

The Summer VIP Raffle is now open!



1st Prize

£15,000

2nd Prize
£1,000

Plus 33
other prizes.

Tickets cost £1

and help to rebuild blind veterans' lives

Phone **0300 111 2233**

Play online raffle.blindveterans.org.uk/review



Raffle closes 20 September. Draw takes place 27 September

No under 18 allowed to enter. No prizes will be paid to anyone under 18 years of age. Full terms and conditions apply, please visit raffle.blindveterans.org.uk/rules for more details.



Person responsible for the raffle and lottery: Sarah Gray, Blind Veterans UK, 3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AR. Blind Veterans UK is a registered charity no. 216227 (England & Wales) and SC039411 (Scotland). Licensed by the Gambling Commission under the 2005 Gambling Act. Registered license number 008297.

Review



The journal of
Blind Veterans UK
July 2024



Our Royal Patron officially opens Rustington

Inside:

- Marking D-Day 80 around the UK
- Member Conference reflections
- How to avoid online scams





The 2025 Birmingham International Tattoo

We invite you to join us at Britain's biggest indoor tattoo, the 2025 Birmingham International Tattoo on **Sunday, 9 February** at the Resorts World Arena.

An event unlike any other, the 2025 Birmingham International Tattoo brings together marching bands, pipes and drums, field gun racing and much, much more. There will also be a spectacular Grand Finale featuring over 1,000 performers.

We have a limited number of subsidised platinum tickets for registered Members who would like to come along to enjoy the show together with their fellow blind veterans.

Please book your place using the form on our website at blindveterans.org.uk/tattoo25. You can also call us on **0300 111 22 33**.

Once booked online, our customer services team will be in touch within five working days to take your payment over the phone.

Please note: due to popular demand we can only offer up to two tickets per blind veteran. Travel to the venue and accommodation is not included and these tickets are not wheelchair accessible.

For more information, visit the event site at bhamtattoo.com

Tickets:
£10
(RRP £35)



HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh signing the Rustington guestbook

Contents

- 02** Birmingham Tattoo 2025
- 04** Chief Executive welcome
- 08** News
- 12** Rustington Centre official opening
- 16** D-Day 80 tributes around the UK
- 22** Supporters, we salute you!
- 26** We're all in the same boat
- 30** Bonding over brilliant banter
- 34** Service spotlight
- 36** How to protect yourself from scams
- 38** Member voice
- 40** Summer Olympics and Paralympics
- 42** National Creative Wellbeing Programme
- 45** Quiz time
- 46** Family news
- 47** In Memory
- 51** Contact details

On the cover

HRH Duchess of Edinburgh meets Member Alan Walker during the official opening of our Rustington Centre.



PHOTO: SAM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY

A busy but memorable summer so far

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



Adrian Bell

As what is meant to be summer fast approaches, I have taken time to reflect on the last couple of months that seem to have been busier than usual and share my thoughts and experiences in this article.

First and foremost, we held a Member Conference in May in London, and I would like to thank all those who attended and contributed so fulsomely to the discussions we had. On page 26, you will find an article from Greg Swaysland, one of the Members who attended that I would draw to your attention. It's an important piece and well worth a read.

The conference focused on some of the challenges we face in reducing our annual expenditure and eventually balancing the budget, so that we are no

longer faced by a spiralling deficit. This is essential work, not only so that we can continue to look after our present Members, but also so we can support those who need us in years to come.

During the conference, one of the topics we discussed was a Member-wide survey and the nature of the questions we should ask to allow all of you the opportunity to contribute your thoughts and opinions. That survey is now being sent out and I would urge you all to take the time please

to respond to it. If you wish, you can always phone the Supporter Services Team on **0300 111 22 33** for help so that your voice is heard. Thank you.

Early June was particularly busy as not only did we have various D-Day 80 commemorations around the country and the dedication of the Blind Veterans UK Standard in Rugby, but we were also graced by a visit from HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh for the formal opening of our Rustington Centre. I would like to thank all →



PHOTO: SAM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY

HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh, centre, with our tour party at Rustington



Adrian with Member Tony Harbour at our Rustington Centre

“I would like to thank all those who attended and contributed so fulsomely to the discussions we had”

of you who took part in the various celebrations, especially those who travelled from far and wide.

I think it's fair to say that the Duchess thoroughly enjoyed her visit to Rustington. Not only did she spend time listening to and talking to each and every person she met, but she also enjoyed a good face wash from

Guide Dog Grady! We were all well aware that the Duchess was on a tight schedule as she had an evening event to attend, but her visit overran by more than half an hour - a sure sign of how much she, and everybody else there, enjoyed the visit.

I am occasionally asked by Members how our work in support of Ukraine is going and coincidentally now is timely to update you. We have been working with the World Health Organisation for some time now and have recently agreed to review and provide feedback on a training programme for Ukrainians that have lost their sight through war, which they intend to roll



Taking questions at the conference

out this summer. This work is being fully funded by the World Health Organisation.

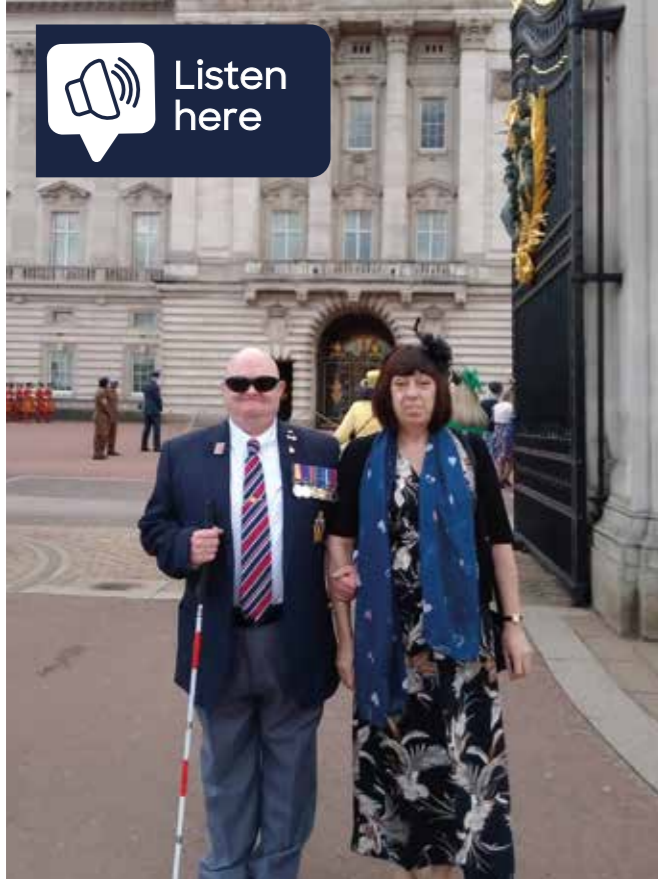
We are also providing informal support to rehabilitation specialists at one of Ukraine's leading rehabilitation hospitals, which deals with both vision and limb loss. Our team is able to share their experience and thoughts with Ukrainian counterparts and support them as they talk through some of their more difficult and challenging cases. This work is particularly important. I worry a lot about the uncertain world in which we live today and the apparent willingness of some of the more tyrannical world leaders



At a D-Day 80 event in London

to resort to military might and open conflict. Our charity was founded by Sir Arthur Pearson for a very particular cause, and we absolutely need to make sure that we are ready to support the brave men and women in today's Armed Forces should they need our help and support through their service to the nation.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who took the time to email me with your thoughts and concerns with regards to the work around our deficit. I admit I can be quite slow in responding - please forgive me as I'm busy - but I do enjoy hearing from you and learn a lot by listening to you. 🇬🇧



Member Shaun at the palace



Hazel with a beefeater

delight of my husband, who came along as my taxi driver and carer.

“On arrival at the palace, we were ushered in through security while watched by tourists who were trying to spot anybody famous. As we entered the garden, I suddenly became aware of just how many people were in attendance. I believe there were around 2,500 people!

No August issue of Review

Please note there will be no August issue of the Review magazine this year. The next issue will arrive as normal in September.

News

NFA Buckingham Palace Garden Party

Thirty of our Members and escorts were lucky enough to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace on 17 May with the Not Forgotten Association (NFA). Member Hazel Dunnett shares her experience...

“Following an invitation from the Working Age Member team at Blind Veteran UK to apply to attend an afternoon party at Buckingham palace, I applied and, to my surprise, was successful. This was much to the

“Everybody was very welcoming, including the other veterans and guests. We could hear a lone piper who was down by the lake in the garden. It was a lovely walk down to where he was and we were struck by the lack of traffic noise despite the fact we were in the middle of a city - we could just hear the birds. On our return to the main area, we were entertained by the Irish Guards playing ‘Beat the Retreat’.

“Although we didn’t get to meet our host, Princess Anne, personally, she was sat just ten feet away from us. It was so lovely to see her; she was so engaged with everyone she was introduced to and the household staff were extremely kind and helpful. We loved all the Beefeaters, and everyone enjoyed being in their finery.

“It was a long day, but so worthwhile - something we will remember forever. If any of you get the opportunity to attend, we thoroughly recommend it!”

Standard Dedication in Rugby

Blind Veterans UK recently held a dedication service at St Andrews Church, Rugby, of a new Blind Veterans UK standard for use in the Northern province.



Rugby Standard Dedication

Blind Veterans UK Standard Bearer, Member Wayne Perry, from Rugby, carried the Standard. Wayne has recently received help from the charity to become trained as a Standard Bearer.

Our Chairman, Barry Coupe, attended and addressed the congregation, which included Blind Veterans UK staff. There was a good turnout and many Members attended too. Everyone went on to enjoy light refreshments following the service.

Member survey

As many of you will know, our Chief Executive, Adrian Bell, has written in previous issues of this magazine →

about the charity's need to bring our budget into balance and explore ways to deliver our support to existing and future beneficiaries from a financially sustainable position.

Adrian is keen to garner as many views as possible from our membership on the future of Blind Veterans UK and, in May, spearheaded a Member Conference, which was attended by almost 70 Members and their partners and carers. Frank discussions took place on what it means to be a Member and the impact of the support we provide to blind veterans and their families.

We are now rolling out a Member Survey for all of you to complete. The questions in this survey have come out of the conference and give you the opportunity to share your views on how the charity might best support beneficiaries in the years ahead.

It's really important that we understand what's working well for you regarding our services so that we can provide the best training and support for many years to come. Your responses to our questions will help inform our plans going forward.

The survey has been sent to you by post, but you can also complete it online via our Members' Area at



Simon Brown in his mayoral regalia

blindveterans.org.uk/membersurvey or by calling us on **01273 391 447**. We very much look forward to receiving your completed survey.

Member achievements

Simon elected as new Mayor of Morley

We're delighted to share that, in May, long-time Member, Simon Brown, was sworn in as the new Mayor of Morley in Leeds.

Simon says: "Being sworn in was a very proud moment for me and my family and, as well as thanking my family, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank Blind Veterans UK and Leeds

Rhinos Foundation for all they've done to help me get here. That's why I've chosen the Leeds Rhinos Foundation and Blind Veterans UK as my charities to support in my year as Mayor."

Chief Executive, Adrian Bell, says: "Simon is a fantastic ambassador for Blind Veterans UK and for Physical Disability Rugby League. I know that he will also now be the best ambassador for Morley in his term as Mayor."

Ron completes his archery coaching qualification

In another true 'victory over blindness' experience, keen archer and Member Ron Jury has recently completed his Archery Coaching Level 1 qualification.

Ron started the process just over six months ago with the support,



Ron Jury shows off his certificate

encouragement, patience and expertise of his coach, David Holland.

In order to complete the course training syllabus modules, Ron had to attend many meetings online. With support from his wife, Donna, he undertook sessions alongside other fully-sighted coaches to learn how to teach beginners of all ages and abilities to run an archery range safely. He also coached seasoned archers to help them achieve their goals.

The Archery Coaching Level 1 is a national qualification and Ron is absolutely thrilled to have achieved this despite his sight loss.

Many congratulations to both Ron and Simon!

Planning to Remember

Following on from all the moving D-Day 80 commemorations around the UK, we know that many of our communities are now turning their thoughts to Remembrance 2024.

If you're thinking about planning a Remembrance event in your local area, we have lots of ideas for you. Sign up to our 'Planning to Remember' campaign at blindveterans.org.uk/plan-now or contact the team at fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk



Listen here

PHOTOS: SAM MARSHALL PHOTOGRAPHY



HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh speaking to Member George Wilson at the official opening of our Rustington Centre



Clockwise from top left: The Duchess viewing our registered war memorial; meeting guide dog Grady; and unveiling the plaque with Members Gary Stevenson and Peter Kay



Rustington

Our Rustington Centre opening by HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh

In June, we welcomed our patron, Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh, to formally open our new centre in Rustington, West Sussex

Her Royal Highness visited the charity at our new south coast home in Rustington, seeing first-hand the difference the charity makes to the lives of our Members.

Blind Veterans UK Rustington Centre Manager, Lesley Garven MBE, said: "After an initial phased opening, particularly ensuring that our small number of permanent residents were settled in, the building is now operating

at full capacity and welcoming blind veterans from across the country for holidays, themed and activity weeks and for specific training and rehabilitation.

"We had over 80 years of history at our Brighton Centre, but we've had such a warm welcome from the local community in Rustington that I know we'll be making many new memories here."





The Duchess receiving a commemorative bowl made by Member Kevin Nugent

“It was such an honour for our blind veterans and our new staff team here for our Royal Patron to visit and formally open our new south coast home.”

On her tour of the building, the Duchess met with veterans who served in the Second World War. She also met with archer Clive Jones, and tried her hand at mosaic making with Rustington resident, Woody.

Her Royal Highness assisted with the ceremonial reburial of a time capsule



Top: The Duchess with Member Peter Kay. Bottom: Being greeted by Centre Manager, Lesley Garven

which had been dug up from our former centre in Brighton and marched to Rustington by a group of Members last summer. One of those Members, Mark Threadgold, was there to talk it through with The Duchess.

The time capsule, buried in 2015 to mark 100 years of Blind Veterans UK, contains items and documents detailing our history including a talking watch, the first piece of equipment offered to every Blind Veterans UK beneficiary. It's set to be opened in 2115 - 100 years after it was originally buried.

The Duchess also unveiled a very special plaque, carved from wood and made by two Members, Peter Kay and Gary Stevenson, who have been supported by the charity to continue their hobby of woodworking. Her Royal Highness invited the pair to unveil the plaque with her.

Another Member given the opportunity to meet The Duchess was Alan Walker. Alan started the whole visit off when he was given the responsibility of raising the Royal Standard when the Royal party arrived. He also had the opportunity to talk to Her Royal Highness in our new gym.

Alan said: “I serve as a standard bearer for Blind Veterans UK, so it really is the ultimate honour to raise that Royal Standard for the time The Duchess of Edinburgh was with us.

“I was also proud to speak to Her Royal Highness and get across the impact the charity has had on me since I lost my sight.”

Before leaving and thanking everyone at the centre, the Duchess became the first guest to sign our new visitors' book. To sign the book, she sat in the very same chair made especially by a St Dunstaner for a visit of our former Royal Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, in 1975.

After speaking to a number of Members, charity officials, volunteers and staff, Her Royal Highness shared her impressions of the centre. She said, “What a perfect place, a sensorial place with wonderful surroundings. Here you're getting a whole environment, inside and outside.

“So, thank you so much and I hope it will be a very, very happy place. Well, it already is.” 🇬🇧

A gift fit for a duchess



Although Member Kevin Nugent was unable to attend the opening of the centre, a very special gift

was presented to the Duchess of Edinburgh on his behalf.

Kevin had turned a bowl made from tulip wood for the Duchess, with a Blind Veterans UK silver coin set into an edge. He said: “The team at the centre asked me to turn the bowl and it took two solid days' work from start to finish. I was overwhelmed to be asked and hugely proud.”

D-Day tributes around the UK

A roundup of our special commemorations marking the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings on 6 June

Military Dinner

D-Day 80 commemorations were widespread across the entire country, these included a very special Military Dinner held at the Victory Services Club, London, with our CEO, Adrian

Bell, Chairman Barry Coupe, and guest of honour, Normandy veteran George Chandler, all in attendance.

Over 100 people enjoyed an unforgettable experience as George

retold his first-hand account of the invasion where he served as a gunner on a torpedo boat. George and fellow WWII veterans John Ryan, George Barnes and Alice Wolynsky each received a limited-edition Blind Veterans UK sterling silver coin in recognition of their service and contribution to the charity.

Others attending the event had this to say about the experience:

“What a fitting tribute to those who fought at D-Day and in the subsequent Normandy campaign. It was particularly thought-provoking

to listen to the personal lived experiences of George.”

And also:

“We enjoyed it all... the incredible food, the entertainment, and the whole ambience of such a special occasion. Thank you so much.”

The D-Day Darlings, famed for their appearance on ITV’s Britain’s Got Talent, helped mark the occasion through song, while an exhibit of Blind Veterans WWII artefacts, including a typewriter and pocket watch, helped set the scene and atmosphere. →



Members at the Military Dinner



D-Day veteran George with Grady



D-Day veteran John with his coin



The D-Day Darlings

D-DAY 80

Tim Eckersley, our Military Lead said: **“These special events are hugely important. We must always remember the sacrifices that others made for us to enjoy our freedoms today. These events provide the perfect opportunity to bring people together and allow us to showcase the charity at its very best.”**

We continued our commemorations throughout the month of June with another military dinner at HMS Sultan, Gosport. Our guest of honour was D-Day veteran, George Chandler, once again. You can read about it in your next issue of Review.

Swansea

Commemorations took place in Wales on 6 June as Blind Veterans UK organised a special D-Day 80 event in Swansea, which was sponsored by Bridgend and Vale Business Club.

Journalists from BBC Wales TV and radio, and Welsh channel, S4C, came to the event to interview D-Day veteran, Neville, who's 102 years old.

We were also joined by the Veterans Commissioner of Wales who came to the event to present a gold Blind Veterans UK coin to Richard Peizer.

And in another special moment the Lord Lieutenant of West Glamorgan presented Member Cyril “Jim” Lewis with replacement medals after his original medals were stolen many years ago.

Rustington

Also on 6 June, BBC Radio Sussex broadcasted their entire breakfast show from our Rustington Centre for their special D-Day 80 show. Our Head of Rustington Centre, Lesley Garven, was interviewed, as was WWII veteran and Rustington resident, Nancy Bowstead.

“These special events are hugely important. We must remember the sacrifices others made”

In the evening, our President Colin Williamson lit a beacon on Rustington Beach, watched by the local community, and in alignment with the thousands of beacons and lamps lit all around the UK and beyond.

Llandudno

While our Llandudno Centre →



Member Neville, 102, being interviewed by S4C



The veterans, escorts and staff at the D-Day 80 commemoration in Swansea



Our President Colin Williamson lights the beacon outside the Rustington Centre as part of our D-Day 80 commemorations

D-DAY 80

is temporarily closed, staff and local Members were delighted to be able to attend a special D-Day service in the neighbouring town of Conwy at the Mulberry Harbour site.

Member and volunteer, John Nicol, was Standard Bearer at the service and three other Members were in attendance, proudly representing the charity.

Conwy's Mulberry Harbour was the site of one of the best kept secrets of the Second World War. It was there that concrete sections of the Mulberry Harbour - a complex floating harbour

installation used for the Normandy D-Day operations - were constructed and launched into the River Conwy.

The concrete structures were towed to France and then linked to form two harbour walls. These enabled the Allied forces to transport large numbers of vehicles, personnel, communications equipment and other supplies across to France, which was vital for sustaining the frontline Forces as they pushed deeper into enemy territory.

On Saturday, 8 June, ten Members and their escorts joined a special commemorative parade with Blind

Veterans UK staff and volunteers along the promenade to the war memorial.

The centre staff also created a stunning D-Day 80 flower display in the Llandudno Centre grounds, made out of knitted poppies.

Portsmouth

On 5 June, some of our staff and Members attended the D-Day 80 commemorations in Portsmouth. The event was attended by The King, Queen Consort and Prince of Wales, as well as lots of MPs. Dame Helen Mirren provided the narration for TV.

It was an emotional day for our Members, as well as our staff. Some of our very own blind veterans, including Member John Haddock, were featured on the big screen telling their stories, proudly wearing their medals and their Blind Veterans UK ties and pin badges.

Northern Ireland

In commemoration of D-Day 80, our Members in Northern Ireland made a special visit to Whiteabbey British Legion and War Memorial, joined by local Councillor Robert Foster.

A picnic lunch was enjoyed by all, kindly hosted by Whiteabbey Royal British Legion. The lunch took place indoors as the breeze off Belfast Lough was a little too bracing. 🌧️



Volunteer, Mally Roberts, with Standard Bearer, John Nicol



Members enjoying the special D-Day 80 event in Portsmouth



Members Hugh Megarry and Alex Lundy in Northern Ireland



Member Ada Chell, who celebrated her 100th birthday earlier this year, was interviewed by the BBC about her memories of D-Day. You can read all about it by scanning the QR code above.

Supporters, we salute you!

For Armed Forces Month in June, we encouraged our supporters to take on a fundraising challenge. We asked Ian, Rebecca and Janine what they got up to



Ian walking with his white cane

Ian's blindfolded bimble

Member Ian, from the Isle of Wight, organised a fundraising walk with a difference on 9 June. Walkers were asked to complete a 3km walk from Shanklin to Sandown blindfolded, with their partner guiding them. The pair then swapped places for the return leg.

Thirty people turned out to show their support and the walk took the group approximately two hours to complete. As it took place just days after the 80th anniversary of D-Day, Ian asked each pair to raise a minimum of £80.

He says: "I think those taking part were surprised how vulnerable they felt when they put on their blindfolds and started walking."

Ian served with the 2nd Battalion Royal Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

for four years in his 20s and carried out tours in Iraq, Kuwait and Northern Ireland. In 2017, he tragically lost his sight after choking at home while eating dinner with his family.

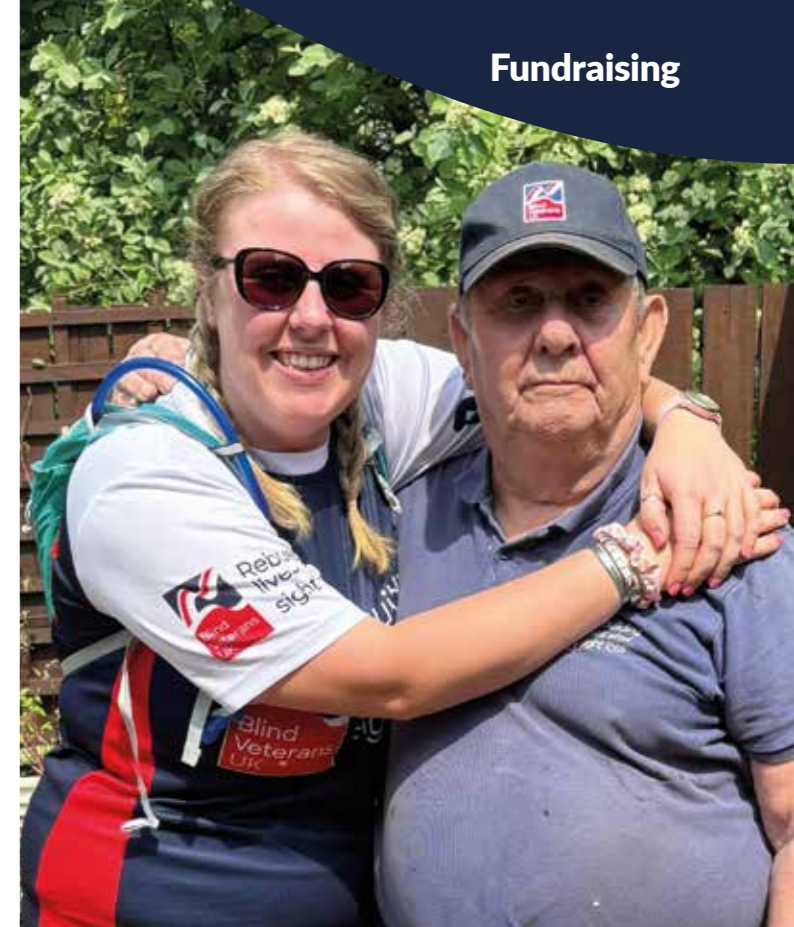
He says: "My brain was starved of oxygen which has resulted in severe sight loss. A simple everyday activity changed my life overnight.

"My sight loss has had a huge impact on my life. Everyday activities like taking a walk, preparing a meal, or spending time socialising with friends or playing with my two daughters became difficult and my confidence reached an all-time low.

"Discovering the charity has turned my life around. I can now walk safely unaided with a cane, prepare food with a talking microwave and I've met and spent time with other blind veterans which has helped me to imagine a life for myself beyond sight loss.

"Being able to meet others in the same boat as you means you are all on the same playing field and sight loss isn't the first thing that we notice about each other.

"I've also attended themed residential stays at the charity's centres of wellbeing where I've taken part in a range of activities from footgolf to axe



Rebecca and Brian Jarps

throwing. My confidence has been boosted and I've been spurred on to spend time with family and friends.

"I want to ensure that other veterans like me can receive life-changing support for years to come."

Rebecca's kilt walk

Rebecca Jarps chose to walk 18 miles wearing a kilt to say thank you for the support we give her grandad.

Rebecca, 32, took on the Aberdeen Kilt walk on 2 June, which saw walkers dressed in an array of kilts making their way from Duthie Park to Bellfield Park in around seven hours. →

Rebecca says, "I chose to raise money for the charity because of the amazing support offered to my Granda. Every time I speak to him, he tells me about his new adventures with Blind Veterans UK and his time away at the centre in Llandudno.

"He and my nana would stay together at the centre for holidays, prior to her passing in 2020. When she passed away, my Granda lost a lot of his independence, but being able to visit the Llandudno Centre really helped him through the grieving process.

"Finding new friends, activities and a sense of belonging has been a huge comfort to him."

Rebecca's grandad, Brian Jarps, joined the Merchant Navy at 21-years-old and served for five years as an onboard engineer. His service took him all around the world and he spent a lot of time in both North and South America.

Brian first noticed he was losing his sight around nine years ago. He has age related macular degeneration and is registered as severely sight impaired.

He says: "The charity has saved my life. Once I walk through the door at the Llandudno Centre all my problems go away and I know I'm part of a big family who will keep me safe.

"Before losing my sight, I enjoyed gardening and woodwork. I still do these things; I turn pens and birdboxes. Life doesn't end because you lose your sight.

"I am so very proud of Rebecca for taking on this challenge to support me and my fellow blind veterans."

Janine's 84-mile trek

Intrepid supporter, Janine Mussett, walked the entire length of Hadrian's Wall in a bid to raise awareness for Blind Veterans UK and honour her dad who passed away a year ago.

Joined by her partner and two friends, she walked for six to seven hours a day to cover the 84-mile route in six days.



Janine at Hadrian's Wall

Janine's dad, Joe, served in the Army with the Royal Anglian Regiment. During his service he completed three tours of Northern Ireland, although he never spoke of his experience.

Joe lost his sight due to macular degeneration in his late 60s. He was only 71 when he died and, sadly, the family only found out about the support available from the charity a few months prior to his passing.

During their walk from Carlisle to Newcastle, the group marked two poignant dates: the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the first anniversary of Joe's death. Janine made sure she raised a pint of Carling - Joe's tippie - to mark the day.

She says, "By doing this walk and wearing a Blind Veterans UK T-shirt, I wanted to make sure that other veterans know about the charity as the support that my dad was offered was amazing. He was really looking forward to getting more involved and staying at one of the centres for a holiday.

"Dad was massively affected by his sight loss. He was such an independent man and losing his sight took his choices away from him. He suddenly had to rely on others.

"He found life with sight loss lonely,



Janine, top right, with her partner and friends, promoting our charity

but getting a white cane made a huge difference as people then knew to say 'hello' to him, rather than just smile and he was no longer seen as 'the rude man sat in the corner'.

"I believe that with the support of Blind Veterans UK, Dad would have regained even more independence and I want to make sure that others who are eligible don't miss out. For me, raising awareness of the charity is my biggest goal - and we also raised money along the way."

■ If you'd like to take on a challenge, we have lots of ideas to inspire you. Just email the team at fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk or take a look at our website at blindveterans.org.uk/fundraise.



Listen here



Members watch Adrian giving a presentation at the conference

We're all in the same boat

Member **Greg Swaysland** shares his reflections on the recent Blind Veterans UK Member Conference, attended by almost 70 Members and escorts

The Member Conference provided an insightful and powerful experience, which is still percolating.

feeling among those who had made their arduous journey to London was that it was well worth the effort.

Despite it being years since we'd last gathered in force, the underlying

As the evening of the first night flowed - amidst a few cheeky



Our CEO Adrian Bell

beverages - so did the long overdue conversations. These were permeated with anticipation and trepidation about what was to unfold, and what we were to expect from the next couple of days.

Day 1: Adrian's honest appraisal

In our Chief Executive, Adrian's, opening address the following morning, it must have felt like a 'clear lower deck' as he conveyed his orders to the membership.

The revelation that inclement



Adrian facilitated a Q&A

“As the evening of the first night flowed amidst a few cheeky beverages, so did the long overdue conversations”

weather was on the horizon (financial challenges) and rapidly changing conditions were to be negotiated if we were to survive as an institution came as a shock. You could hear a penny drop in the room as this news was conveyed.

All Adrian asked of us was to listen, which we did. And as we moved →



Discussions get underway at the conference

seamlessly into the Q&A, Members were offered the same courtesy. In response, Adrian received pointed questioning and justified cynicism from those who had 'been around this buoy' before with previous incumbents.

Adrian provided Members with an honest appraisal, which formed the basis of a long-overdue conversation between the organisation and its membership.

The mission was clear: for the charity to navigate and survive its most difficult passage, the organisation and the membership needed each other. We're all in the same boat.

Breakout dialogues

With conversations underway, dialogues continued in our breakout rooms. No words can encapsulate the powerful stories shared by some, which showed just how much this charity means to its Members.

Each account was personal and showed that Blind Veterans UK is so much more than just a charity. In a society that often isolates and seldom values people with disabilities, it provides a lifeline to its Members at critical junctures in their journey with sight loss.

Central to these accounts was the fact that the organisation provides

“Members had been given a much-needed voice to help shape the direction of Blind Veterans UK”

individuals with a place to meet other veterans, helping them to find collective solace and meaning after sight loss, often leading to the discovery of new, exciting avenues.

It was an intense day, but the evening meal served as a timely opportunity to decompress and enjoy the Blind Veterans UK collective spirit.

Day 2: Getting back to business

It was back to business the following morning as we explored Members' journeys from the beginnings of their sight loss to joining the charity.

Frustrations were aired at the inconsistency, bureaucracy and feeling of paternalism from the charity towards its Members.

There was also a deep sense from participants that they could add value as ambassadors for sight loss, but had been prohibited from doing so.

It was clear that some Members view themselves as underutilised and forgotten assets to both society and the organisation, which seemed to embody why we were in the current predicament. That is, the disconnect between the organisation and its membership was indicative of a command structure removed from the demoralised troops on the frontline.

A much-needed voice

Despite all this, as the conference ended, the feeling was positive. Members had been given a much-needed voice.

And it was clear that in order to move forward, there needs to be a closer relationship between the leadership and its Members. Indeed, if we are in the same boat, then we all need to pull in the same direction.

The real challenge for Adrian now lies in how to harmonise this powerful and capable group within an organisation that needs to change, without rocking the boat or having a mutiny on his hands. Not to be underestimated!

Successfully navigating these difficult waters involves listening to, unifying with and utilising us - the very people who understand better than anyone what it's like to be a veteran with sight loss. 🇬🇧

Bonding over brilliant banter

As we celebrate International Friendship Day on 30 July, we share two heartwarming stories of blossoming friendship formed through Blind Veterans UK

RAF meets Army Member Nigel shares his experience of hosting a recent visit from fellow Member Steve.

One drizzly March weekend proved to be entertaining and challenging for my wife Jo, as fellow Blind Veterans UK Member, Steve, was visiting.

Jo initially felt apprehensive about entertaining two vision-impaired veterans, asking questions about Steve's needs and how to make the house suitable. I jokingly replied, "Never mind that, he's RAF; that's much more worrying for me!"

Jo was right, though, hosting two veterans with vision impairment for a weekend, while providing a safe and supportive environment, was quite

a challenge, particularly with the shocking level of banter.

I had thought the RAF were supposed to be more civilized, but Steve gave as good as he got!

Reflecting on the weekend, Jo remarked on how the banter creates a common language that allows service personnel to instantly bond and connect - a lifeline for me as I adjusted to life after sight loss.

Two incidents from that weekend stand out:

A trip to Hornsea

On one of the days, Jo took us to Hornsea and, despite the cold and drizzle, we had great fun. After fish and chips, she guided us along the seafront. However, failing to spot a freak wave,



Nigel and Steve with Steve's guide dog, Eddie

we all got drenched, including Eddie, Steve's loyal guide dog. Jo got stuck all the way home, but it was a great learning curve for her guiding skills!

Swimming success

The next day, we went to the local swimming pool as I had promised to coach Steve on his front crawl for his triathlons. Steve was anxious about swimming in a new environment, but his determination was inspiring.

I saw his challenges but also his incredible determination and he quickly adapted to my coaching techniques, making excellent progress. It was a fantastic and humbling experience,

showing that we could work well together to achieve a common goal.

I have many more tales to tell, but just wanted to share a snapshot of how two Members, who met by chance eight years ago, finally got to meet again and cement a growing friendship.

This bond was tested when Steve procured the remote control, making me watch three quiz shows in a row (I hate quiz shows). He answered nearly every question correctly, winding me up about my pathetic attempts.

I shall make sure I hide the remote if Steve visits again! →

The power of friendship

Steve's regular phone calls have been a tremendous support. His gentle nature and determination inspiring me to make the most of every day. Our lovely weekend together gives hope for the future.

It would have been interesting if we had been joined by a vision-impaired Member from the Navy, but perhaps that's a bridge too far for a novice guide!

Flourishing female friendship

Review writer, Sheena Thomson, asks two volunteers, Member Sonia Griffiths-Jones and widow, Pam Tait, about their blossoming friendship.

When asked about her friendship to fellow Blind Veterans UK volunteer, Pam Tait, is clear: "We laugh all the time."

Pam first met Sonia during a holiday with her late husband, Earn, at our Llandudno Centre. Earn, a former Royal Engineer who sadly passed away in 2015, lost his sight a number of years ago over a weekend.

After becoming a Member, Earn learned computer skills at our

Llandudno Centre, which they visited regularly.

After Earn's death, Pam wanted to continue her involvement with Blind Veterans UK, so became a volunteer and it was through this that she got to know Sonia.

She says, "I did meet Sonia briefly when Earn was still alive, as Sonia came in when we were staying in Poppy Wing. When Earn died, I wanted to keep the connection with Blind Veterans UK as they were so good to us, so I became a volunteer.

"It's been the best thing I've done. When I went to the volunteer training I met Sonia again, and we did a lot together that week."

The pair became firm friends and these days they regularly go on holiday together, most recently enjoying a few days at our new centre at Rustington.

Former WRAF, Sonia, is a Member as well as a volunteer. She first experienced vision issues when she was 37.

At first, she took it in her stride, adapting her skills to volunteering for the RNIB and working in mental health for a number of years. But

when she eventually lost most of her sight around 2015, she went through a period of what she describes as grief before joining Blind Veterans UK.

She later moved to Llandudno and started volunteering for us, as well as founding the buddies lunch club at her local golf club.

Sonia says, "I started volunteering because Blind Veterans UK was marvellous when soon after I joined I developed cancer. I volunteer both in the centre and in the community. Pam wanted to go to Brighton, so I asked if she wanted to come with me."

After that first holiday, the pair have been on several since, including to Plymouth for a week. The pair meet regularly through volunteer training and activities and, of course, holidays – all through Blind Veterans UK.

Sonia explains why they are such good friends: "We argue, but we never fall out. Pam is sighted, so its nice to have someone sighted around as everyday you wake up and have to cope with the blindness. Pam takes a lot of stress out of things."

Pam adds, "Everyone thinks we are sisters. Somehow we are in tune. Sonia is such a special friend to me." 🍷



Sonia, second from right, and Pam, third from right, at our centre

Service spotlight

Review writer Sheena Thomson asks former Army Rifleman and Officer, **Charles Heyman**, about his time in service



Name: Charles Heyman
Trade: Rifleman, then
Commissioned Officer
Service: Army, 1961-1983

Inspired by his boyhood comics, Charles, now 79, joined the Army for adventure. He served in the Far East during the Brunei rebellion, and Northern Ireland and Germany. He went on to have a successful career in military journalism and political affairs.

What were you doing in Berlin?

“When I was in Berlin I was still quite

young. It wasn't even 20 years after the war and we were there doing patrol duties. The battalion tasks included the British Guard at Spandau Prison, in Berlin. I was a Guard Commander.

“There was a four-power agreement in place between the UK, the US, France and Russia for guarding the prisoners. The British would guard for a month, then the Americans, then the Russians and then the French – all for a month each. That was the rotation.

“Spandau Prison was basically where the Nazi hierarchy was incarcerated if they hadn't been executed. When I was there, only three prisoners remained. The most prominent, of course, was Rudolf Hess, and the other two were Albert Speer and Baldur von Schirach. They lived in the main barrack block and were looked after by other multinational guards who were basically senior policemen.

“I was the guard commander during our rotation, and I would make sure my shift was properly dressed, and

that they had all their equipment and ammunition. I would also inspect the watchtower to make sure everything was in good order.

“The prison gardens took up quite a large area of the prison estate and backed onto the watchtowers. On one occasion, it was quite obvious that, during the night, one of the guards got down [from his watchtower] and smashed up all Rudolf Hess's tomato plants. There was still a lot of hatred against Germans, and the guards were bored stupid in those towers.

“I was checking the tower early that morning, and I heard this commotion. Rudolf was in the garden and jumping up and down with rage. He saw me and went absolutely bananas [knowing it was likely a British culprit], pointing to these tomato plants on the ground which had been trampled on. He spoke perfect English, although he was pretty incoherent with rage. He went on for a couple of minutes before the guard took him back inside to calm down.

“I can still see it now. It wasn't like smashing up Kew Gardens or something. This was somebody's little plot of tomato plants which, by the time you'd done about 18 years in prison, meant something. We dealt with it very, very quietly by buying replacement plants and planting them

during the night for old Rudolph when all the prisoners were locked away. The next day, he was with a British guard, and he saw me and thanked me.

“There was a man who was once at the top of the tree - the equivalent of being the Deputy Prime Minister of Germany, and then he ends up at the bottom of the tree, getting so upset about his trampled tomatoes.”

What difference has it made to your life being a Member?

“Being a Member has had a major impact on my life. Before, I felt that I was in a sort of my own prison. My induction week in Llandudno gave me the key to my cell door. I've thought about it many times, and Llandudno did important things. I still remember the sort of things I learned there and how it has made me feel. There was a lot of talking with members of staff.

“Just the very fact that people understand what's happening to you makes an enormous amount of difference. I can't tell you how important this is. It's the little things like that that mean a lot. And here in Rustington, this is as good as a first-class hotel - lots of nice staff and lovely people. I'm amazed. I count myself blessed in my old age to be able to come to somewhere like this to escape, as life can be a little bleak at times.” 🍷

How to protect yourself from online scams

Tips from our Safeguarding Lead, **Jo Cook**, to help you keep your personal information and your money safe

Around three million adults were victims of scams in 2023, but as this type of crime remains massively underreported, the National Trading Standards Scams team say the figure may actually be closer to 19 million.

Following these basic tips could help you beat the criminals.

Don't rush into responding

Criminals use manipulative techniques to urge you to act quickly so that you don't have time to think and consider your next steps. For example, you might receive a one-off deal in an email, or a message informing you that your bank account is compromised and you urgently need to move your money. Don't fall for it - give yourself time to think before you respond.

Keep your information safe

Never give out your name, address, bank details, email or phone number to people or organisations before verifying their credentials. Always question unsolicited calls, texts or emails requesting your personal or financial information. Better still, ignore them or put the phone down and contact the company directly using a known email or phone number.

Check unsolicited emails

Many frauds start with a 'phishing' email inviting you to click on a link. These can look genuine, so it's important to remember that banks and financial institutions never send emails asking you to confirm your bank details. You can always call your bank using the phone number on a genuine

YULIJA / ADOBE STOCK



A person holding a smartphone

piece of correspondence or their website (typed directly into the address bar) to check if you're not sure.

Scam avoidance checklist:

- Never automatically click on a link in an unexpected email or text – if in doubt contact the person or organisation in another way.
- Email addresses and phone numbers can be spoofed, so don't use those as a means to verify that a message or call is authentic.
- Be wary of fake websites – one way to check a website is secure is to look for the padlock symbol in the top left or right of your address bar or see if it starts with HTTPS, where the 'S' stands for secure.

- The best way to get in touch with a company is to use a known email or phone number, such as the one on the back of your bank card.
- Make sure your passwords are 16 characters or longer and include a combination of letters and numbers. And use different passwords for your different online accounts.

What to do if you get scammed

If you've been a victim of a scam, contact your bank promptly and, for those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, you can also call Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or complete their online reporting form. In Scotland, the guidance is to call your bank promptly and contact the police on **101**. 🇬🇧



Listen here



A Member holding a wreath for Remembrance

Member voice

Tim Eckersley, our Member Engagement and Military Lead, shares the latest Member news and updates

Member feedback

Thank you to all those who responded to our June Member Engagement Survey. We really appreciate your feedback. For anyone who doesn't know, these short surveys change each month and you can answer them via blindveterans.org.uk/member or by contacting MeSH. Without your feedback we can't improve our

services, so please do participate if you can.

The recent Member Conference demonstrated the real value of meeting face to face and we're keen to explore other ways of engaging more frequently. Another way to have your say is to use our support helplines and digital platforms. We will be launching

an Events Feedback Form very soon which can be used in the same way to capture your thoughts and ideas on events you have attended.

Family and carers

One group we're keen to engage with is our families and carers as we recognise the huge importance they have on our Members' lives, and the impact of carers supporting one another. We already have a National Families and Carers Group which meets regularly online. If you would like to find out more about this, we'd love to hear from you.

- Please contact the Member Engagement team to find out when this group is getting together. You can also join the Facebook group for carers and family at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/blindveteransukfamilyandcarers/>

London Cenotaph

The London Remembrance weekend preparations are underway, with accommodation reserved at London Euston Premier Inn at a reduced cost for Saturday 9 November. We've increased this year's ticket allocation to 100 people - and in a year that celebrates the 80th anniversary of D-Day, 25th of Kosovo, and 10th

anniversary of Afghanistan, it promises to be a special weekend.

Building on the success of last year, the weekend will include a memorial service for Sir Arthur Pearson, a social evening at the Victory Service Club, and a limited number of tickets for the Festival of Remembrance.

- If you'd like to register your interest, please contact your Community team or call Supporter Services on 0300 111 22 33. 📞

Military Engagement Dinners

The Military Engagement Dinners are incredibly special and memorable events which celebrate our military heritage and strengthen our relationships with the service community. If you would like to attend a dinner, contact the Member Engagement team by emailing MET@blindveterans.org.uk.

Diary dates for future Military Dinners

- 30 August 2024 - Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa
- 11 October 2024 - RAF Honington

How to enjoy the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games from your sofa

Our Digital Inclusion team explains how you can use your TV, radio and smart speaker to watch or listen to the Games using the built in accessibility features



The Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games has seen many iconic moments over its 128-year history.

Some might remember the Mary Peters gold win in the Pentathlon in 1972; Coe versus Ovett in 1980; Men's Hockey gold in 1988; Tanni Grey-Thompson winning quadruple gold in 1992 and 2000; London 2012 Super Sunday and lots more.

This year, the Games is taking place in Paris, kicking off on 26 July. For those of you not lucky enough to have tickets, you'll have to be content with watching or listening in on TV, radio or a smart device. Coverage of the Games will be available on Discovery + and BBC as live broadcasts and streaming. (Streaming differs from live broadcasts as it allows you to pause, rewind and rewatch programmes.)

A coveted ticket to the Paris Games

Smart televisions

If watching television is becoming difficult due to your sight loss, it may be time to invest in a new TV. Most modern televisions come with accessibility features which help to improve the 'viewing' experience for people with a vision impairment, such as built-in voice guidance which announces on-screen information like channel names, numbers, television guides, menus, upcoming and recorded programmes, and various settings.

Some new TVs also have an android operating system and include accessibility features like TalkBack for speech and closed caption subtitling. The android system also allows access to features like 'catch up' and streaming services, or you can get these features via an add-on device such as the Amazon Fire TV Stick.

■ **For more on smart TVs, take a look at our resource, [Watching TV with a Vision Impairment](https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/tvtoptips), at [blindveterans.org.uk/tvtoptips](https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/tvtoptips)**

Radios and smart speakers

Radio coverage of the Olympics and Paralympics will be available via Talksport and BBC radio stations. These can be accessed with a traditional radio, a PC or via smart devices and smart speakers. Smart

speakers such as an Amazon Echo can be a great option for listening to the radio as it gives you access to hundreds of stations worldwide and is operated purely using voice instructions.

■ **See our resource, [Using Alexa to Listen to the Radio and Music](https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/alexaradio), at [blindveterans.org.uk/alexaradio](https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/alexaradio) for more about this.**

British Blind Sport

Finally, if you are inspired by the Olympics and Paralympics to get up off the sofa and take up a sport of your own, the charity British Blind Sport (BBS) is a great place to start.

BBS helps people with sight loss access and enjoy different kinds of sports and physical activity. This includes everything from fitness classes at your local gym to competing in the Paralympic Games.

The BBS website has loads of information about sports adapted for people with a vision impairment and it also has an activity and organisation finder so you can find out what's available in your local area.

■ **Find out more by visiting [britishblindsport.org.uk](https://www.britishblindsport.org.uk) and if you need support with Alexa or making your TV more accessible, call our MeSH team on [01273 391 447](tel:01273391447).**

National Creative Wellbeing Programme

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



Beach hut mosaic

To sign up to or find out more about the following creative activities or hobby circles, simply call **01273 391447**. You can leave a message on our answer machine if you'd just like to request an activity pack, or visit blindveterans.org.uk/activitykit to sign up online. All our projects come with VI and reader-friendly

instructions, as well as the option of audio on a USB stick if requested.

Mosaic

Beach hut mosaic: This bespoke mosaic has been designed especially for the summer. Tiles will be sorted into labelled bags for you with a large print, VI friendly step-by-step pattern to follow. Inside your pack, you will find a 20cm engraved beach hut base and everything else you need, including tweezers for the smaller tiles and sand coloured grout.

Craft

Puzzle collage: Another collaborative collage design, but this time, a chance to create artwork for greetings cards. You'll receive two jigsaw shaped templates with colour-themed packs of card and paper, and purple glue that shows up easier on your paper. Once returned, these will be compiled into a jigsaw of images to signify Members working together to create artwork. All Members who take part will

receive a pack of 10 greetings cards and envelopes to send to family and friends. The final submission date is 1 October 2024.

Make sure to hold on to any leftover collage materials from this project or the bauble and balloon collages. In the September Review, the fundraising team will be sharing a wonderful Member idea and your craft materials may come in handy!

Painting & Drawing

Watercolour pencils: These pencils may look like ordinary colouring pencils, but when water is applied, they turn into watercolour paints. This

is an easy way of controlling colour when painting and allows for more precision than the traditional methods. In this pack, you'll receive watercolour pencils and specialist paper, a few extra materials, and a step-by-step guide.

Woodwork

Angelfish model: From August, there will be a new wooden model project available of an angelfish. This 132-piece project is now available to pre-order to be dispatched from the start of August. You will receive the wooden model kit, printed graphic designed instructions and a step-by-step guide, alongside sandpaper and glue to help you. We hope you enjoy taking part. →



LUMOS SP / ADOBE STOCK

Watercolour pencils

More woodwork and gardening projects will come later in the year. Thank you for your patience while we get these developed and ready for dispatch. We'd love to see what you create – especially your results from the Surprise Seeds project! Do share photos of your work by emailing us at ncwp@blindveterans.org.uk.

■ **Thank you for continuing to return the surveys within your packs. Your feedback is very valuable to us and will help us continue to shape the NCWP going forward.**

CREATIVE HOBBY CIRCLES

Facilitated by NCWP staff and our member volunteers, Members meet monthly on the telephone for a chat about specific areas of shared interest. You can join the group via our website: blindveterans.org.uk/virtualgroup

Painting & Drawing: This is for amateur and experienced artists to share tips and hints and talk about your current creative projects. We're looking for more members to join this group so it can be restarted from late summer. If you are interested, please get in touch. This group is held on the second Tuesday of the month at 11am.

Wool work: This online group is for Members to chat about their latest

SEBBOY12 / ADOBE STOCK



Knitting needles and wool

knitting or crochet projects with wool. All abilities welcome, a friendly group to support and inspire! The group is held on the third Thursday of the month at 10am.

Woodwork: This group is for those of you interested in woodwork, woodturning, wooden model making and more. The group offers peer support and encouragement with your wooden model projects. It takes place on the last Thursday of the month at 11am.

Gardening: This is for amateur gardeners and Members who have signed up for our gardening projects. It offers peer support with VI friendly gardening, no matter the size of your garden, greenhouse, or windowsill! The group gets together on the first Tuesday of the month at 11am. 🌱



Quiz time

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

1. What was the name of the magician of King Arthur's court?

2. Who won the first Rugby League World Cup in 1954?

3. Which is the longest running BBC Radio series?

4. What is the common name for a school crossing patrol?

5. When was the M25 first opened?

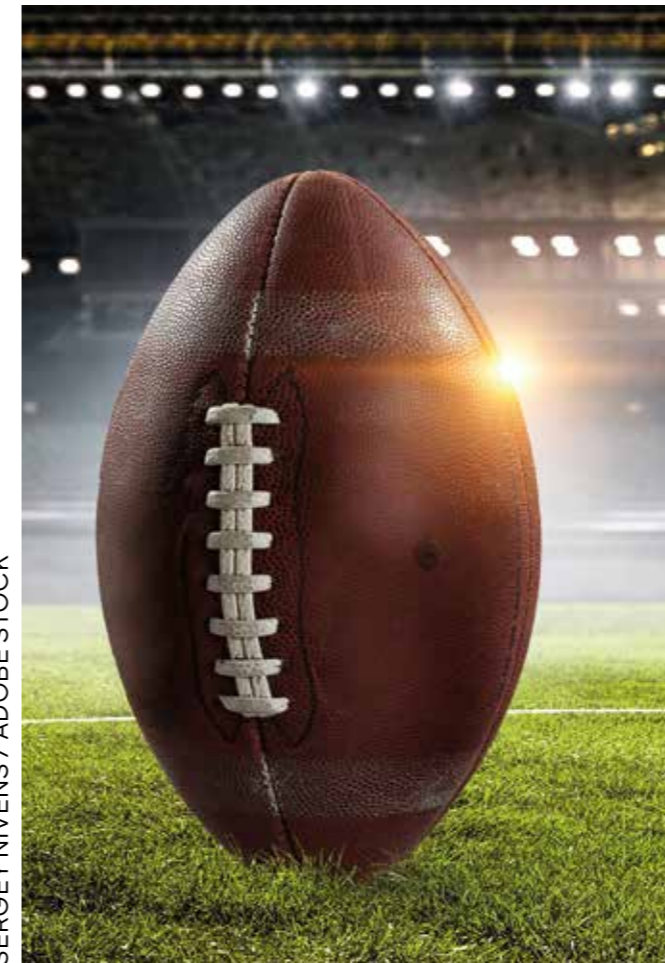
6. What percentage of salt is there in oceanic salt water?
a) 3%
b) 7%
c) 9%

7. Which is the longest mountain range in the world?

8. What is the biggest prison in Britain?

9. Until the 13th century, the Isle of Man belonged to which country?

10. What is the English name of the Welsh mountain, Yr Wyddfa?



SERGEY NIVENS / ADOBE STOCK

Rugby World Cup

Answers on Page 59



Joseph Baines who celebrates his 100th birthday on 3 August 2024.

Thomas Brown who celebrates his 100th birthday on 31 July 2024.

William Davies who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 1 August 2024.

Anthony Ditcham who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 25 July 2024.

Frank Gidlow who celebrates his 100th birthday on 12 July 2024.

Frank Grosse who celebrates his 103rd birthday on 27 July 2024.

Bernard Holt who celebrates his 100th birthday on 20 July 2024.

Joyce Malcolm who celebrates her 101st birthday on 17 July 2024.

Douglas Marsh who celebrated his 101st birthday on 8 July 2024

Alexander McRae who celebrates his 101st birthday on 22 July 2024.

Kenneth Millard who celebrates his 100th birthday on 13 July 2024.

Dilys Moy who celebrates her 103rd birthday on 27 July 2024.

Mary Murrell who celebrates her 100th birthday on 16 July 2024.

Alan Pyefinch who celebrates his 102nd birthday on 24 July 2024.

Shelia Savill who celebrates her 100th birthday on 12 July 2024.

David Scott who celebrates his 100th birthday on 21 July 2024.

Joan Tanton who celebrates her 100th birthday on 11 July 2024.

John Westlake who celebrates his 100th birthday on 28 July 2024.

Arthur Wildsmith who celebrates his 100th birthday on 1 August 2024.

Arnold Wilkinson who celebrates his 100th birthday on 15 July 2024.

Michael Woods who celebrates his 100th birthday on 12 July 2024.

Condolences

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

Dorothy Anne Gore who died on 1 January 2024. She was the wife of David Gore.

Beryl James who died on 13 May 2024. She was the wife of Charles James.

Patricia Ann Nott who died on 12 May 2024. She was the wife of Colin Roy Nott.

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

John Aaron of Kettering, Northamptonshire died on 29 March 2024 aged 92. He served as a Flight Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force.

Raymond John Allen of Weymouth, Dorset died on 1 May 2024 aged 91. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

John Joseph Bannon of Southsea, Hampshire died on 14 May 2024 aged 95. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Graham Sydney Black of Manchester died on 1 May 2024 aged 98. He served as a Surgeon Lieutenant in the Royal Navy.

Gordon Bolt of Wilmslow, Cheshire died on 7 April 2024 aged 92. He served as a Private in the Cheshire Regiment.

Peter Brewer of Stockport, Cheshire died on 10 May 2024 aged 84. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

David Swinstead Britton of Colchester, Essex died on 1 May 2024 aged 86. He served as a Sergeant in the Green Jackets.

Dennis George Burrows of Presteigne, Powys died on 9 May 2024 aged 92. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Anthony John Buxton of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk died on 12 May 2024 aged 87. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

John Doyle Cameron of Jersey died on 1 May 2024 aged 82. He served as a Leading Steward in the Royal Navy.

Peter Cannon of Reading died on 16 May 2024 aged 92. He served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps / Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Peter John Cresswell of Reading died on 10 February 2024 aged 99. He served as a Navigator in the Royal Air Force.

Charles Edward Daly of Braintree, Essex died on 1 May 2024 aged 89. He served as a Private in the Parachute Regiment.

Paula Winifred Dickinson of Epping, Essex died on 15 May 2024 aged 96. She served as a Lance Corporal in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

John Duncan of Lewes, East Sussex died on 1 May 2024 aged 88. He served as a Lieutenant in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

Gerald Montimore Fenn of Minehead, Somerset died on 13 May 2024 aged 87. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

John Fleming of Richmond, North Yorkshire died on 3 May 2024 aged 70. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Air Force.

Peter John Gadd of Spalding, Lincolnshire died on 1 May 2024 aged 86. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Service Corps.

William Galvin of St. Helens, Merseyside died on 1 February 2024 aged 87. He served as an Acting Leading Air Mechanic in the Royal Navy.

Rita Joan Gathercole of Southsea, Hampshire died on 16 May 2024 aged 99. She served as a Writer in the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Frederick Thomas Glover of Birmingham died on 10 April 2024 aged 89. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Service Corps.

John Graham of York, North Yorkshire died on 10 May 2024 aged 102. He served as a Private in the Royal Artillery.

Raymond Grose of Gillingham, Kent died on 26 May 2024 aged 100. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Service Corps.

John Trevor Handley of Withernsea, North Humberside died on 1 May 2024 aged 76. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

George Fairbairn Horsburgh of Melrose, Roxburghshire died on 1 May 2024 aged 76. He served as a Leading Seaman in the Royal Navy.

David Godfrey Horton of Christchurch, Dorset died on 1 December 2023 aged 84. He served as an Air Artificer in the Royal Navy.

John Langley of St Helens, Merseyside died on 12 April 2024 aged 75. He served in the Royal Corps of Transport.

Raymond Leveson of Bingley, West Yorkshire died on 1 May 2024 aged 97. He served as a Corporal in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment.

Walter Joseph McManus of Manchester died on 1 May 2024 aged 89. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers.

Derek Peter Mercer of Runcorn, Cheshire died on 4 March 2024 aged 86. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Signals.

Peter Alexander Moir of Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire died on 12 May 2024 aged 88. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Cyril Edward Nelson of Fleet, Hampshire died on 1 June 2024 aged 97. He served as an Engine Room Artificer in the Royal Navy.

Edward Nicholas of Walton-On-Thames, Surrey died on 1 May 2024 aged 98. He served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

Nathaniel Ogayemi of London died on 1 April 2024 aged 75. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales') (38th, 64th, 80th, and 98th Foot).

Bernard O'Kane of North Shields, Tyne and Wear died on 18 April 2024 aged 95. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Air Force.

Alice O'Neil of Henley-On-Thames, Oxfordshire died on 7 May 2024 aged 84. She served as a Sergeant in the Women's Royal Air Force.

Michael Alexander Barker Parfect of Lewes, East Sussex died on 4 June 2024 aged 92. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Leonard George Proctor of Cambridge died on 5 May 2024 aged 93. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Anne Elizabeth Ramsbottom of Christchurch, Dorset died on 7 March 2024 aged 81. She served as an Aircraftwoman First Class in the Royal Air Force.

Thomas Richard Ivan Redman of Burnham-On-Sea, Somerset died on 19 April 2024 aged 94. He served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers.

Kenneth Roberts of Blackburn died on 26 May 2024 aged 95. He served as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery.

Michael John Rochford of Kilmarnock, Ayrshire died on 26 May 2024 aged 58. He served as a Private in the Army.

George Seymour of Sunderland died on 16 May 2024 aged 98. He served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Pioneer Corps.

William Bernard Shepherd of Middlesbrough, Cleveland died on 1 May 2024 aged 88. He served as a Private in the Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales Own Yorkshire Regiment).

Alan Short of Sheffield died on 1 May 2024 aged 86. He served as a Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Hugh Templeton of Daventry, Northamptonshire died on 2 May 2024 aged 86. He served as a Senior Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force.

Peter Thomas of Hailsham, East Sussex died on 13 May 2024 aged 94. He served as an Aircraftman First Class in the Royal Air Force.

Phillip Arthur Thompson of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire died on 19 May 2024 aged 94. He served as a Flying Officer in the Royal Air Force.

Darrel Thomson of Kidlington, Oxfordshire died on 21 May 2024 aged 87. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps / Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Archibald Thornton of Berwick-Upon-Tweed died on 22 May 2024 aged 89. He served as a Sergeant in the King's Own Scottish Borderers.

Marjorie Tullett of Seaford, East Sussex died on 31 May 2024 aged 82. She served as a Leading Wren in the Royal Navy.

Geoffrey Wayne Turner of Tenterden, Kent died on 31 March 2024 aged 94. He served as a Squadron Leader in the Royal Air Force.

Alexander Michie McRitchie Walker of Edinburgh died on 3 June 2024 aged 90. He served as a Sergeant in the Royal Signals.

Brian Whelan of Rotherham, South Yorkshire died on 31 May 2024 aged 88. He was a Corporal Technician in the Royal Air Force.

Fred Whitworth of Bicester, Oxfordshire died on 1 May 2024 aged 96. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Engineers.

William Wigginton of Reading died on 21 May 2024 aged 93. He served as a Signaller in the Royal Signals.

Walter Wilson of Livingston, West Lothian died on 27 May 2024 aged 98. He served as a Corporal in the Royal Scots Regiment.

Beryl Wilson of Horsham, West Sussex died on 11 May 2024 aged 96. She served as a Lance Corporal in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Geoffrey Wright of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire died on 9 April 2024 aged 93. He was a Sub Corporal 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



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



AGENTURFOTOGRAFIN / ADOBE STOCK

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 49

1. Merlin
2. Great Britain
3. The Archers
4. Lollypop person
5. 1986
6. a) 3%
7. The Andes
8. Wandsworth
9. Norway
10. Snowdon

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.