a short while as I have very recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer and need to undergo surgery pretty quickly.

My treatment will likely have started by the time you're reading this, and I have been advised that I will need to



Our founder Arthur Pearson in his office in Regent's Park

be off work for up to two months to allow me to take the time necessary to recover.

Amongst all the swirl of emotion that goes with this, I am devastated that I will be absent from my role during this period but can assure you all that the charity is in very good hands with the present Leadership Team. Gazala Hurley, Chief Operating Officer and my deputy, will step up as Acting Chief Executive in my absence.

I look forward to returning as soon as I am able and getting back to work to continue supporting our charity's mission as we enter our 111th year. 🌍



Gazala Hurley, stepping in as Acting Chief Executive

News

Gazala steps up as Adrian recuperates

As Adrian has shared in his message on page 4, a recent diagnosis of prostate cancer means he's been forced to take a temporary leave of absence to focus on his recovery.

During his absence, the Senior Leadership Team at Blind Veterans UK will work together to ensure

the charity continues its vital work seamlessly, with Chief Operating Officer, Gazala Hurley, stepping in as Acting Chief Executive. Together with the Board the team will continue to work on the charity's transformation plans over the coming months, whilst ensuring the smooth daily running of our services.

We are sure you will join us in wishing Adrian a swift recovery.

Sign up to our monthly e-newsletter

Did you know, you can receive all the latest Member news, announcements and opportunities for you and your family in your e-mail inbox every month?

Whether you are a Member, a family member or a carer, all you need to do is visit the Member area on our website at blindveterans.org.uk/member-updates and sign up. Simple.

Annual Member Conference 2025

We are pleased to invite you to the Blind Veterans UK Member Conference 2025.

The conference, led by our Chief Executive Adrian Bell, will give you the chance to share your thoughts, feedback and ideas on important decisions regarding our future strategy. At the same time, you will be able to get together with your fellow Members and meet senior staff from across the charity.

Due to expected high levels of interest, Members expressing their interest to attend this event will be chosen via a random ballot.

Venue

Aston Conference Centre
Aston University, Birmingham
B4 7ET

■ The date has not yet been finalised but it is likely to be in May. The latest information will be available at www.blindveterans.org.uk/events/annual-member-conference-2025 or by phone on 0300 111 2233. You can also register your interest in these places. →



Be part of our Member Conference



JEFF WHYTE / ADOBE STOCK

A member of the Armed Forces standing in front of a Union Jack flag

Help shape the future of the Veterans' card

The Government Digital Service (GDS) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) are currently working in partnership to explore thoughts and experiences towards the Veterans' Card, as well as other possible future options.

They are looking to speak to both veterans and organisations that support veterans, and would love to attend a group session you already have planned or set up remote interviews. They will ask you questions about the Veterans' Card and show you other initiatives they are working on to gather your feedback.

■ **If you would like to learn more, then please complete this short form to register your interest here: <https://forms.office.com/e/XbVZxFmTNA>**

You can get in touch with them to find out more details about what to expect without committing. If you decide not to take part, you can simply let them know and they will remove your details from their research records.

■ **Your data will be handled in accordance with their policies. If you have any questions for them, please send them an email at DBSDIT-AGUserResearch@mod.gov.uk**



Jamie Weller, 1970 - 2023

We are extremely sad to share news of the death of Member and former Blind Veterans UK Trustee, **Jamie Weller**, who passed away on 27 November, aged 54.

A much-loved Member who will have been known by so many of you, Jamie was supported by the charity for over 30 years.

Having joined the Royal Navy in 1988 and served as an Engineer Mechanic 1st Class, it was just three years later that Jamie lost his sight at the age of 20. He joined St Dunstan's, as the charity was called then, soon after and, after an initial stay at our Brighton Centre for training, began a truly remarkable journey of astounding achievements.



Jamie Weller and his guide dog Freddie

After graduating with a Mathematics degree from the University of Warwick, Jamie not only became the UK's first blind chartered tax adviser, but also went on to compete for Great Britain at the Invictus Games in Toronto in 2017, winning four medals. He experienced success in so many ways and was a great example to all.

Jamie was also an enthusiastic advocate for many charities and organisations, including Blind Veterans UK. He worked closely with Help for Heroes, the Royal British Legion and Guide Dogs, to name just a few. He was always the first to take on new challenges, often with his guide dog, Freddie, by his side. He wrote an article for Review, published in the November issue, detailing his amazing journey with the Veterans' Comedy Club.

Jamie will be missed by all those who knew him. We are sure you will want to join us in passing on our most sincere condolences to his wife, Katrina, his daughters, Madeleine and Poppy, and all his family and friends. 🐾



The Grinch at Christmas and Members playing games on New Year's eve party

In your community

Read about some of the social gatherings across the country bringing together Members in their local areas

In Llandudno

Our Llandudno Centre kicked off the New Year in style with everyone dressing up for Christmas dinner in the Hogwart's dining hall. As well as

eating too much turkey and mince pies, our Members enjoyed a whole host of entertainments including a visit from the cheeky grinch, Christmas carols sung by staff, and a Boxing Day full of crafting and curling!

Left and top: Canterbury Cathedral Carol service, and right, Cornwall Christmas lunch

All the Members who joined us may otherwise have been alone at Christmas. They had a joyous time with their fellow blind veterans. Then, on New Year's Eve, even more Members partied through the night at our New Years eve bash, playing games and showing off their dance moves.

In Canterbury

A group of Members and their families and friends came together at

Canterbury Cathedral for a Christmas carol service. The cathedral was beautifully decorated, and the guide dogs danced along to the music.

In East Cornwall

East Cornwall members had their Christmas lunch celebrations in Liskeard, where they came together with staff and volunteers to share lots of laughter and sport stylish multi-coloured cracker party hats. →



Sleaford social group and, on the right, Peterborough festive lunch

In Sleaford

Why not have the first meeting of a new social group in Sleaford at Christmas? It was a wonderful festive lunch for Members at a venue they have all been to individually before. The creation of this group was Member-led by Peter Ruffy, who is also a volunteer. We also invited along Cpl Chris Lake to present a Founders Day Award for Carer's Recognition to Gill Terry, the sister of Member Paul Ruffy and Peter's daughter. Gill sadly passed away earlier this year,

but not before moving heaven and earth to ensure Paul received the care he needed. It was an extra special occasion.

In Peterborough

Peterborough Peer support group enjoyed a lovely festive lunch, thanks go to our fabulous volunteers, Diane and Paul. We were also delighted to be joined by Gina, our wonderful admin for Region 4, which meant the Members could finally meet the

Participants enjoying the Crawley lunch at Frogshole Farm

person at the end of the phone they so often speak to when booking their lunches. We all had a great time.

In Crawley

Our Crawley Members in Community 18 commenced the final week of Christmas events with a festive lunch at Frogshole Farm. Jan Cooke did a fabulous job organising the event and we were very fortunate to be joined by Paul Schauerman and two volunteers, Darren and Stephen, who added to the

merriment. On top of this, we were able to listen to one of our Members talk about the independent living skills training he received from ROVI Helen Venables, which now means he can cook independently again, despite his sight loss. He's absolutely delighted – as is his wife! 🍷

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.



WIKIPEDIA / CPL MIKE O'NEILL RLC LBIPP/MOD

Soldiers in Afghanistan listen to a briefing in 2012

Operation Herrick: ten years on

To mark a decade since the end of British operations in Afghanistan, we share an extract of a recent interview with Member **Rob Long**, who lost his sight in action

The code name 'Operation Herrick' was the name for all British military activity within Afghanistan between 2002 and 2014. More than 150,000 British service personnel served there

during this 12-year period, which saw 7,807 field hospital admissions, 7,477 medical evacuations, and 616 personnel suffering serious or life-changing injuries.

Among these was blind veteran, Rob Long, a frontline soldier in the Royal Artillery 473 Special Ops Battery. He was just 23 when he lost his sight.

In honour of the ten-year anniversary of Operation Herrick, Rob spoke to our Military Events Officer, Rob Cotterill, about his experience...

Landing in a war zone

"Arriving in theatre, it's what you trained for years. I joined the Army in 2006 and I've done all my training. I've joined an elite battery and now I've been posted to Afghanistan as part of a six-man team to do what I felt was an important job: high, close target surveillance.

"I knew how dangerous it was. In 2010, there was a huge IED (Improvised Explosive Devices) threat. It was something like 1,000 IEDs being laid a month in Sangin alone. We were there to combat that.

"I felt that was an important job, for not only the safety of our troops but the safety of the area. I felt really proud to put my training into action.

"When you fly in, it's on an unmarked plane at night with all the lights off. So you can't really see anything, but you get out there into Kabul and you're met with a military airport, military base

and there's no civvies there anymore. It's 'Welcome to Afghanistan'. You're now in a war zone.

"As soon as we got to Bastion, we were seeing soldiers coming in with the most devastating injuries every day. It hit you straight away what you were up against."

A covert operation

"On 8 July 2010, my patrol was conducting a covert operation outside the Forward Operating Base →



Rob Long

(FOB). The idea was to get in there before first light. As we made our way there, we could see activity - very young spotters with a motorbike. It was clear what they were."

"We did the job we were supposed to be doing and, unfortunately, my patrol commander that day, Sam Robinson, triggered an IED. First light was just coming up. And that was the last time I ever saw light again.

"Sam was killed straight away. My left eye got ripped out straightaway by the blast."

"I remember getting back to the FOB and... making noise out the field is not

what you want to do, but now I'm back in the safety of the FOB... I remember letting out a huge scream of pain. Once I did that, the pain started completely overwhelming me."

Remembering the laughter

"I remember flashes from the IED instrument, but what I really remember about that tour is the laughs we used to have; the jokes; the smiles on the guys faces, and the professionalism of how they did their job.

"These are the images I remember of Afghanistan; of the British Army. This is what stays with me for the rest of my life - not the incident that ended my career.

"Thanks to Blind Veterans UK I've been able to get my life back and make the most out of life. And I do that in honour of those guys who didn't make it back."

Our sincere thanks to Rob for sharing his experience. You can watch, listen or read the full interview at blindveterans.org.uk/opherrick



LESLIE ANGULO / WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

Raising the flag in Afghanistan

From dark to light

To mark Retinitis Pigmentosa Month, Member **Roan Webb**, 55, who was diagnosed with the inherited eye condition in his 20s, shares his moving story



Roan steering a speed boat

When Roan Webb was just 13, he was so determined to join the army and serve in Germany that he chose to learn German at school instead of French. He says, "Seeing what my brother was doing in the army gave me a real taste of military life."

Once joined up, he was posted to Germany as expected and served as a gunner. He loved everything Army life had to offer. He says, "It was some of the best years of my life. I was 16 or 17 and could already speak the lingo. I got involved in all the activities."

A shattered dream

Although Roan excelled in daytime training, he struggled when out in the field at night, though he had no idea why.





Roan flying on a zipline...

He says, "I started experiencing difficulties seeing in the dark. This was when I realised that something wasn't quite right."

"My peers were as confused as I was as to why at night training I seemed to turn into a completely different person. It was frustrating."

He received little support and found himself trying to pretend everything was fine until he could no longer do aspects of his job. He says, "I'd find excuses for why I wasn't doing as well as I should have been because I didn't understand what was going on."



...and taking a mountain top selfie

"There were difficulties as the military didn't understand what I had. They thought that maybe there was something I wasn't quite doing right."

Sitting in darkness

With no chance of promotion, Roan eventually left. His diagnosis came by chance during a visit to the doctor for a migraine. He says, "I was scared. There were certainly periods where I became very insular. I'd be quite happy to stay in my flat in the dark."

Initially reluctant to reach out for support, eventually he agreed to come along to meet other blind veterans. He

"I'm a lot more confident now. I know what I want, and I go for it. Blind Veterans UK has changed my entire life"

says, "That's when everything changed. Suddenly I was reminded of who I really was and what I could do."

Living an active life

Since then, Roan's made the most of our training and rehabilitation, especially in IT and digital technology. He also loves to stay fit and active through gruelling challenge events.

He says, "I started doing sports activities with the charity and still love all kinds of challenges, particularly cycling." He says that this, and all the support we've given him, has completely changed the way he feels about himself.

He says, "Where I am now – socially, mentally, even professionally speaking - I'm in a much better position today than I could have even dreamed of back then.

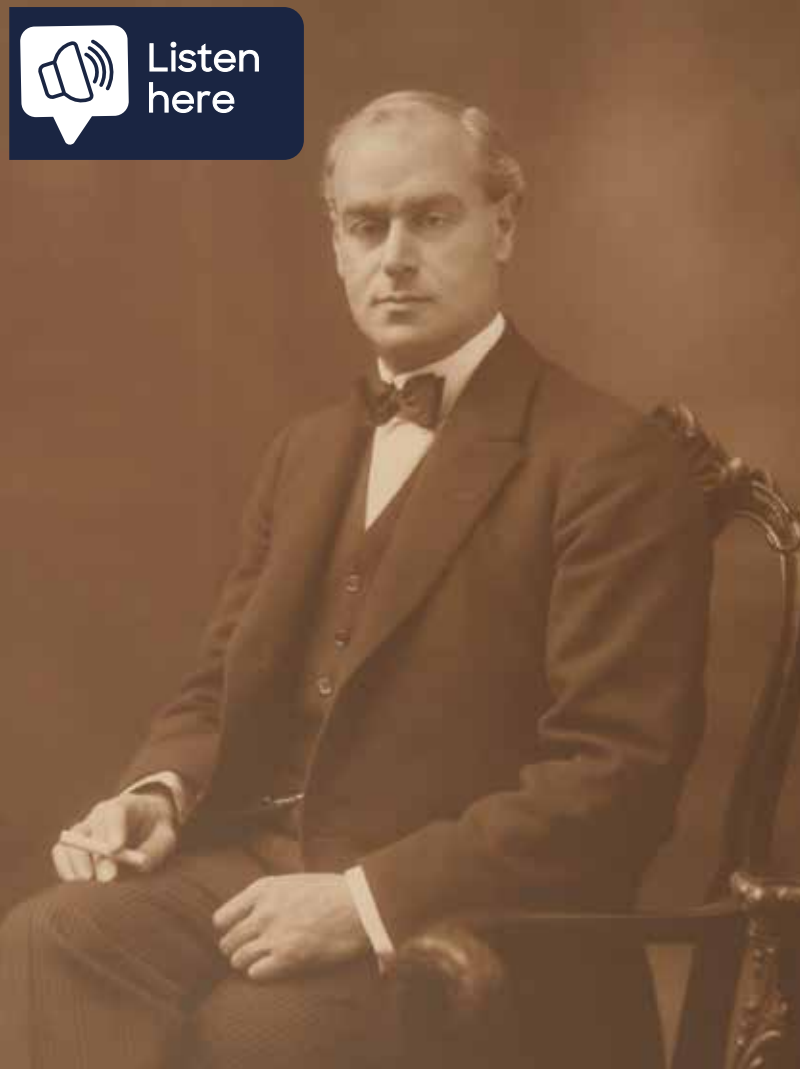
"I'm a lot more confident now. I know what I want, and I go for it. Blind Veterans UK has changed my entire life." 🇬🇧

What is retinitis pigmentosa?

Retinitis pigmentosa (RP) is a group of rare eye diseases that affect the retina (the light-sensitive layer of tissue in the back of the eye). RP is a genetic disease that makes cells in the retina break down slowly over time, causing vision loss.

The most common early symptom of RP is loss of night vision – usually starting in childhood. RP also causes loss of side (peripheral) vision which means that people who have it will have trouble seeing things out of the corners of their eyes.





Clockwise, from left: Founder Sir Arthur Pearson, a staff nurse reading the news to blind veterans, and Members and staff at St Dunstan's Lodge

We're 110 years old!

On 29 January, Blind Veterans UK celebrated 110 years of dedicated service to vision-impaired veterans. Review writer **Mark Wheeler** reports

During the outbreak of the First World War, our founder, Sir Arthur Pearson, a publisher and newspaper owner who had lost his sight due to glaucoma, quickly recognised the urgent need to support soldiers and sailors blinded on the battlefield.

On 29 January 1915, he launched the Blinded Soldiers and Sailors Care Committee at Bayswater Hill in a building leant by a kind supporter.

Although the newly-formed charity only stayed in the building for a short

time, in the early days of February 1915, the charity received its first two blinded soldiers - both Belgian - and began its work in earnest.

The first soldier - almost certainly the first soldier to be blinded in the war - was Oscar Daumont. A rifle bullet had pierced his eyes on the first day of the siege of Liege. As with nearly all wounded Belgians in those early days of war, he had been sent to an English hospital and eventually came to us.

We went on to support seven other Belgians, who lost their sight before the Belgian authorities began caring for their own wounded.

A move to St Dunstan's Lodge

When the move was made on 26 March 1915 to St Dunstan's Lodge, there were just 16 war blinded men. Before the end of 1918, there were over 1,500 names on our books.

St Dunstan's Lodge was put at Sir Arthur's disposal by Mr Otto Kahn, the well-known American financier, as it was his London residence set in Regent's Park. It was a spacious and splendid house, with grounds extending over 15 acres. Not only did he place St Dunstan's at the service of the blinded soldiers free of charge, but he also maintained the grounds and gave Sir Arthur absolute carte blanche

to erect any buildings and effect any alterations necessary.

Over the following months, various workshops, classrooms, offices, storehouses, chapels and recreation rooms sprang up over the gardens, along with additions to the house.

Like most people at that time, Sir Arthur Pearson imagined that the war would be of short duration. But it was certain that among the wounded would be many blinded. He was concerned that everything possible should be done for them after medical science had performed its work.

Teaching men to be blind

In his 1919 autobiography, *Victory Over Blindness*, Sir Arthur Pearson wrote: "With practically no exceptions all the soldiers and sailors of the British Imperial Forces blinded in the war came under my care, in order that they might learn to be blind."

"The main idea that animated me in establishing this hostel for the blinded soldiers was that the sightless men, after being discharged from hospital, might come into a little world where the things which blind men cannot do were forgotten and where everyone was concerned with what blind men can do. A world where they could learn to be blind!"



It was decided to teach the veterans a variety of eight trades and occupations - massage, shorthand writing, telephone operating, poultry farming, joinery, mat making, boot repairing and basketry. It was felt that these provided the most practical openings for the sightless man who desired profitable work.

Sir Arthur also knew that sporting and social activities at Regent's Park were crucial for our early veterans to accept their sight loss and feel a sense of achievement once again. He knew that learning to be blind involved a change in their mental outlook and how important this was in them being able to return home and reclaim their position in society.

The home of happiness

Writing further in his autobiography, Sir Arthur said: "St Dunstan's had been called many names by writers who have visited it; some have called it the Palace of Hope; it has been called the House of Good Comfort; it has been called the Home of Happiness – and the last name is the one I like the best, for happiness has always meant so much at St Dunstan's.

"It meant that the men there were content with the lot that the Fates had dealt out to them. It meant that they had conquered a foe who threatened

"Happiness has always meant so much at St Dunstan's"

to destroy spirit as well as sight. It meant that these determined men had dragged themselves from the dark morass in which they were plunged, that they had set their feet on the velvety, flower spangled lawns which lead through the garden of Endeavour out on to the broad highway of Normal Life."

Supporting blind veterans into the future

Ten years ago, in honour of our Centenary, a plaque was unveiled at our first training centre on Bayswater Hill, now a hotel, by 100-year-old blind veteran Ron Freer, along with the country's first blind cabinet minister David Blunkett.

Our 110th anniversary provides us with another opportunity to celebrate our past and remember the mission we hold dear to honour the legacy of Sir Arthur.

So, with a strong foundation built over 110 years of service, we are determined to continue providing essential support to blind veterans into the future, giving all the training and rehabilitation they need to 'learn to be blind'. 🐶



John is awarded British Empire Medal

Member **John Hardy** receives prestigious accolade for his contribution to the veteran community

We are delighted that Member, John Hardy, has been awarded a British Empire Medal by his Majesty The King in the New Year Honours list. As a founding Trustee of the Bridgewater Community Hub, John has been recognised for his services to the veteran community.

The hub has become an essential support network for veterans and those in the local area. Through John's dedication and commitment, a wide range of activities and events have been established, including veteran breakfast clubs, young carers groups, and social groups for those displaced by the war in Ukraine.

The Covid-19 pandemic threatened the future of the hub, but John saw this as an opportunity to provide different services to the wider community and could regularly be found collecting and delivering prescriptions to housebound individuals.

During the ongoing cost of living crisis, John has worked closely with local retailers to obtain food that would otherwise go to waste, and with a group of volunteers, has been making meals that can be distributed to those who need them. →



John has campaigned for the rights of guide dog users

John says: "It's great to receive the recognition. As any volunteer will say, that's not why we do it, but it's lovely to be appreciated."

John joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1973 and, after basic training, served in Germany and Northern Ireland. He left the Army in 1977 to train as a registered nurse, but re-joined during the First Gulf War.

From 1990, he worked in the military hospital in Riyadh, looking after Servicemen and women who were injured or ill, nursing them back to health, or preparing them for evacuation to the UK.

It was later in life that John had a retinal artery occlusion and abruptly lost his sight. He says: "I woke up unable to see out of my right eye and already had low vision in the left, so I became blind.

"This immediately stopped me from working. I couldn't drive and I couldn't see to read. It was a complete and utter nightmare. I bluffed my way through for about four months, but I was in a dark place and quite depressed."

Luckily, John found out about our charity and has been receiving our support ever since. He says, "Blind Veterans UK has helped me so much

"It's great to receive recognition but, as any volunteer will say, that's not why we do it"

with equipment and training. They gave me a phone that talks to me, a laptop with a large keyboard, and a device that I can listen to magazines and newspapers on. But the most important thing the charity gives you is the realisation that you can still live independently."

As a guide dog user, he recently won a court case judgement against a London hotel which refused him a stay because of his guide dog, Sidney. It was his second successful lawsuit following a similar case against a local restaurant.

Evita Gonzalez Lewis, Guide Dogs Partnership Operations Manager, says: "Congratulations to John on his well-deserved award. What John's done to support his local community is amazing and we're delighted he's been recognised in this way. Thank you to Blind Veterans UK for nominating him.

"We know what a huge contribution John makes, including as a vocal campaigner who's spoken out when he's encountered illegal access refusals with his guide dog, helping to highlight this important issue." 🇬🇧



Syd's D-Day 80 portrait is crowned a winner

Our portrait taken of veteran **Syd Podd** is a winning entry in British Journal of Photography's Portrait of Britain

Last month, we were delighted that a portrait we commissioned of Syd Podd, for the 80th anniversary of D-Day commemorations last year, was among the winners of the British Journal of Photography's Portrait of Britain.

Syd's portrait was one of 100 winning entries that featured in transport hubs, on high streets, and in shopping malls nationwide.

Portrait of Britain celebrates the resilience, diversity and spirit of the people in the UK. The portraits aim to encourage reflection, inspire hope, and highlight the unity and humanity that connect us all.

On D-Day, Syd was an operations air gunner in the RAF with 644 Squadron, aged 21. Flying Halifax bombers and towing gliders, he also supplied underground movements in Europe with their needs.

He recalls seeing the vast array of landing crafts stretching across the

English Channel, likening it to a guards parade. In the very early hours of 6 June, along with 31 other aircraft, Syd headed to the town of Ranville, towing the gliders that they would release into Normandy.

The background image in his portrait shows a Halifax bomber towing a Horsa glider during the Second World War. 🇬🇧



Portrait of Member Syd Podd, Photographed by Richard Canon

Get involved in VE80!

As the nation gets ready for the 80th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe, we share Members' recollections and fundraising activities you can try

On 8 May 1945, the nation rejoiced at the news they had all been waiting and hoping for... Victory in Europe and the end of the war.

Although, one of our Members, Janet, was just seven years old, she clearly remembers the euphoric atmosphere.

She says, "People had managed to save things from their rations and a lady had got lots of crepe paper and made hats for the girls. We all sat on a long table in the street and had jelly and sandwiches, and it was just excitement all round."

Another Member, Evelyn, who sadly is no longer with us, described VE Day as one of the best days of her life in old footage we have of her.

She said, "We danced, cheered, waved, laughed, cried, and sang our hearts out between Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square. Hugging and being hugged, kissing and being kissed, over and over again!"

Meanwhile, Member Peggy, who was 23 at the time, remembers spending the day with her husband, reflecting on their experiences serving in the war before enjoying a walk together.

Now 80 years on, we are calling on our veterans, and your family and friends,



WIKIPEDIA/IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUMS.



Celebrations in London on 8 May 1945

to take inspiration from these stories to celebrate the freedom that was fought so hard for, while raising vital funds for Blind Veterans UK.

Brew up some community spirit

Why not create a Brew Up party in your community, work place or classroom? Bring in opportunities for fun and laughter, and make memories with a 1940s dress up, or a Second World War-themed swot up quiz.

Plan a sponsored walk

Plan a sponsored walk with family, friends or colleagues to your local war memorial and finish off the day in a drinking hole where you can raise a

glass or two together to celebrate an incredible 80 years of freedom.

Get creative with the number 80

Give up a bad habit for 80 days or bake and sell 80 cakes. Walk, run or cycle 80k or swim 80 lengths, Play hop, skip and jump for a combined 80 laps of your playground or do 80 good deeds in exchange of donations.... the possibilities are endless!

■ For more information, visit blindveterans.org.uk/vedaygetinvolved, email fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk or request a call back on 0300 1111 22 33. 📞

Financial assistance to help with the cost of living

If you're struggling with the cost of living, read on to find out where to go for help and what support you may qualify for

There are a number of charities and organisations that can offer advice and may be able to give you financial assistance if you are disabled, vision-impaired and on a low income. Sight loss charity RNIB compiled the following information with Blind Veterans UK and other charities across the sight loss sector.

Where to start

We recommend that you contact your local **social services** team first when you are looking for help to afford items. Whether you are registered with them or not, they may be able to offer help with care home fees, telephone use, adaptations to your home, and holidays and respite breaks.

■ **If you are looking to find out what support is available to you, you can use Turn2us's eligibility checker**

online at grants-search.turn2us.org.uk, contact citizens advice on 0808 223 1133 or visit gov.uk/cost-of-living.

Disabled facilities grants from your local authority

If you live in England, Wales or NI

Your local authority may be able to offer grants for major home adaptations such as installing ramps and improving access to rooms. For England or Wales, contact your local housing authority for an application form. If you're in Northern Ireland, contact your local housing executive grants office.

If you live in Scotland

For anyone living in Scotland, your local authority may be able to provide you with equipment or adaptations that are

essential to your needs. The amount of money available towards this is dependent on your local council.

Help from charities in your area

There may be local charities providing grants **in your area**. You can search for details of regional grant-giving charities on the RNIB's online sightline directory or via Turn2us.

There are also a number of independent local societies for blind and partially sighted people around the country. They may offer grants or the loan of equipment to help you in your daily life.

It is also worthwhile contacting your local Rotary, Round Table or Lions Club to see if they will consider helping you.

Help with holidays

The following organisations, Family Fund and The 3H Foundation, award grants for **disabled people and carers** on low incomes in certain areas across England. The grants are generally awarded from £200-400.

■ **For direct links to support, helplines and eligibility checkers online, please visit blindveterans.org.uk/sight-loss/resources.**



DENYS KURBATOV / ADOBE STOCK

Member voice

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

Founders Day Awards

The pilot scheme launched last January to October has ended. A total of 43 Founders Day Awards were presented throughout the country – 20 in a military mess and

22 in the local community – by senior officials including Brigadiers, Naval Captains, Lord Mayors and Wing Commanders. Following the success of the pilot, Founders Day Awards will recommence this year from January to October.



Founders Day Awards 2023

Military Sight Loss Champions Scheme

We continue to onboard serving personnel across the forces who have the opportunity to fundraise volunteer, and host our events in their mess and download useful content around eye care, including resources.

This is a fantastic opportunity as we continue to build our network within the forces community. You can find more information about the scheme at blindveterans.org.uk/champion

Military anniversaries: The Gulf War

The 28 February 2025 marks 34 years since the Gulf War ended in 1991. This was an armed conflict between Iraq and a 42-country coalition, which was predominantly led by the US.

The invasion was split into two-phases - Operation Desert Shield, signalling the build-up of military personnel and equipment, and Operation Desert Storm, combat and arial bombing of key targets against Iraq in January 1991.

During the conflict, 392 coalition personnel died, including 47 British servicemen.



Member Brian Naylor's Veterans Art Project illustration

Veterans Art Project: VE80

The Veterans Art Project: VE80 is an exciting initiative encouraging you to showcase your creative talents to help raise funds for the charity.

We've received some wonderful artwork submissions themed around VE80, the 80th anniversary of Victory over Europe, marking the end of the second world war.

Member Brian Naylor has submitted fantastic paintings using water colours and fine line pen. Brian first tried painting with water colours whilst at sea. After a 30-year gap, he has taken up the brush again to paint and submitted 12-paintings in





Another of Brian's VE80 illustrations

support of the Veterans Art Project: VE80, hoping to raise funds. This is a great opportunity to show off your artwork. It could be exhibited online and at events, auctioned off, given as gifts and even displayed on our merchandise.

How to take part

Artwork and photography

The project consists of three parts - two artwork kits, suitable for beginners and more experienced artists, and a photography challenge. You're welcome to take part in one, two or all three.

Your personal story

We also ask that you include a short personal story with your submission with a brief outline of your service history, your sight loss journey, the techniques used in your work and the inspiration for your work.

If you're old enough to remember VE Day, we'd love to read about your recollections. If not, the project gives you the chance to explore the theme of war and peace and get creative!

■ Visit blindveterans.org.uk/vap to find out more and request a kit. Alternatively, you can email us at ncwp@blindveterans.org.uk or leave a message on 01273 391 447. If you leave your name and number and a member of the team will call you back.

Give us your feedback

Have you attended a Blind Veterans UK event recently? We'd love to know what you thought of it so we can improve our services and offer more of what you like. Our Members, carers, and even our staff can give events feedback to us directly via the Blind Veterans UK website by using our simple online form at blindveterans.org.uk/event-feedback

Coming up

- **Royal Military Academy Sandhurst Dinner – 28 February**
- **Annual Members Conference (see page 7) – Friday, 7 March**



National Creative Programme

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

Welcome to the February programme of VI-friendly creative activities. Please call **01273 391447** to leave a message and request a project pack. You can also request a pack online at blindveterans.org.uk/member.

All projects come with VI-friendly instructions and the option of audio instructions on a USB stick or by email if you request it.

Dragonboat

We are delighted to share this 141-piece wooden model kit with you.



An assembled dragonboat

The ornamental boat will measure 28cm H x 36cm L x 16cm W when built and the kit comes with bespoke instructions with a step by step, high contrast guide.

Flower mosaic

In time for spring, this cheerful mosaic has been designed for you by the NCP with a step-by-step pattern. Your tiles will be sorted for you into labelled bags, and you'll receive everything else you need in your kit. The base is 20cm wide and the tiles are a cheerful spring mix of greens and pinks.

Papercraft scrapbook

After receiving your lovely feedback, we have designed this kit for you to make a papercraft and collage scrapbook. We've included materials which we hope will inspire you to use this scrapbook in your own unique way - and a few specially chosen items for those of you who take part with children, grandchildren and other little helpers!



Surprise seeds 2025

– outdoor gardening:

Following the success of last year's gardening project, designed and provided by the late Jim Long, this project is back again in his memory, supported by Jim's son, Mick. The varieties of seeds were picked out by Jim and you will receive a pack to try growing in your garden such as broad beans, cabbage, cauliflower and more, as well as separated seeds in labelled plastic bags and a hints and tips guide for planting them in your garden.

Also available:

Winter mandala

Similar to the autumn mandala, this



Jim Long



Painting by Member and watercolour artist, Peter Murphy

design is made up of concentric circles of wintry blues and white tiles.

Watercolour pencils kit

Back by popular demand, this pack comes with a few helpful hints and tips from Member and watercolour artist, Peter Murphy.

Thank you for continuing to return your NCP surveys. Your feedback is so helpful and enables us to shape the service going forward. And thank you for all your suggestions for future projects. We will be looking to make some of these projects a reality this year!

We always love hearing from you, whether it's to share photographs, feedback or just to have a chat about your crafting activities. Please do not hesitate to get in touch via email at ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk 🇬🇧



ALEXANDER RATHS / ADOBE STOCK



Gardening

New year, new start for the NCP

Your National Creative Project (NCP) team, **Lucy Bradshaw** and **Reanna Kite**, share a project update

Hello!

Last year was the busiest year ever for the NCP, with more of you taking part than ever before. Thank you to those of you who sent in your photographs and feedback. We love hearing from you and can't wait to connect with more of you over the coming year.

We're excited to share our plans for this year. We're planning more bespoke craft projects with you and have more than 25 projects planned!

Year-round kits

While we still plan to offer our usual seasonal projects, we'll also have →

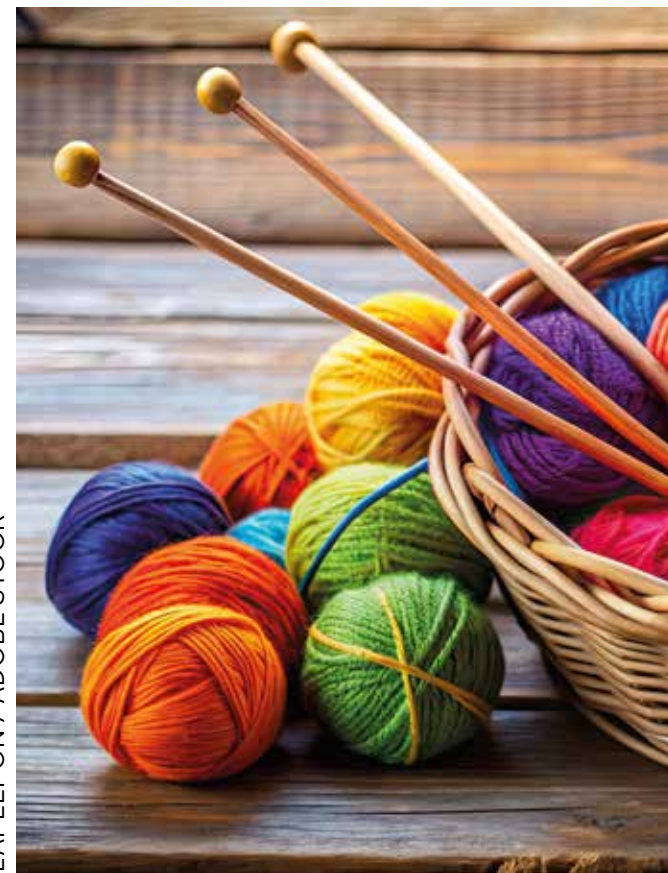


a stock of kits available all year round which we'll be adding to, under the heading, **"Also available"**.

You can take part in as many as these projects as you like and do them more than once if you really enjoy them. Our mosaics and woodwork in this range will be slightly easier than the regular NCP kits, so will be good "tasters" to see if you'd like to try more.

Hobby circles

In addition to this, we'll also continue to run our virtual hobby circles, which take place on the following days:



Knitting

KOLYADZINSKAYA / ADOBE STOCK



Painting and drawing

- **Gardening** – first Tuesday of the month at 11am
- **Knitting** – third Thursday of the month at 10am
- **Woodwork** – last Thursday of the month at 11am

We're also hoping to relaunch our Painting and Drawing hobby circle (on the second Tuesday of the month at 11am). If you're interested in joining, please let us know.

Get in touch

You can send us an email at ncwt@blindveterans.org.uk or leave a voicemail on **01273 391 447**. You can also ask community staff or the Member Support Hub to pass a message on for us to give you a ring if this is easier. 📞

Quiz time

Our quizmaster **Ron Russell** tests your general knowledge

1. What is another name for the constrictor snake, water boa?
2. What is the national flower of Japan?
3. What's the smallest country in the world?
4. On an airfield, what does ATC mean?
5. How many hours are there in two thirds of a day?
a) 8
b) 12
c) 16
6. What is the best-selling book series of the 21st century?
7. David Lloyd George was an MP for over 50 years for which party?
8. What is the last letter of the Greek alphabet?
9. Which is the longest running BBC radio series?
10. How many days does it take the Earth to orbit the sun?



ARCHIVIST / ADOBE STOCK

A water boa



Family news

Frank Buttery who celebrates his 105th birthday on 2nd March 2025.

Estelle Hannaford who celebrates her 104th birthday on 28th February 2025.

Ivy Chafer who celebrates her 103rd birthday on 25th February 2025.

Marjorie Hanson who celebrates her 102nd birthday on 16th February 2025.

Queenie Hall who celebrates her 102nd birthday on 16th February 2025.

Michael Hopkins who celebrates his 100th birthday on 11th February 2025.

Robert Allen who celebrates his 100th birthday on 18th February 2025.

Bernard Williams who celebrates his 100th birthday on 22nd February 2025.

Horace Rathyens who celebrates his 100th birthday on 2nd March 2025.

Condolences

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

Mary King who died on 19th December 2024. She was the wife of Dennis John King.

Helen Wheeler who died on 20th December 2024. She was the wife of Thomas John Wheeler.

Annette Lanchester-Harding who died on 18th of November 2024. She was the wife of Keith Edward Lanchester-Harding.

Rose Smith who died on 15th November 2024. She was the wife of Dennis Smith.

Anne Robinson who died on 1st February 2024. She was the wife of William Edward Robinson.

Valmai Gertrude Bowen who died on 3rd November 2024. She was the wife of Neville Bowen.

Rita Hall who died on 1st October 2024. She was the wife of William Walter Hall.

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



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

Ada Cecilia Cockings of Romford, London died on 1 December 2024 aged 98. She served as a Private in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Alan Benjamin Allport of London died on 28 October 2024 aged 86. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Alan Campbell Woodward of Bolton died on 9 November 2024 aged 94. He served as an Acting Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Alan Donald Goldthorpe of Ossett, West Yorkshire died on 2 December 2024 aged 66. He served as a Lance Bombardier in the Royal Artillery.

Alfred Turner of Lancaster, Lancashire died on 24 December 2024 aged 96. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers.

Allan George Prinn of Newcastle upon Tyne died on 3 January 2025 aged 91. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Anthony Michael Herbert of Sidmouth, Devon died on 9 December 2024 aged 91. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Hampshire Regiment.

Arthur Astley Sains of Birmingham died on 22 November 2024 aged 94. He served in the Royal Artillery.

Arthur John Roberts of Belvedere, Kent died on 19 November 2024 aged 95. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Barry John Eastham of Manchester died on 26 November 2024 aged 83. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.



Bernard Matthews of Livingston, West Lothian died on 18 December 2024 aged 79. He served as a Private in the Army Catering Corps.

Bernard Anthony Rainbird of Sleaford, Lincolnshire died on 7 January 2025 aged 92. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Bertram Alick Akhurst of Wincanton, Somerset died on 5 November 2024 aged 96. He served as an Aircraftman 1st Class in the Royal Air Force.

Brian Biggin of Sheffield, South Yorkshire died on 6 January 2025 aged 90. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Brian Drake of Preston, Lancashire died on 18 November 2024 aged 80. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

Brian Sidney Causon of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on 5 January 2025 aged 86. He served as a Private in the Gloucestershire Regiment.

Charles Carley of Bexleyheath, Kent died on 21 November 2024 aged 94. He served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Charles Neve of Brighton, East Sussex died on 1 December 2024 aged 93. He served as a Leading Hand in the Royal Navy.

Cyril Caddick of Uckfield, East Sussex died on 30 November 2024 aged 88. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals.

David Gibson of Preston, Lancashire died on 5 December 2024 aged 91. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

David John Yeomans of Hailsham, East Sussex died on 9 December 2024 aged 88. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force Police.

Dennis Blakemore of Wrexham died on 1 December 2024 aged 99. He served as a Craftsman in the Army.

Derek Illingworth of Durham died on 24 December 2024 aged 90. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Signals.

Derek John Payton of Weymouth, Dorset died on 30 November 2024 aged 86. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Derrick Philip Cross of Paignton, Devon died on 1 November 2024 aged 87. He served as a Private in the Royal Hampshire Regiment.

Desmond Thorp of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk died on 11 November 2024 aged 93. He served as a Driver in the Army.

Dorothy Thomas of Oswestry, Shropshire died on 6 January 2025 aged 89. She served as a Corporal in the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Edward David Wagstaff of Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire died on 29 December 2024 aged 89. He served as an Aircraftman 2nd Class in the Royal Air Force.

Eilir Elwyn Evans of Swansea died on 17 December 2024 aged 90. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Enid Winifred Blanche Unstead of Hove, East Sussex died on 12 January 2025 aged 100. She served in the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Eric Charles Hand of Watford, Hertfordshire died on 12 November 2024 aged 97. He served as a Private in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment.

Eric James Nichols of Norwich, Norfolk died on 12 January 2025 aged 88. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Ernest Garlick of Oldham, Greater Manchester died on 14 January 2025 aged 91. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Tank Regiment.

George Adam Bell of Liverpool, Merseyside died on 1 March 2024 aged 88. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

George Wilson Taylor of Newcastle upon Tyne died on 24 November 2024 aged 100. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Gerald Alfred Leat of Honiton, Devon died on 13 November 2024 aged 90. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Gordon Parr of Peacehaven, East Sussex died on 12 January 2025 aged 82. He served as a Leading Air Mechanic in the Royal Navy.

Harold Leslie Beadles of Newtown, Powys died on 22 November 2024 aged 91. He served as a Private in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Harry Winterbottom of Oldham died on 29 November 2024 aged 92. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Horace Henry Parker of Malvern, Worcestershire died on 24 December 2024 aged 84. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Idris Cooper of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on November 1, 2024 aged 90. He served as a Private in the Mercian Brigade.

James Brown of Romford, Essex died on 14 November 2024 aged 74. He served in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's).

James Clifford Bell of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire died on 3 January 2025 aged 93. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

James Trevor Sykes of Holmfirth, West Yorkshire died on 4 January 2025 aged 90. He served as a Junior Technician in the Royal Air Force.

Jamie Frederick Weller of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire died on 27 November 2024 aged 54. He served as an Engineer Mechanic 1st Class in the Royal Navy.

Jeffrey Kinna of Wymondham, Norfolk died on 26 October 2024 aged 95. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

John Geoffrey Croxford of Blackburn, Lancashire died on 5 December 2024 aged 97. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

John Iorwerth Davies of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan died on 21 November 2024 aged 89. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

John Derek English of Bristol died on 7 December 2024 aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

John Hindmarsh of Swindon, Wiltshire died on 17 December 2024 aged 95. He served as a Squadron Leader in the Royal Air Force.

John Mcowan of Peebles, Scottish Borders died on 15 November 2024 aged 103. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

John Phelps of Longfield Hill, Kent died on 21 December 2024 aged 93. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

John Anthony Ramsey of North Ferriby, East Riding of Yorkshire died on 1 January 2025 aged 84. He served in the Royal Air Force.

John Shaw of Durham, County Durham died on 22 November 2024 aged 84. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Army Service Corps.

John Watson of Wirral, Merseyside died on 17 November 2024 aged 102. He served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy.

Kenneth Elvin of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 10 September 2024 aged 76. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Grenadier Guards.

Kenneth Pape of Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire died on 5 November 2024 aged 85. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Prince of Wales Division.

Kenneth Percival John Mulley of Orpington, Kent died on 7 December 2024 aged 96. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Service Corps.

Kenneth Sims of Paignton, Devon died on 1 January 2025 aged 88. He served as a Driver in the Royal Signals.

Kenneth Titley of Cockermouth, Cumbria died on 24 November 2024 aged 88. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Kevin Thomas Patrick Hickey of Accrington, Lancashire died on 1 December 2024 aged 86. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Lawrence Tucker of Thatcham, Berkshire died on 18 October 2024 aged 89. He served as a Private in the Army.

Leonard Elvy of Wallingford, Oxfordshire died on 3 January 2024 aged 95. He served as an Aircraftman 2nd Class in the Royal Air Force.

Leslie William Davy of Romford, Essex died on 15 November 2024 aged 86. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

Malcolm Graham Roberts of Exeter, Devon died on 3 December 2024 aged 77. He served as a Leading Air Mechanic in the Fleet Air Arm.

Marjorie Dodsworth of Guernsey, Channel Islands died on 3 December 2024 aged 99. She served as a Wren in the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Martin J Cornish of Chelmsford, Essex died on 28 December 2024 aged 95. He served as an Aircraftman 1st Class in the Royal Air Force.

Michael Critchley of Ipswich, Suffolk died on 30 November 2024 aged 88. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Michael Gray of Houghton Le Spring, Tyne and Wear died on 8 January 2025 aged 81. He served as a Leading Ordnance Electrical Mechanic in the Royal Navy.

Michael Lee of Ferndown, Dorset died on 1 January 2025 aged 86. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force Police.

Michael Mann of Downpatrick, County Down died on 7 December 2024 aged 75. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Nancy Amelia Paterson of York, North Yorkshire died on 11 January 2025 aged 102. She served as a Leading Aircraftwoman in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

Neil O'Donovan of Barry, South Glamorgan died on 6 January 2025 aged 96. He served in the Army.

Neville Howard Jones of Stafford, Staffordshire died on 16 December 2024 aged 97. He served as a Lance Sergeant in the Coldstream Guards.

Patricia Irene Sant of Altrincham, Cheshire died on 19 November 2024 aged 99. She served in the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Peter Ross of Clayton-Le-Woods, Chorley died on 26 October 2024 aged 89. He served as a Private in the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire).

Peter David Tavener of Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire died on 28 November 2024 aged 91. He served as an Air Mechanic in the Royal Air Force.

Philip Carter of Wolverhampton, West Midlands died on 8 November 2024 aged 96. He served as a Warrant Officer 2nd Class in the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

Philip Deegan of Manchester died on 1 October 2024 aged 70. He served in the Royal Corps of Transport.

Philip Newell of Ilkley, West Yorkshire died on 16 December 2024 aged 92. He served in the Royal Army Service Corps.

Raymond Harry Worsley of Bristol died on 4 January 2025 aged 90. He served as a Corporal in the Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry.

Raymond Nicholson of Swansea died on 4 January 2025 aged 90. He served as a Guardsman in the Irish Guards.

Reginald Townsend of Worthing, West Sussex died on 1 November 2024 aged 95. He served as an Aircraftman 1st Class in the Royal Air Force Police.

Richard Gordon Jones of Morecambe, Lancashire died on 19 December 2024 aged 94. He served as an Aircraftman 1st Class in the Royal Air Force.

Robert Henderson of Stockport, Cheshire died on 1 November 2024 aged 97. He served as a Stoker in the Royal Navy.

Robert Joseph Crum of Exmouth, Devon died on 19 December 2024 aged 104. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Robert Middlemas Watson of Perth, Perthshire died on 1 November 2024 aged 92. He served as a Trooper in the Highland Brigade.

Robert Neil Spencer of Stourbridge, West Midlands died on 1 January 2025 aged 95. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Ronald Giles of Northampton, Northamptonshire died on 27 November 2024 aged 100. He served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy.

Ronald Michael Murphy of York, North Yorkshire died on 19 December 2024 aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Ronald Relp of Norwich, Norfolk died on 1 December 2024 aged 95. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers.

Ronald Frederick Williams of Swansea died on 23 November 2024 aged 95. He served as a Craftsman in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Stanley John Edgar Cox of Birmingham died on 11 December 2024 aged 101. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Navy.

Stanley Rawlinson of Liverpool, Mersyside died on 12 November 2024 aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Signals.

Stuart Thomas of Reigate, Surrey died on 1 November 2024 aged 97. He served as an Acting Lance Corporal in the Royal Armoured Corps.

Sydney Dyson of Barnsley, South Yorkshire died on 14 December 2024 aged 83. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Terence Reginald Thomas Bolton of Seaford, East Sussex died on 3 January 2025 aged 94. He served in the Royal Air Force.

Thomas Haywood of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire died on 21 August 2024 aged 95. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals.

Thomas Mckenna of Chichester, West Sussex died on 1 November 2024 aged 105. He served as a Rifleman in the King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Thomas Waters of Broadstairs, Kent died on 29 December 2024 aged 83. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Trevor Clarke of Brecon, Powys died on 18 November 2024 aged 99. He served as a Flight Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Wilfred Knowles of Penarth, South Glamorgan died on 1 December 2024 aged 96. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

William Leslie Williams of Caernarfon, Gwynedd died on 16 December 2024 aged 100. He served as a Private in the Welsh Regiment.

William Wilson of Preston, Lancashire died on 21 December 2024 aged 87. He served as a Private in the Royal Corps of Transport.

Vincent Parkinson of Liverpool died on 31 December 2024 aged 94. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Service Corps.

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



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

Review Editor: 0300 111 22 33 or revieweditor@blindveterans.org.uk

Feedback: To give us feedback on any of our services, please email us at supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk or call **0300 111 22 33**.

Donations: To make a donation, simply call **0300 111 22 33** or visit blindveterans.org.uk/donate.

To listen to Review on Alexa, the command is: **"Alexa, ask TuneIn to play Blind Veterans UK Review."** If you have any problems getting it to work, please contact the MeSH helpline on **01273 391 447**.

Quiz answers – from page 37

1. Anaconda 2. Cherry blossom
3. The Vatican 4. Air traffic control
5. c) 16 6. Harry Potter 7. The Liberals
8. Omega 9. The Archers 10. 365

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.



AGENTURFOTOGRAFIN / ADOBESTOCK

