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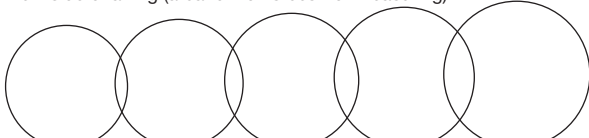
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NEW YEAR, NEW LEGION

Over the past few months, we've been reviewing the Legion's strategic direction in order to produce a new way of working. It's important that we keep you up to date with progress. For nearly 100 years, the Legion has supported Service personnel, veterans and their families, providing practical help and campaigning on their behalf. As we look ahead to our centenary, we're exploring how we can best adapt to meet the needs of today's Armed Forces community and be fit for purpose for the next 100 years. As part of our review, we're looking at how we're structured and whether our funds are being spent effectively on the greatest needs of those who seek help.

With responsibilities for welfare support, campaigning and Remembrance, our work is wide-ranging, and the review will consider options for the future across all three areas.

The needs of our Armed Forces community are changing. There's more demand for support in complex issues including employment, finances, housing, mental health and wellbeing, and care. People often have several needs; for example, if someone has difficulties with housing, that can affect their mental health. We have to adapt accordingly, and, as with all charities, we must use the money we're given to deliver the best-possible results and ensure our services are sustainable. We must focus our efforts on activities that will make the biggest contribution to improving the lives of those we serve.

More information about the progress of this strategic review will be shared as work develops. Meanwhile, you can read about our current thinking on page 51.

On page 33, we've gathered a number of touching testimonies that bring alive everything we stand for. Elsewhere in the issue, we're looking forward to 2020 with enthusiasm and you can see our preview of planned events on page 22. I hope our Coming Home theme (see page 28) will inspire and help you when planning your own commemorative and fundraising events. Brian Wood's valour in Iraq (see page 54) led to him being awarded the Military Cross after his 2004 tour. As you will discover, it was an honour tinged with sadness for this brave veteran. His gratitude to the Legion is a timely reminder of the difference we can make.

As we strive to improve how we work, it's important to remember the vision for our centenary year and beyond: "To bring together our nations, communities and individuals to create better futures for our Armed Forces community and their families."

M. Blominson



Top: We outline the key dates for your diary in 2020
Above: Seruwaia Nainoca is among the ex-Service people who have been helped by the Legion

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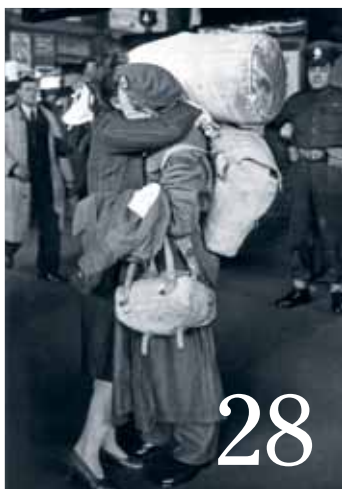
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On the battle in Iraq that led to him receiving the Military Cross



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NEWS

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NEWS SPECIAL

The 2019 Festival of Remembrance was held at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday 9 November, commemorating all of those who have lost their lives in conflicts. Attended by HM The Queen, the event drew special attention to the centenary of GCHQ and the 75th anniversaries of D-Day, Monte Cassino, and Kohima and Imphal, as well as the collaboration between the British, Commonwealth and Allied Forces. The Festival opened with a moving rendition of *The Impossible Dream* by Louise Dearman and a tri-service band, followed by a brief introduction by BBC presenter Huw Edwards, who welcomed everyone in attendance and those watching at home. Musical guests included Hollywood actor Jeff Goldblum, James Blunt, Leona Lewis, Lee Mead, the Central Band of the Royal Air Force, the Band of HM

Royal Marines and the Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. British actors Cel Spellman and Daniel Mays read testimony from D-Day veteran Kenneth Oakley and recited Feliks Konarski's poem *The Red Poppies on Monte Cassino*, respectively. At one point during the ceremony, 44 veterans who served in 1944 took to the floor and received a standing ovation, after which Legion President Lieutenant General James Bashall CB CBE gave the Exhortation: "At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them." The Last Post was played during the Two Minute Silence and thousands of poppies fell from the ceiling. The audience then stood for the National Anthem and with that, the event drew to a close.

To find out more about our Remembrance events, visit www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events



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20TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIFTING OF GAY BAN IN ARMED FORCES



On 12 January 2020, we commemorated the 20th anniversary of the European Court of Human Rights ruling that British lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender personnel should be allowed to serve openly, without discrimination. Before the ban was lifted, those found to be gay or lesbian could be thrown out of the Armed Forces, stripped of their Service, career and military honours and, in the worst cases, lose their families after being outed.

This month also marks the first anniversary of the Legion's first LGBTQ+ Branch. Founded by Ann Miller-McCaffrey, who serves in the Royal Navy, and her wife Emma, the Branch aims to provide support and guidance

for LGBTQ+ Service personnel and veterans, primarily by partnering with other military organisations and charities such as Stonewall, to raise awareness of our work.

To mark the two decades since the lifting of the ban, we've been sharing on social media stories from staff and members who served either pre- or post-ban, highlighting how the change has impacted them. We've also been collaborating with the Ministry of Defence and supporting its campaign for parliament to pardon those who were discharged for their sexuality before 2000.

To find out more about our LGBTQ+ initiatives, visit www.britishlegion.org.uk/stories/why-lgbt-community-groups-are-important



Above left and above:
The Armed Forces
celebrate Pride

WALHAMPTON SCHOOL HOLDS REMEMBRANCE SERVICE FOR BATTLE OF ARNHEM

Walhampton School in Lymington, Hampshire, recently held a special Remembrance service to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem, which was fought in the Netherlands in September 1944. The service, which took place in the school's chapel, was attended by around 400 people, including pupils, staff members, and five Arnhem veterans, some dressed in their berets and medals. Many relatives also attended the service, including John Grayburn, son of Jack Grayburn, who died of his wounds at Arnhem Bridge, aged 26, and was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously.

After the service, guests enjoyed looking around the Remembrance Garden, where a bronze statue, especially made by the school's art department, is permanently on display to honour the veterans.



Arnhem veteran Jim
Hooper with pupils at
the commemoration

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RAF OFFICER WINS HEROPRENEURS AWARD

Winners of the 10th Heropreneurs Awards were announced during a ceremony at Plaisterers' Hall in the City of London on 7 November. The awards celebrate the business achievements of ex-Service personnel. Among the 11 category winners this year were former RAF officer Hannah Saunders, who was awarded Start-up of the Year for Toddle, her range of natural, vegan skincare products for children (www.toddlebornwild.com).

"It was a huge honour to be awarded Start-up of the Year," says Hannah. "I am incredibly proud of my career in the Armed Forces and it was wonderful to be recognised for my achievements since launching Toddle, along with other former military personnel who have become entrepreneurs."

Heropreneurs was launched as a registered charity in 2009 and offers a free mentoring programme to help ex-Armed Forces personnel create their own successful businesses. For more information, visit www.heropreneurs.co.uk.



Winners of the 2019
Heropreneurs Awards

FUNDRAISING FASHIONISTAS MAKE MORE THAN £600 FOR THE LEGION

The Women's Section of the Little Common Branch recently held a fashion show in its East Sussex village in an effort to raise money for the Legion. There were 12 models in total, each showing off four outfits from the local M&Co fashion store. More than 100 guests and members attended the event.

"We raised more than £600 for both the Branch and the Poppy Appeal," says Women's Section Branch Secretary Janet Dixon. "It was a very busy – and successful – afternoon!"

Preparing to
go down the
catwalk at the Little
Common fundraising
fashion show



REMEMBERING SIR MICHAEL UREN

Acclaimed philanthropist, Royal Navy veteran, engineer and businessperson Sir Michael Uren OBE has passed away at the age of 95. Sir Michael served in the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War. In 1955, he founded Civil & Marine, a supplier of sea-dredged aggregates and manufacturer of ground granulated blast-furnace slag. He sold the company for £245 million in 2006.

During his lifetime, Sir Michael gave away more than £90 million to good causes, including £40 million to his alma mater, Imperial College London, in 2014. A member of both the Naval Club, and Naval and Military Club, he donated almost £900,000 to The Royal British Legion through The Michael Uren Foundation. David, his eldest son, writes: "He held the Armed Forces in exceptionally high regard and felt that members and veterans who had selflessly committed themselves to Queen and Country too often received inadequate support from the state. He supported a number of military charities financially and was always keen to advance their cause to others. It was a source of great pride to him that he had been able to assist."

On behalf of our staff, members and the people we support, we'd like to express our gratitude for his contribution to the Armed Forces community. His legacy will live on through the lives of the people he helped.



COMING SOON: THE GREAT GET TOGETHER



The 2020 Great Get Together – a nationwide initiative created in memory of the late MP Jo Cox, pictured left – will take place from 19 to 21 June. Last year, Legion members were among an estimated 720,000

people who participated in more than 11,000 events designed to unite neighbourhoods and promote Jo's values of kindness, tolerance and respect.

"We are so grateful to all of the Legion members who have been part of the Great Get Together to date," says Catherine Anderson, CEO of The Jo Cox Foundation. "Bringing people together can have such a powerful impact, from tackling loneliness to building a support system in your area, and we hope that you have seen these positive changes in your community. Thank you so much for helping to keep Jo's valuable legacy alive."

Seventy-one per cent of participants in last year's Great Get Together reported that they felt less lonely after attending an event, and 66 per cent said they felt more hopeful about the future, demonstrating the power of building connections.

If you'd like to join in, there are many ways to get your community involved. Visit www.greatgettogether.org to find out how to start planning your event.



LINFIELD FC COMMEMORATES THE FALLEN

On 2 November, Linfield Football Club conducted a special service to remember 19 Linfield FC players who gave their lives serving in the First and Second World Wars. The service also paid tribute to Linfield personnel who served with distinction – and in many cases, suffered injury – during these and other conflicts and returned home.

Commemorations began with a Service of Remembrance at the club's war memorial, situated in the Railway Stand offices, followed by a traditional pre-match tribute, with players being led onto the pitch by Legion pipers and Standard Bearers. Linfield FC Manager David Healy laid one of the poppy wreaths in the centre circle before a minute's silence was held in honour of the fallen.



Commemorating the fallen at Linfield FC

HEAD OF CARE SERVICES VISITS OUR FRIENDS FROM FAR AWAY

The Royal British Legion's Head of Care Services, Angela Cullimore-Todd, recently travelled to The Curphey Home in Manchester, Jamaica, to meet with veterans who served under the

British flag. "My greatest joy was to meet the only female resident, now well into her nineties; she served as a member of the Auxiliary Territorial Service," says Angela. "The veterans were extremely proud of their Service under the British flag. It was an unforgettable experience." The Curphey Home has provided care and protection for veterans since 1957.



Angela Cullimore-Todd at the Curphey Home

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The memorial to the 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment

NEW MEMORIAL UNVEILED IN LEICESTERSHIRE

In September last year, a sandstone memorial to the 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, was unveiled in Burrough on the Hill, Leicestershire, in the presence of veteran Freddie 'Dixie' Deane and more than 500 guests. The 10th Battalion was stationed in the area prior to departing for Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands in 1944 – of the 582 men who took part, only 36 returned two weeks later. Sculptor Graeme Mitcheson was commissioned to make the triptych memorial for the 75th anniversary of the ill-fated mission. Fundraising for the project was undertaken by the Friends of the Tenth, a charity committed to remembering the sacrifices made by those at Operation Market Garden and promoting an ongoing programme of education in both Leicestershire and Arnhem.

UNIFORM CHAIRS TO RAISE FUNDS AT AUCTION

Chair specialists HSL marked Remembrance Day by creating three unique seats upholstered in Armed Forces uniforms. The chairs were made by craftsmen in the HSL factory in Batley, West Yorkshire, and went on display in the Dewsbury store. Now touring HSL branches nationwide, the seats are due to be sold at auction in May. For more information on where the chairs can be seen, visit www.hsl.com/stores



HSL's handcrafted chairs, upholstered in Armed Forces uniforms

AMERICAN RELATIVES VISIT NORTHERN IRISH AIRCRASH SITE

Relatives of some of the 10 US airmen who were killed when their B-17 Flying Fortress bomber crashed in heavy fog at Cavehill, Northern Ireland, visited the site for the first time to mark the 75th anniversary of the accident. The crash occurred five days prior to D-Day in 1944. The family members attended a simple ceremony where the act of Remembrance was given by John Stewart, Chairman of the Legion Northern Ireland. Wreaths were laid by US Consul General Elizabeth Kennedy Trudeau; High Sheriff of Belfast, Alderman Tommy Sandford; Mr Stewart; Chair of Oldpark/Cavehill Legion Donna Alexander; and Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service Group Commander Chris Fee; along with family members. A film by Sir Richard Attenborough, *Closing the Ring*, is loosely based on the true story of Alfie Montgomery, who discovered an airman's inscribed wedding ring at the crash site in 1993 and spent about two and a half years tracking down his widow in Kentucky to return it to her.



The relatives of US airmen who crashed in Cavehill, Northern Ireland, visit the site



Primary school pupils designed Hull's Festival of Remembrance programme cover

SCHOOL HOLDS COMPETITION TO DESIGN FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE PROGRAMME

The Christopher Pickering Primary School, Hull, held a competition for pupils to design the front cover of the 2019 Hull City Hall Festival of Remembrance programme. The winner, Jamie Chambers, right, and runners-up were chosen by Festival of Remembrance Organiser Liz Spivey, North & East Yorkshire County Chairman Rod Evans, and Willerby Kirk Ella & Anlaby Branch Vice Chairman Katrina McCrudden.



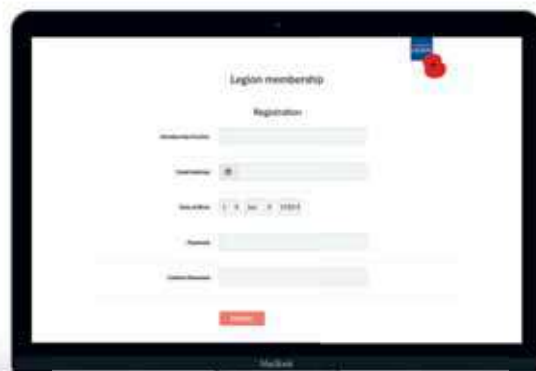
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Since 1 October 2018, approximately 19 per cent of all members have renewed their membership online, helping us to minimise costs. **Have you tried the Legion's Self-Service Portal yet?**

You can renew your membership, pay online and change your details by visiting the Legion's Self-Service Portal – a secure area of the Legion website created just for members. To log in, please visit **selfservice.britishlegion.org.uk**. If you don't yet have an account, you can register quickly and easily by following this step-by-step guide:

1. Visit the registration page:
selfservice.britishlegion.org.uk/register
2. Enter your membership number, the email address linked to your membership* and date of birth, then create a new password and click the register button.
3. Your new account will be created and you will be taken to a page where you can enter your details to log in.

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REMEMBER

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Celebrating the 90th conference of the Northern Ireland Women's Section

NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S SECTION HOLDS 90TH CONFERENCE

The Northern Ireland Royal British Legion Women's Section recently held their 90th annual conference in Antrim, Northern Ireland. The event was attended by many District Committee members, as well as the new President, Wing Commander Tara Scott MBE. Here's to the next 90!

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

A Free Will Writing service for all Members of The Royal British Legion

We were set up to serve this country's Armed Forces and their families – from the many thousands who fell in the mud and trenches of the First World War to those who served in recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and those who serve today. We have been here for nearly 100 years, honouring and supporting our Armed Forces and the families that stand by their side.

Our support comes in many different shapes and sizes. For instance, we run a completely confidential – and free – debt and money advice service to help Service families manage their finances. We also offer training and support with employability to help Service leavers to kick-start new careers.

As a member, we are able to assist you in making your Will for free and ensuring that your wishes are respected. We'll help you to safeguard the future of your family and friends and give you complete reassurance and peace of mind that your estate is in order – all free of charge.

You may already have a Will, but if your circumstances have changed, with this service, you can update it for free with a solicitor.

Honouring the our Armed Forces community – past, present and future.

Your decision to update your Will is of course personal to you, but this offer is a unique opportunity to update your Will and, at the same time, ensure that the Armed Forces of tomorrow can depend on The Royal British Legion.

Every gift, no matter the size, will make a difference to the vital welfare work we do, supporting the whole Armed Forces Family.

Thanks to the generosity of the Great British public, we can be here for today's Armed Forces family every step of the way. But what about tomorrow's Service personnel?

We support serving and ex-serving personnel all year round, every day of the week.

Our support starts after seven days of service and continues through life, long after service is over. We don't know what challenges our Armed Forces may have to overcome in the future, but with gifts in Wills, we will be able to respond to whatever comes our way.

If you would like us to help you update your Will or send you our Will Guide, I'd be delighted to discuss this with you. You can contact me at freewills@britishlegion.org.uk or on **020 3207 2253** and I will be happy to assist. You can also find out more about our free will service at: www.rbl.org.uk/freewills

Nicola Hall

Legacy Manager, The Royal British Legion

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Find out more or request a copy of our Will Guide at www.rbl.org.uk/freewills

Contact the Legion's legacy manager at freewills@britishlegion.org.uk or call **020 3207 2253**



"It's a huge comfort to know the Legion's support will never stop."

Mark Stonelake, who lost his left leg following an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion in Afghanistan.

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MY LEGION

"WHEN YOU SERVE OTHERS, YOU LIFT YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR OWN PROBLEMS"

At just 14 years old, **Sam Carruthers** has carried the Torch of Remembrance, affiliated his school with the Legion and become one of the youngest Standard Bearers in the country. Here, he shares his passion for the Legion's work

“

I love history and I've learned a lot about my ancestors who served in the two World Wars.

One of those on my dad's side, Joseph Jenkin, was in the Welsh Guards during the First World War and lost his arm after trying to clear an enemy grenade on the frontline. He recovered and later served as footman to HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. My great-great-uncle Murdo Mackenzie was a sailor in the Merchant Navy, and my great-grandfather, Squadron Leader Robert Graham, served in the Royal Air Force – both in the Second World War.

My whole family are involved with the Legion and I've been a member since my 12th birthday. Shortly after I became a member, I attended the Festival of Remembrance with my mum and grandma. What we saw and heard made us want to become more involved – to give back to those who have served us. Mum and I met the then County Chair, John Boisson, who said I should think about training to become a Standard Bearer when I turned 14. I started straight after my birthday and am now a Youth Standard Bearer for the Old Catton Branch. I also got to carry the Torch of Remembrance as it came through Norfolk. It was handed to me by a 99-year-old veteran – a symbol

of Remembrance being carried from the older generation to the youth of today. It was a huge honour.

Since then, I've managed to get my school affiliated with the Legion, and I'm organising a special assembly to introduce all the great work the Legion does. I was also the Youth Speaker at last year's Annual Conference. I was nervous but when it was my time to go up, I talked about how youth members can help the Legion and vice versa. It's rewarding to help others; you feel that you're making a difference, as well as being part of a community of



Sam is a Youth Standard Bearer for the Old Catton Branch

Addressing last year's Annual Conference



like-minded people. When you serve others, you lift yourself out of your own problems and become part of something bigger. There are friendships to be made, and helping the older generation is our way of saying thank you.

Before I attended the conference, I'd been raising money for a trip to help communities in Tanzania, and after my speech, a group of Legion delegates donated a huge sum. It was amazing – they were all incredibly kind. During the trip, we made a hut for a blind man who had lost his home in a storm, enlarged a watering hole and painted a school, among other things. None of it would have happened without those delegates' help. Being part of the Legion has been so rewarding and I know I'll be a member for life.” >>

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Lisa with her husband Guy, who she met on an Operation Telic tour

"I LIKE TO GO INTO THE COMMUNITY"

Lisa Evans is the Community Fundraiser for West Sussex. Prior to joining the Legion as a member of staff, she and her husband went through a difficult resettlement period. She hopes to use her own experience to help other veterans

“

Both my grandfathers served in the Second World War, one in the Royal Navy and the other in the Royal Air Force. Service then skipped a generation and came down to me.

I joined the Army in December 2001. My husband and I met when we were on an Operation Telic tour. I was in Bahrain and he flew me back to Qatar in a Hercules. We got chatting and ended up both being based in Qatar for a month. The rest is history.

We both came out of the Armed Forces in 2011. I knew I wanted to change direction, so I left voluntarily. About four months later, my husband found out he'd been medically discharged. He'd broken his neck and had disc-replacement surgery; he wasn't flying any more but had gone back to work once he'd recovered. He then received a letter from the resettlement agency asking why he had not registered for resettlement. When he asked at work, he was informed that he'd

been medically discharged six months previously but nobody had told him. He literally lost his career overnight and struggled to find work because he flew a Hercules and you can't replicate that in civilian life.

On leaving the Army I received the full resettlement package, but I don't recall any education on the Legion. My husband was discharged without any help. We assumed, incorrectly, that the Legion was an Army support charity, and that he wouldn't be entitled to anything because he'd been in the RAF. Had we understood the Legion properly, we could have approached it and received practical advice on how to manage our finances, as well as information on who to turn to for help. We had a mortgage to pay and suddenly no income. My husband would have benefited from some assistance with finding new employment – he left without a usable CV or the knowledge on how to write one. Also, just having someone to speak to and knowing that we weren't the only veterans

in the community who were struggling, would have made the transition so much easier.

After a few months, someone my husband knew who works for a flight-training school out in Qatar offered him a job, so we moved there in 2013. I reeducated myself in event planning, and when we returned from the Middle East two years ago, our two boys were old enough for me to go back to work.

I fell upon my Legion Community Fundraising job because it involved event planning, fundraising and working in the community that served my military family. The stars were aligned and it seemed perfect. Community Fundraisers are the face of the charity in the local area. If there's a veteran who doesn't know where to turn and they see you out on the street during the Poppy Appeal, they will come and speak with you.

I like to go into the community and visit groups, schools, those kinds of places, and talk about the Legion. Fundraising is what I do, but I think educating the public is just as important. Compared to most charities, which have one main focus, the Legion is complex – but it does a lot for a lot of people. That's why I also joined as a member. I have first-hand experience and want to be able to promote the Legion's expertise to others."



Lisa (right) fundraising with fellow Legion staff Sue Sadler and Graham Ferris

MARCH

ARCTIC SURVIVAL CHALLENGE MAR 2020 & FEB/MAR 2021

A survival challenge set in the pristine wilderness of northern Sweden, just south of the Arctic Circle. Learn new skills including husky sledding, snowhoeing and building a snow hole.

Registration fee and sponsorship:

a) register for £200 and raise £2,500;
or b) register for £200, pay £1,195
yourself and raise £1,100

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/arctic-survival-challenge

APRIL

VIRGIN MONEY LONDON MARATHON

26 APR 2020

One of the greatest marathons in the world. If you know someone who has a place, we'd love them to run for Team Legion. They'll be cheered all the way to the finish line.

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/virgin-money-london-marathon

2020 EVENTS:

From the 75th anniversary of VE Day to the Festival of Remembrance, here's everything you need to know about the biggest events of the year



LONDON LANDMARKS HALF MARATHON

29 MAR 2020

Runners pass some of the capital's most popular landmarks on this iconic route.

Registration fee: £30

Sponsorship: £350 target

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/london-landmarks-half-marathon

VE DAY 75 7-10 MAY 2020

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe, there is a special programme of events in central London, designed especially for the Second World War generation who served at home and overseas across the European theatre. We'll be hosting 750 veterans, each accompanied by a nominated companion, and funding their transport, meals and accommodation; they will travel to London by train courtesy of the National Rail Group.

We need your help to find veterans, so if you or anyone you know would like to take part, please spread the word and apply as soon as possible at www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/ve-day-75



MAY



NORMANDY BEACHES TREK

12-17 MAY 2020

Cover just under 50 miles of the beautiful Normandy coastline on this unique trek, which marks the 76th anniversary of the D-Day Landings.

Registration fee and sponsorship: a) register for £199 and raise £1,450; or b) register for £199, pay £700 yourself and raise £750

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/normandy-beaches-trek



POPPY QUEST

JUN/JUL 2020

A 10km discovery walk in locations across the UK, solving puzzles to uncover city gems.

Registration fee: £16, under 18s free

Sponsorship: £50 min
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/poppy-quest

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



POPPY RIDE

31 MAY 2020

Cycle with ex-Service personnel from the Battle Back Centre on routes through the picturesque Staffordshire countryside; the longer route also takes in the National Memorial Arboretum.

Registration fee: £32

Sponsorship: Raise as much as you can to help fund recovery for ex-Service personnel
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/poppy-ride

CANONTEIGN WATERFALL ABSEIL

27 & 28 JUN 2020

Abseil 220ft down England's highest waterfall, Canonteign Falls, near Exeter in Devon.

Registration fee: £20

Sponsorship: £150 min
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/canonteign-waterfalls-abseil



JULY

PEDAL TO YPRES

4-6 JUL 2020

A three-day cycle that finishes at the Menin Gate in Ypres. A dedicated historian joins us and adds insight to the memorials visited en route.

Registration fee and sponsorship:
a) pay £250 and raise £750; or
b) pay £750 and raise £250
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/pedal-to-ypres >>

JUNE

POPPY RACE DAY

8 AUG 2020

Newmarket's annual Poppy Race Day is one of its most popular summer fixtures. It features a Standard Bearers' parade, a display by Army Air Corps helicopters and an assault-course challenge as well as the horseracing, with proceeds going towards the Armed Forces community.

Entry fee: £135, including a gala lunch

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/race-day



AUGUST

PRUDENTIAL RIDE LONDON

16 AUG 2020

Cycle 100 miles on closed roads through the capital and the countryside of Surrey, finishing at The Mall in London.

Registration fee: £30 (charity place)

Sponsorship: £450 min
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/prudential-ride-london



SEPTEMBER



PEDAL TO PARIS

3-7 SEP 2020

A four-day ride from London through France that's open to both individuals and teams, with a Tour de France-style finish at the Arc de Triomphe. This is the 25th anniversary of the ride, so we'll make it extra special.

Registration fee and sponsorship: a) pay £150 deposit and raise £1,500; or b) pay £150 deposit, £600 yourself and raise £900
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/pedal-to-paris-2020

VJ DAY 75 14-16 AUG 2020

For the 75th anniversary of Victory in Japan, we'll be funding travel and accommodation costs for veterans of the Asia-Pacific campaign, plus a nominated companion each, to visit key CWGC and commemorative sites across South and South East Asia. For veterans who prefer to be part of the UK commemorations, we'll fund travel and accommodation to attend three days of activities at the National Memorial Arboreum from 14 to 16 August. If you'd like to take part – or know any veterans who would – apply at **www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/vj-day-75**



GREAT NORTH RUN

13 SEP 2020

The world's largest half marathon, starting in the centre of Newcastle, continuing over the iconic Tyne Bridge and finishing in South Shields.

Registration fee: £30

(charity place)

Sponsorship: £350 min

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/great-north-run



WESTERN FRONT TREK

23-27 SEP 2020

Walk in the footsteps of heroes who fought in the First and Second World Wars on this three-day trek along the Western Front, finishing at the Menin Gate.

Registration fee and sponsorship: a) register for £199 and raise £1,399; or b) register for £199, pay £600 yourself and raise £799

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/western-front-trek

CASTAWAY SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

12 SEP, 26 SEP & 3 OCT 2020

A survival challenge that sees you cast away to the wilderness of a mystery beach location.

Entry fee: £50

Sponsorship: £575 min

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/castaway-survival-challenge-september-2020



OCTOBER



POPPY RUNS

1 OCT – 30 NOV 2020

A 5km course in various locations all over the UK. Open to all ages and abilities – including four-legged friends. Register your interest to find out more.

Entry fee: £15 adults, £7.50 ages 7-17, under-sixes free

Sponsorship: £50 min target

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/poppy-run

2020 EVENTS

NOVEMBER

POPPY APPEAL

OCT 2020, DATE TO BE CONFIRMED

Thanks to you, last year's Poppy Appeal was an amazing success, helping to raise millions of pounds for serving and ex-serving members of the Armed Forces community and their families. We want to repeat that success in 2020 – but we need your help to do it. Expect more details later in the year, including dates, locations and fundraising targets.



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

8 NOV 2020

The National Service of Remembrance, held at the Cenotaph on Whitehall, London, honours our Armed Forces community, Allies, the British and Commonwealth veterans, and the civilian Servicemen and women involved in the two World Wars and later conflicts.

TWO-MINUTE SILENCE

11 NOV 2020, 11AM

Join us as we ask the nation to pause for just two minutes and pay their respects to our Armed Forces community, past and present.

COMING SOON IN 2021... THE LEGION CENTENARY

Next year, we're celebrating The Royal British Legion's centenary. We'll highlight how we've played a vital role in society for the past 100 years – and how, with your help, we'll continue to do so for the next 100. More details about events and activities will be coming soon, but we encourage members and branches to start thinking about their local Legion stories and how they might be celebrated in 2021.



FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

7 NOV 2020

An annual service hosted at the Royal Albert Hall. For the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, we will commemorate the Service and sacrifice of a generation. We remember the child evacuees who returned and those who faced long journeys to their homes in the far-flung Commonwealth. We will celebrate the peace that reunited them, and the democracy and freedoms they saved for us. We will honour the 400,000 British and Commonwealth forces who never saw home again.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events



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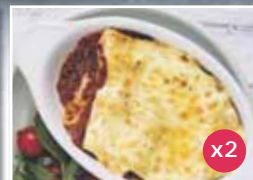
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Welcoming home
(above left) a PoW from
Singapore, 1945; (above
and below right) troops
from the Falklands, 1982;
and (below left) a soldier
from Afghanistan, 2011



REMEMBRANCE 2020

Keeping Remembrance alive – and relevant to all – in the years to come is one of the Legion's biggest responsibilities. Here we look at the thinking behind Remembrance 2020

Home has a very special place in the hearts of the Armed Forces community. It is also central to the concept of Remembrance: we are grateful for the men and women who come home from deployment – we celebrate the peace that reunites them and the democracy and freedoms they have won for us. But we also honour those who never see home again.

The Legion's Remembrance activities in 2020 will have the idea of 'coming home' at their heart. It's not a directive or a call to action as such, more a way to unify everyone's – including branches' and members' – approach to Remembrance this year.

"It helps to give a very wide-reaching organisation such as ours a single theme to unite around," says Robert Lee, the Legion's Assistant Director of Remembrance. "It brings our Remembrance work to life in a consistent way because we're all pulling our oars in the same direction. It also helps us and the public to make sense of our year-round Remembrance acts. And we can talk about activity across counties, across branches,

"WHEN YOU SERVE, 'HOME' MEANS SO MUCH MORE"

in the context of a shared theme.

"I also think that in taking Remembrance forward, particularly into the years coming up, which aren't as full of [anniversary] commemorations as the past five years, it is useful to have a theme so that it stays front-of-mind for the nation and continues to have life and relevance."

To Service personnel on deployment, the thought of home carries them through difficult times. For most, it's what they are fighting for. For centuries, sailors have illustrated this idea with a swallow tattoo, which can signify distance travelled but also the intention that the wearer will, as swallows do, return home to rest. "The swallows would always take me home," says Dani Cummings, a Leading Logistician on HMS *St Albans*, talking about her tattoo for the Legion's Tribute Ink project.

"When you serve, 'home' means



Leading Logistician Dani Cummings' swallow tattoo signifies coming home

so much more," says Robert. "And that's been the case in wars, conflicts and operations across all time. It's at the front of a Serving person's mind: the buddy beside them and the family back home are the two things that are never far from their thoughts."

WHAT IT MEANS FOR LEGION MEMBERS

'Coming Home' is the focus for activities throughout 2020 in the same way that 'Remember Together' was for 2019. "Last year, we remembered in particular the contribution of the Commonwealth and Allies in the great battles of 1944," says Robert. "That involved reaching out to different heritage communities in the UK that are descended from the many nations that were part of the Commonwealth or foreign forces under British command in the Second World War. We included them in acts of Remembrance and the language of Remembrance."

As an example, the Festival of Remembrance last November acknowledged not only the contributions of Commonwealth nations in the battles of 1944, but also the Commonwealth soldiers in the British Armed Forces today. Many communities nationwide held Remembrance observations including different nationalities within the same community. "It brought a sense >>>



A parade of Commonwealth flags at the 2019 Festival of Remembrance

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†Based on a selection of national well-being criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10 years younger after moving from mainstream housing to housing specially designed for later living.

SC005836

of togetherness around that Remembrance activity,” says Robert. “I’d like to see that happen again in 2020 around the ‘Coming Home’ theme.”

COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

The Legion’s main events commemorating the end of the Second World War – the 75th anniversaries of VE Day in May and VJ Day in August – will be built around ‘Coming Home’. The Festival of Remembrance will also reflect the theme.

“The Legion will be leading on national events for VE Day and VJ Day,” says Robert. “What unites them is that those were days of great celebration, thanksgiving and relief across the nation. But then there was this enormous task of demobilising, repatriating and resettling into civilian life. This had to be done for 3.8 million men and 400,000 women in Britain alone, and for a similar number of Commonwealth forces, who had much further to get back home. In some cases, the process took a couple of years, and once they got home there was often a difficult period of readjustment. We have to think of what the entire nation went through: a bittersweet combination of joy and challenges.”

Just as important as those who returned home, of course, are those who did not. “We will honour them as well, including the tens of thousands of British civilians who died on home soil,” says Robert. “It was a total war: it occurred on the home front and the battle front, and we will be marking those who gave their lives and did not come home.”



A returning sergeant is greeted by his wife and son, plus the people of his Devon village, 1945

LOCAL FOCUS

The Legion is keen for communities to replicate the national VE Day and VJ Day events at a local level. Many counties and branches will already be organising their commemorative events, so Robert suggests simply keeping the idea of ‘Coming Home’ in mind when planning. Storytelling will be key to this, he says.

“Scratch the surface of anyone’s memory in this country and they will have a story in their family or in their town or institution about that homecoming period,” says Robert. This is the ideal time to explore narratives of returning home after the Second World War – how it changed communities and families. These form the cornerstone of our commemorative events, around which people can organise their Remembrance thoughts.

“There are opportunities for the community to come together and celebrate where they live, to celebrate their own homes.”

KEY 2020 COMMEMORATIONS

VE DAY
8-10 May

**70TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE START OF THE
KOREAN WAR**
25 June

**VJ DAY
COMMEMORATIONS**
14-16 August

**FESTIVAL OF
REMEMBRANCE**
7 November

**NATIONAL SERVICE OF
REMEMBRANCE**
8 November

**ARMISTICE DAY AND
TWO-MINUTE SILENCE**
11 November

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THIS IS WHO WE ARE

THIS IS WHAT WE DO

What does the Legion mean to you? Is it the champion of Remembrance? The nationwide fundraiser with the Poppy Appeal at its heart? Or the network of support-based employees and volunteers who help the Armed Forces community in so many ways? The truth is, the Legion is all of these things and more

From its formation in 1921, The Royal British Legion has grown throughout its 99 years to become a vital lifeline for veterans, their families and dependants. At the heart of the Legion's purpose lies concern for the welfare of those who have served their country, requiring the charity to adapt to the changing needs of the Armed Forces community. Whatever the issue – be it physical and mental wellbeing, financial and employment support, care and independent living or just someone to talk to – the Legion is there for all members of the Armed Forces community.

The key pillar that has been present throughout the charity's near-century of work is that of Remembrance. The act of honouring those who defend our democratic freedoms,

with some paying the ultimate sacrifice, is best symbolised by the Two Minute Silence of Armistice Day. But Remembrance isn't just for 120 seconds on 11 November each year. The Legion is there all year round, organising events to mark key anniversaries and arranging trips to enable people to pay respects at war graves around the world or closer to home at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Then there are the less visible activities that are just as integral to what the Legion stands for. The Public Affairs and Public Policy team lobbying politicians and the Legion members ensuring veterans get the support they need are just two examples of the Legion working at its very best. On the following pages, four people tell us why the Legion is so special to them. »

A photograph of a climbing wall with various colorful holds (blue, red, yellow, black) on a light-colored background. The wall is slightly angled, and the lighting is soft.

Lyndon Chatting-Walters

joined the Royal Engineers in 2006 before moving over to 9 Parachute Squadron RE. In 2008, at the age of 18, he was deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan, where he sustained a number of injuries (shattered right heel, broken left leg, shrapnel injuries to thigh and groin, broken back in four places, broken ribs, lung contusions and broken jaw) that should have spelled the end of his career. He somehow returned for a second tour in 2010, before having to come home on sick leave. Lyndon attended the Battle Back Centre in Lilleshall, Shropshire, a Legion-funded facility created to help Service people in their recovery.

"I was sent to the Battle Back Centre by my PRO [Personnel Recovery Officer] in early 2012. I'd returned from my second tour in 2010 and my back was bad. I was waiting for spinal surgeries and came to the centre while I was on sick leave. I'd been at home for well over a year.

That week made me more aware of what was going on inside my head. The coaches were fantastic. I'd been told by a dozen surgeons that I couldn't do anything, but it turned out I could still do a lot. The centre was where I fell in love with

climbing, which is now a massive passion. It showed me I was still capable – I'd just need to adapt.


I was discharged from the Army in 2013, and I've been working at the Battle Back Centre as a coach for about three or four years. It's just unbelievable to see the change in the people who come here. They arrive in a pretty bad place and when they leave they're all standing proud, excited for the future and they've got some good things in place to take them forward. Having been through it myself definitely helps me at my job. It gives hope that things can get better.

Last year, we took an expedition to the Himalayas to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. A lot of us summited Mera Peak on Remembrance Sunday. It raised a lot of awareness for the Legion, Remembrance Sunday and the work that's done at the Battle Back Centre. It was quite a poignant moment standing on the top of a 6,500m peak on Remembrance Sunday with a load of veterans. I think that there are a lot of ex-Service people out there whose lives could potentially be pretty difficult without charities like the Legion. The work can be life changing. I see that week in, week out at the Battle Back Centre."



"IT'S JUST
UNBELIEVABLE
TO SEE THE
CHANGE IN THE
PEOPLE WHO
COME HERE"





"I'M HELPING
THROUGH MY
COMMUNITY BUT I'M
ALSO HONOURING
MY FOREFATHERS"

Tariq Malik is a Poppy Collector and a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Elders Association (AMEA) in Birmingham. He supports the Legion both in his home town and nationally through the AMEA's Charity Walk for Peace initiative, which raised more than £500,000 for the Legion in 2018. It was the discovery of a family tie to the First World War, however, that gave his fundraising an extra, personal edge.

"We started collecting formally through our community, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Elders Association, about five years ago. We organise walks throughout the year under our Charity Walk for Peace platform, and charities can affiliate themselves with the events to raise money. The charities receive 100 per cent of whatever they raise – we don't keep a penny – and we give them a dinner at the end. In 2018, we achieved just over £1 million nationally, and more than half a million was raised on behalf of the Legion.

As a child, I was always aware of the Legion because of the Poppy Appeal collection at school. However, I didn't realise that members of my own community had contributed and fought with the Allied Forces.

My family is originally from Pakistan, and on researching the history of my village, Dulmial, we found out that of about 800 men, 460 fought in the First World War and they were predominantly Muslim. In the Second World War, more than 800 men participated. Now, when doing the Poppy Appeal, I'm remembering my great-grandfather and all of those who were involved. It's a dual thing – I'm helping through my community but

I'm also honouring my forefathers.

My community's support doesn't stop at the organised walks, either. It might not be financial support, but we'll volunteer our time, be it attending events, marshalling or standing there with a collection bucket.

We've also set up an organisation called Community Ambassadors, which entails us as Muslims working with people of other faiths and the military. In 2018, we had a veterans' tea party, and towards the end of last year, we held a dinner to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day. We prepared a formal meal in the mosque and invited veterans from the local community. It was a thank-you to the veterans for their service, but we were also educating ourselves about the sacrifices that people make that we take for granted. We wanted to show that we remember them, even after the Poppy Appeal.

The community cohesion is an ongoing process. Growing up, I wasn't aware of the contribution of the Commonwealth, and I think we need to develop that even more from a school-education point of view. It is getting better, though.

In last year's Poppy Appeal, the theme from the Legion was 'Remember Together', and I think we're realising we need to recognise all those who made a sacrifice. Once people become aware that those from the African-Caribbean or Indian subcontinent gave so much for the greater good, it will develop a feeling of belonging. We're trying to develop more community cohesion because society is becoming more fractured, but people need to realise we're better together."



Michael 'Mikey' Hall served in 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, but while taking part in a regimental competition, he broke his neck in two places and fractured his spine in seven, leaving him in a wheelchair. After taking medical discharge, he stumbled upon archery; he turned out to be so good that he went on to compete for Britain at the 2016 Summer Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro. In 2017, however, he fell seriously ill, which was when the Legion stepped in.

"A mate of mine who was in the same regiment as me came out at the same time and asked if I fancied doing an archery course. I went along and quite enjoyed it – I had a good eye and I was hitting the gold from the off. Firstly, I did recurve bow archery for a year, but then I went to compound because I found I was a better shot with that bow.

I was asked to go to Sochi for the Winter Olympics as part of the PIP (Paralympic Inspiration Programme) team, and while I was there, I was asked if I wanted to take part in the Invictus Games. I won gold and bronze medals there and really enjoyed it. It was great getting to represent the British Armed Forces again and it was through a sport that I was good at. There was a great team and it was nice to come away with two medals.

This led to me being selected for ParalympicsGB. I kept winning shoots, got up to number four in the world and managed a seventh-place finish at the Paralympics in Rio. I was the top compound shooter in Britain, it was really good, but then, in

2017, it all went downhill.

One day, I felt ill and was rushed to the hospital, where it turned out I had sepsis and internal organ failure. I woke up two months later. I remember being told I'd had five operations and that I'd died in my last one but they'd brought me around. They put me in an induced coma and they couldn't do any more operations on me – I had an open wound on my stomach. I was in Shrewsbury for seven months and then was sent to a specialist unit in Manchester, where they stitched me back up in 2019.

Mike Hughes from the Legion's Market Drayton Branch is a very good friend who heard about me and got in touch with my parents. The Legion paid the travel expenses for their regular visits from Shropshire to Manchester and were there if we needed them. Mike also got in contact with the local branch in Manchester and someone visited me at least every two weeks to see if I was alright and check if I needed anything. It was an extra layer of support and it was nice to have someone to talk to.


I wasn't aware that the Legion was there for this sort of thing, but now I know it is. It has also helped with adaptations to my house and had a proper ramp put in. It meant I could get out of my house – otherwise I'd be stuck indoors 24/7.

I'm hoping to get back into the ParalympicsGB team. I won't be going to Tokyo because I've missed that boat now and I haven't had the chance to do any training. But next year, hopefully, I'll get back into training and be back in the team ready for France 2024."

"IT WAS GREAT
GETTING TO
REPRESENT THE
BRITISH ARMED
FORCES AGAIN"







"I DON'T THINK
I COULD HAVE DONE
MY DEGREE WITHOUT
THIS HELP"

Seruwaia Nainoca was a Private in the Royal Logistic Corps, deploying to Iraq, Kuwait and Cyprus during her eight years of Service. On leaving in 2007, she wanted to study law, but couldn't afford the essentials required – laptop, text books, travel – to complete her course. Fortunately, the Legion was there to help.

"After leaving the Armed Forces, I had a career break for two to three years and I decided to do some studying. Then I made my decision to pursue a law degree but couldn't afford the essentials. I found out that this is the sort of support the Legion gives to vets, and I was provided with a grant that covered my laptop, books and stationery, plus travelling expenses for going to tutorials, seminars and legal conferences held in London. I don't think I could have done my degree without the Legion's help.

I'm now going to start my legal practice course so I can begin working as a solicitor. I want to practise in international and human rights law – that's where my passion lies. I'm glad that the Legion's support is there for soldiers like me to try to expand their career."



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POPPY POWER

From undercover celebrities to superstar collectors, the 2019 Poppy Appeal was an absolute triumph – and it's thanks to you – our members, volunteers and have-a-go heroes

The Legion's 2018 Poppy Appeal raised a record-breaking £51 million – the most we've ever made in the history of the campaign – so for the 2019 Appeal, we set our sights on the same goal. Kicking off on 26 October, it brought together branches, communities and Collectors from all over the country in an effort to raise £50 million for our Armed Forces community. Here are some of the highlights.

"THE 2019 APPEAL BROUGHT TOGETHER BRANCHES, COMMUNITIES AND COLLECTORS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY IN AN EFFORT TO RAISE £50 MILLION FOR OUR ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY"

Clockwise from above right: Rachel Riley and, top, Eddie Izzard were among our undercover celebrities collecting for the Legion; uniformed Poppy Collectors in London King's Cross station; some of our amazing Poppy Run participants



OPERATION POPPY

For the 2019 Poppy Appeal, the Legion recruited a team of super-secret celebrities for a special mission: Operation Poppy. The aim was to highlight the hidden contributions of the Armed Forces community and our Poppy Appeal Collectors, as well as celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ).

In partnership with the intelligence, security and cyber agency, we sent the celebrity operatives undercover as Poppy Collectors for a day. Their mission was to partner with a local Collector and find out more about their efforts supporting the Armed Forces, veterans and their families.

Ahead of the launch, we challenged the public to see if they "had what it takes" to complete the Operation by identifying the celebrities. This involved solving a series



of brainteasers set by the codebreakers at GCHQ – and guess what – you did it! The nine secret celebrities were Rachel Riley, Eddie Izzard, Antony Cotton, Ross Kemp, Ben Shephard, Arlene Phillips, Deborah Meaden, JB Gill and Jeff Brazier, each of whom joined some of the more than 40,000 Poppy Appeal volunteers to help shine a light on your amazing efforts, as well as the invaluable contributions made by the Armed Forces community. Well done, everyone – mission accomplished!

POPPY DAYS

Poppy Days are some of our biggest fundraising events of the year, sometimes raising as much as £1 million in a single day. Every year, cities across the country dedicate a day to distributing poppies and getting the public involved through activities and entertainment. This year we had events in five major cities – London, Leeds, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester – and the turnout was nothing short of extraordinary. But don't worry if you couldn't attend one; you can still make a donation by visiting www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate



POPPY RUNS

More than a dozen Poppy Runs – our fun, family-friendly 5k events – were held across the UK in 2019, from Manchester to Cardiff to Southampton, attracting thousands of fundraisers, volunteers and competitors – not to mention a few four-legged friends.

We'd like to offer our huge congratulations to everyone who took part this year, whether it was by raising money; running, jogging or walking in the events; or simply cheering from the sidelines. We couldn't have done it without you!

To find out more about this year's Poppy Runs, see page 25 or visit www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/poppy-run

YOUR STORIES

The Poppy Appeal is a nationwide effort, uniting hundreds of thousands of people of a variety of ages, faiths and backgrounds. To highlight the diversity of our amazing Collectors, we published a series of online videos to share the stories of our everyday heroes



Mark

Mark joined the Army at the age of 15 and volunteered for the Poppy Appeal after serving for 35 years. Now retired, he helps raise money by collecting donations and organising volunteers in his local area.

"I had the opportunity to join the Army as a Junior Leader," says Mark. "I don't know why they took me as really I had nothing to offer, but for the next two years I was fed, clothed, given an education and, I suppose, moulded into something resembling what the Army wanted. Due to my Army Service, I had the opportunity to give my son the education I never had. He went on to university and gained a decent degree, followed by a master's degree.

"Now I am happy to do my bit for the Poppy Appeal," he continues. "Commuters are amazed to see a 'poppy man' out and about so early, but people love to stop and chat. I am glad that I have this opportunity to pay back my good fortune and hope I will be able to do so for many years to come!"

Maisie

Nine-year-old Maisie started selling poppies outside her school to raise money for the Poppy Appeal after the Legion supported her dad, Duane, who was medically discharged from the Army in 2018.

"When Dad came out of the Army, he needed lots of help," says Maisie. "He has had ten operations on his left leg and has spent lots of time in hospital; I would sit by his bed reading to him to make him happy. The poppy people have helped all of us as a family and so I want to give something back by raising money."

"This has all come from Maisie herself," added Duane. "She just turned to me and said she wanted to do something for the 'poppy people' because they'd helped her dad. I'm so proud of my family – Maisie's a little diamond – and I've been overwhelmed by the support from the school and the local community."

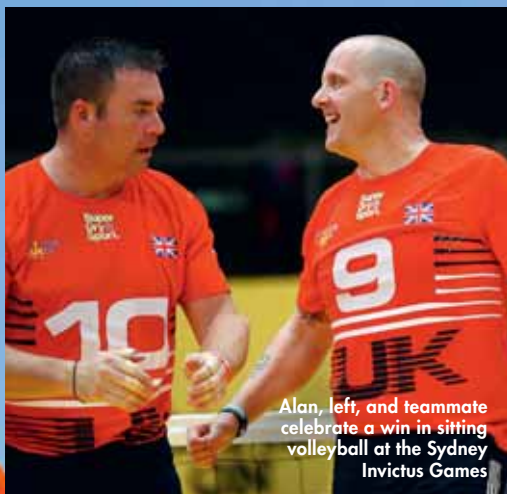
Even the Prime Minister himself showed his support, inviting Maisie and Duane to Downing Street and encouraging everyone to donate money to the campaign.



Maisie and Duane, along with Legion Director of Fundraising Claire Rowcliffe, met Prime Minister Boris Johnson at Downing Street

YOUR AMAZING EFFORTS

Here are just some of the highlights from members, fundraisers and branches all over the country



Alan, left, and teammate celebrate a win in sitting volleyball at the Sydney Invictus Games

Alan

Alan joined the Army in 1992, started a family with his wife Toni-Sue and toured the world with the Royal Marines. But in October 2010, he suffered an injury while running that left him with a paralysed right leg. Shortly afterwards, he was moved to Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre for rehabilitation, while Toni-Sue and their five children were placed in Poole, more than three hours away. When Alan left the military, Toni-Sue contacted the Legion looking for support, and with your help, we were able to move the family into a bungalow so they could be together.

After his recovery, Alan started competing in events for wounded, injured or sick serving and ex-serving personnel. In 2018, he was chosen to represent Team UK at the Sydney Invictus Games, competing in discus, shot put, handcycling, sitting volleyball and swimming. And thanks to your support, we enabled Toni-Sue and their children to watch Alan compete for his country.

Back in the UK, Alan is a keen collector for the Poppy Appeal. "My whole family are Poppy Collectors," he says. "It's something that's really close to our heart and it's very important to have the help of The Royal British Legion. It's a fantastic organisation – one of the longest-running charities we have. It needs our support, today, tomorrow and every day."

POWYS

Presteigne Branch Treasurer Brian Mellen has got to know a remarkable woman who has been raising money as a Poppy Collector for more than 80 years: "Sue Wood celebrated her 100th birthday in September 2018. She first started collecting for the Poppy Appeal in London as a teenager. Her father had fought in the trenches in the First World War and was temporarily blinded by gas, and her husband served in the Royal Navy in the Second World War. She travelled all over the country, depending on where he was stationed, and eventually settled in Liss, Hampshire, in 1949. In all this time, she carried on collecting for the Poppy Appeal, as well as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

"Mrs Wood moved to her present home, in Kinsham, near Presteigne, in 1984. She has continued collecting; she now has three helpers, each of whom have a Poppy Appeal box, but she likes to assist with organisation. It has been a joy for me to go and pick up Mrs Wood's boxes and have a chat with her. She is as enthusiastic as ever about her Poppy Appeal collecting, and she and her helpers raise a good amount of money. Hooray for Mrs Wood and long may she continue!"



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Poppy Appeal Organiser Lucy Aldridge (second left) visited Pencombe CE Primary School, which planted a tree in memory of her son, former pupil William Aldridge

HEREFORDSHIRE

Pencombe's new Poppy Appeal Organiser, Lucy Aldridge, attended the launch of the Herefordshire 2019 Poppy Appeal at Pencombe CE Primary School. Pupils planted a rowan tree, symbolising courage and protection, to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, including one of the school's former pupils: Lucy's son, William Aldridge, who died in Afghanistan in 2009.

"Supporting the wider military community through the Poppy Appeal is very personal to me as a proud mother, granddaughter and great niece who has known loved ones who served and sacrificed," says Lucy. "Returning to the school for the Poppy Appeal launch, a decade on from losing William – to meet with children, parents and grandparents who remember Will or have learned of him as a former pupil – is unbelievably special and comforting to me and his younger brothers. Spanning generations in one remarkable village school, it demonstrates how important and meaningful remembering together is."

Sarah Jones, Community Fundraiser for Herefordshire Poppy Appeal, says, "Such acts of Remembrance and support for the Poppy Appeal demonstrate the Legion's dedication to shining a spotlight on the many hidden contributions and sacrifices made by the Armed Forces community every day."

"SUPPORTING THE POPPY APPEAL IS PERSONAL TO ME, AS I'VE KNOWN LOVED ONES WHO SERVED AND SACRIFICED"

SOUTH DEVON

Eight-year-old Maisie Mead transformed her street into a veritable poppy parade, even going so far as to rename it 'Poppy Street' for the duration of the Appeal. Community fundraiser Izy Shaw explains: "Maisie's dad, James, is a disabled Army veteran, and when she and her family were living in temporary housing while their home was being adapted, Maisie saw some lamp-post poppies and thought she'd like to do something similar. The next year, Maisie told me about her idea to cover her street and school with poppies, and to rename her road 'Poppy Street', keeping it a secret so that everyone would wake up to the surprise."

"From there, it snowballed. I spoke with my Regional Communications Officer and executed Maisie's grand plan, with a few surprises along the way – we invited serving personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Army, and even welcomed RNRM mascot pony Bobby, who came to meet Maisie one morning."



Maisie Mead, who covered her street and school with poppies



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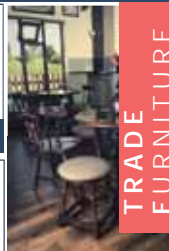
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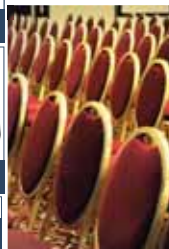
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Wiltshire's Poppy Appeal launched at Bowood House

WILTSHIRE

The 2019 Wiltshire Poppy Appeal was launched at Bowood House on Friday 25 October, and Remembrance and commemorative activities encouraged people to 'Remember Together', with a particular focus on highlighting three critical battles in 1944: D-Day, Monte Cassino, and Kohima and Imphal.

The first Wiltshire poppies were presented to Lord Lansdowne and to the Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire Sarah Troughton. The year 1944 had a significant impact on the Lansdowne family, with the deaths-in-action of Charles Hope Petty-Fitzmaurice, 7th Marquess of Lansdowne, in Italy, and his younger brother Edward in Normandy a few days before.

EAST BERKSHIRE

Members launched the East Berkshire Poppy Appeal in Slough with the help of the town's mayor, Avtar Kaur Cheema; Labour MP Tan Dhesi; the AMYA group; and Police Cadets. "We also had Polish dancers and Indian dhol drummers – it was so much fun!" says Gaynor Dingley, East Berkshire Community Fundraiser. "We shot a hilarious video of us all trying to dance in Indian style to the drummers, which you can find on the Berkshire Poppy Appeal Facebook page. Your kind support helps us preserve the memory of the fallen and the future of the living, so many thanks to all of you."



East Berkshire kicked off its Poppy Appeal with Polish dancers



Eileen Scarborough was recognised for her long service to the Poppy Appeal

LEICESTERSHIRE

The Hose and Harby Branch thanked their Poppy Collectors with awards and certificates in recognition of the number of years they've collected for the Branch. Top of the list: Eileen Scarborough, who celebrated her 60th year of door-to-door collecting in the village of Plungar, Vale of Belvoir. The awards were presented at the Plough Inn, Stathern, by Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire Michael Pearson.

AND ONE LAST THING...

We want to extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who helped out this year: members, volunteers, fundraisers – everyone. Without you, the Poppy Appeal wouldn't be possible, so thank you. And don't forget – there's still time to donate!

Just visit the following link:
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate

ADVERTISEMENT

Golden spice helps medalist Bill stay active at 83



Turmeric has been used for thousands of years in Asia, but now it has been catching on with people across the UK. It turns out they're onto something - more and more people are sticking with turmeric after trying it for themselves.

FutureYou Cambridge, a leading nutritional supplement company, has received praise for their Turmeric+ supplements thanks to a special formulation that allows more of the active ingredient to get where it is needed. Curcumin is the active ingredient in turmeric, but unfortunately it is difficult for the body to absorb - meaning that powdered turmeric sold in the supermarket isn't suitable. FutureYou Cambridge's Turmeric+ formulation is 30x more absorbable than standard turmeric, and also contains vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage.

The impressive formula was developed in Cambridge, a city known across the globe for its academic and medical excellence, and was recently certified

by Informed-Sport, the global quality assurance programme. Each one of FutureYou's supplements is backed by a scientific advisory board that includes pharmacist, nutritionist and author Aidan Goggins BPharm, MSc Nutr Med, and Nicholas Shenker, a leading rheumatologist and chronic pain expert at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

The results of Turmeric+ speak for themselves, with thousands more people signing up for a regular supply in 2019.

Since he started to take the supplement in 2015, Bill Moore, 83, has excelled with his incredible exploits as a competitive swimmer.

'I've been racing now for 35 years and I've travelled all over the world to swim,' says Bill.

'I was 78 when I started taking Turmeric+ - I wasn't a young man, and although I was very active I obviously still had things like creaky knees.'

After winning a FutureYou Cambridge competition to find the

most active older person, Bill started taking Turmeric+ and hasn't looked back.

'I wouldn't like to stop. Turmeric+ has helped me very much - I know I don't look or act my age, and I feel a lot better for taking them.'

At 83, Bill is still keeping up his active lifestyle. 'I won three gold medals in the British Masters Championships last October in Sheffield. Whenever I win it's good. Everything's a bonus when you get into your 80s!'

'I do the annual swimathon for Marie Curie. I shall be doing it again in 2020 - it will be my 22nd year - I've raised well over £10,000.'

He also recommends Turmeric+ to friends at the pool. 'I tell lots of people about it. The important thing is to do exercise because otherwise you stiffen up. Two people I train with take it now.'

TRY TURMERIC+ BEFORE YOU BUY IT

FUTUREYOU, a Cambridge nutraceutical company known for its popular turmeric supplement, has announced that it is offering new customers the chance to try its flagship product for just the cost of the £1.50 postage.*

The formulation for Turmeric+ also contains vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage and bones. The company has built a large following of customers, most of whom are over 50. The offer is aimed at the over 50s, but is open to people of all ages. It comes after the Cambridge firm received a flurry of positive reviews for its product on Trustpilot, the independent online review platform.

'I have taken your Turmeric+ for two years now,' wrote one reviewer. 'I will take these tablets for the rest of my days. Obviously I intend to be a VERY long term customer. Thank you so much,' said another.

To help others find out if Turmeric+ is right for them, FutureYou Cambridge are offering people their first month's supply for free.

'We're very happy to give people their first pack for free so they can experience it for themselves,' says Adam Cleveley, the company's CEO.

'It might sound bonkers but it really isn't. We're that confident in the effectiveness of our formulation.

'I can't think of a better way to convince people. If they like it, they will stick with it. Tens of thousands of customers already do.'



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Discount valid until 31st March 2020. Turmeric+ contains vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage and bones. New UK customers only. One free trial per household. Your first box is free (Just pay £1.50 postage) and you will be enrolled into a flexible subscription (£15 every 28 days). We regret but we cannot take payment for this offer by cheque. You can stop deliveries at any time without obligation. See website for more information on our subscription service. Turmeric+ from FutureYou Cambridge should be consumed as part of a healthy and balanced diet and lifestyle. If you are taking any prescribed medication or have any medical conditions always consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking vitamins or supplements. Trial pack promotion cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotions.

OUR NEXT 100 YEARS

For the past century, the Legion has been at the heart of a national network that supports the British Armed Forces community. As the needs of veterans and their families become increasingly complex, we are exploring how best to adapt to ensure we will be fit for purpose for the next 100 years

The Legion has grown and developed over its 99-year history to become a modern-day organisation with many parts that do not always join together as well as they could. In our strategy review, we are looking at where we can focus our efforts and how we are organised, to ensure our funds are being spent effectively on meeting the greatest needs of those who are seeking help. With responsibilities for welfare support, campaigning and Remembrance, our work is wide-ranging, and the review will consider options for the future across all three areas.

The Armed Forces community is changing, and the type of support needed is growing increasingly complex. Since 2016, we have seen a 20 per cent increase in people needing basic support with housing, financial issues, mental health and wellbeing, and mobility.

**“THE ARMED FORCES
COMMUNITY IS
CHANGING, AND THE
TYPE OF SUPPORT
NEEDED IS GROWING
INCREASINGLY COMPLEX”**

For example, the average expenditure per household through the Legion’s immediate-needs funding has risen more than 45 per cent from £900 to £1,330.

Meanwhile, the regulatory framework in which charities operate has rightly become more robust in recent years to ensure organisations operate to the highest standards. These changes, including the introduction of the Fundraising Regulator and General Data Protection Regulation, have increased pressure on the Legion’s existing resources.

As part of an ongoing plan to decrease our reserves in an accountable and responsible »



We want to ensure we provide the most effective support for Service personnel and their families

way, we have spent more than we raised for the past two years and have increased funding for a number of initiatives. Over the next 18 to 24 months, we shall continue to increase this funding.

We are responding to this changing environment and working to meet the complex needs of the people who require our support. Under an evolving strategy, we will refocus our resources to be as effective as possible in our welfare provision while enhancing regional and local campaigning and Remembrance activities.

Furthermore, we are proposing to invest more in personalised case work, strengthen collaborative work by funding external specialist and localised organisations, and reinvigorate our care model for older veterans. However, to enable us to refocus our funding to where it has the greatest impact, we are planning to make some immediate changes and are now consulting with staff members about proposals to close the four Break Centres in Portrush, Southport, Bridlington and Weston-super-Mare, as well as discontinuing the home-maintenance 'Handy Van' service.



The Legion invested £5 million in the Complex Trauma Gym at Stanford Hall in Leicestershire, which opened in 2019

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK ALLAN, OLLIE SMALLWOOD

OUR NEW VISION

TO BRING TOGETHER OUR
NATIONS, COMMUNITIES AND
INDIVIDUALS TO CREATE BETTER
FUTURES FOR OUR ARMED FORCES
COMMUNITY AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Throughout our history, we have responded to the changes in the Armed Forces community and the landscape we operate within. Discussing these proposals is a necessary step in order for us to adapt and help Service personnel, veterans and their families tackle their toughest challenges today and in the future.

The current proposals form part of a wider programme of work as we create a new strategy to ensure we are having the greatest impact, making the most of our resources and evolving in line with changes around us. Consultation around our current proposals continues, and the decisions will be announced soon.

Our community and supporters deserve the public's generous donations to be used in the most impactful way. This is our opportunity to make the Legion fit for the next 100 years.



The 2018 London Poppy Day was the largest one-day street collection of its kind in the UK

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BADGE OF HONOUR

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS
OF MILITARY EVENTS

“

I grew up in a military town called Bordon, in Hampshire. The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers do their vehicle-maintenance training

there, and it was where my dad was posted. Our family has more than 350 years of unbroken Service. My brother is now serving the last six months of his 24 years.

I'd wanted to be a footballer but didn't make the cut. I was heartbroken, and it was a knee-jerk reaction to go to Aldershot Careers Information Office. I was 16 and nine months, and that's when I signed up.

I joined 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, in Canterbury and spent a short time there before being posted to Tidworth. We were re-rolled from light to armoured infantry and used the Warrior tracked armoured fighting vehicle. I did two peacekeeping tours of Kosovo before being deployed to Iraq. It was 2004 and although the tour was designed to be for peacekeeping, the atmosphere had changed. Peace talks had broken down and it was a war-fighting tour from the minute we landed. It was horrendous. There was no build-up – you were dropped off and you were fighting. I was a Lance Corporal, aged 23, and had never experienced a firefight. I'd always wondered how I was going to react and got to know within 12 hours of being in the country.

Our aim had been to restructure Amarah, a key battleground of the war. We'd wanted to get a foothold in the city while helping and nurturing the Iraqi police and army. On 14 May, six weeks into our deployment, we



LANCE CORPORAL
BRIAN WOOD MC
1ST BATTALION,
THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S
ROYAL REGIMENT, IRAQ

MAY 2004

“THE BATTLE
TOOK THREE
HOURS FROM
START TO FINISH.
IT WAS CHAOTIC
AND BRUTAL”

were sent out to try and set up a vehicle checkpoint because our camp was being mortared. Then, over the radio, I was told to stop and get into the Warrior because there had been an ambush, with two casualties from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. We were tasked to administer first aid and get them out. We never made it that far because we were hit ourselves about 10 minutes into the journey.

I was in the back of the vehicle, and it was very dark, disorientating and boiling hot. There were around 10 to 15 'dug-in' enemy forces and we were returning fire. Then we were told to prepare to dismount and launch a counterattack on the trench. Although we were in an armoured vehicle, I knew it was penetrable – two weeks prior, we had been injured by shrapnel when our Warrior had been hit by two missiles.

In these situations, you have to control your fear as it's contagious. I didn't want it to leak to the lads who were going to be with me. I wanted to go to a holding area and make a plan to move forward. My commander agreed to give me covering fire from the vehicle. I got there along with two other lads, Rushie and Spud, the bravest of guys. We needed boots on the ground because the vehicle wasn't having much of an effect. I believed in the mission.

As I was doing my combat estimate, a Corporal and a Private from another platoon turned up. We agreed to go down the middle and roll up to the main position. We acted as two fire teams; the three of us from my vehicle moved first, and once we drew fire, we returned it. The other two lads bounded in front of us and did the same – we leapfrogged each other, heading towards the stronghold. I was expecting casualties because we were going straight down the middle of the killing area. But we got 50, 60, then 70 metres in and there were none.

As we got closer, it was clear there was a lot of trauma on the battlefield. We were about to go in and take the whole position when the enemy combatants threw down their weapons and surrendered. There was confusion – I had never done this for real, and there were a lot of bodies. We managed to segregate the dead and the alive and disarm the weapon systems. I was panicking that they might be opportunists who would pick up their weapons again and spray us.



We then came under attack again, so had to get into the trenches with the enemy militia, which was very surreal. Once we got control of that situation, my Company Sergeant Major turned up to ask if the battlefield was clear. I wanted to say yes – we were so lucky to be alive – but I knew it wasn't because I'd seen militia leave the stronghold as we'd approached. I was told to put on a fresh magazine and do a clearance patrol.

Within 80 metres, we were engaged again. My Sergeant Major managed to eliminate one enemy combatant, but another appeared with an RPG [rocket-propelled grenade] and I fired four to five rounds into his midriff and throat. I'll never forget the noise he made as he dropped to the floor, choking and coughing. It played on my mind a lot for years after, but in the moment you can't think about it – you just have to get on with it. We decided we were very vulnerable and made our way back to the main position. Two more militia fighters had thrown down their weapons, so we had to arrest them and take them as prisoners.

The battle had taken three hours from start to finish. It was chaotic and brutal. >>

Top: Pictured on tour in Iraq in 2010
Above: Brian was awarded several medals, including the Military Cross

"I KNEW HOW TO COMMAND IN EXTREME SITUATIONS, BUT FOUGHT A HARDER BATTLE TRYING TO CLEAR MY NAME"

It was believed that Bravo One, the main militia leader, was either a prisoner or dead on the battlefield, so we were commanded to go and retrieve the bodies for DNA and iris scanning. It was the hardest thing I've ever had to do and was demanding on my headspace for years after. Taking another human's life is hard, especially from close quarters. Having to go back, pick up the bodies and load them into vehicles was punishing. You can only imagine the smell. Some were in a very bad state because of the calibre of ammunition that had hit them.

The next day, we were back out fighting again. Once the militia had heard what had happened, there was a reaction. It was horrendous but we had a job to do.

A short while after the end of that tour, I found out I was being awarded the Military Cross for my actions on three occasions – one of which was on 14 May, now known as The Battle of Danny Boy.

I continued and did the final Operation Telic tour in Iraq in 2009. But around this time, I discovered that my regiment was accused of murdering 20 Iraqi prisoners and torturing nine others at The Battle of Danny Boy. An official investigation, the Al-Sweady Inquiry, was set up; this meant five years of statements and interviews, which continued until I was cross-examined in the dock. I knew how to be a soldier and command in extreme situations, but when I came back I fought a harder battle trying to clear my name. If I'd died on the battlefield, I would have died doing something I loved – fighting for my country. To come back and be met by these crazy allegations was unfair. It was handled very poorly and was all speculation and deliberate lies. [The allegations were dropped and the inquiry found them to be "without foundation".]

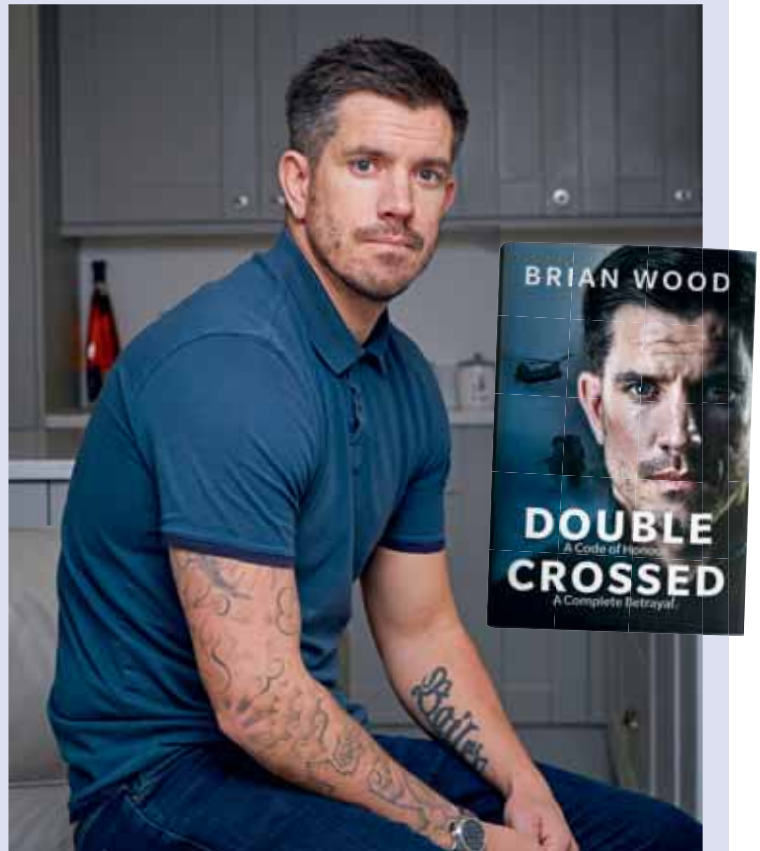
It was a huge factor in me leaving the Armed Forces, but the straw that broke the

camel's back was being told that, due to a technicality, I wasn't entitled to my pension until I was 65, even if I completed 24 years of Service. With that, I left after 17 years. I found the adjustment to civilian life very difficult. In the real world, you don't have that structure and camaraderie around you.

Last year, I was fortunate to be invited to the Festival of Remembrance. It was one of the best things I've ever witnessed; I felt very proud to be British. I was looked after on Remembrance Sunday, too, and felt very welcome. I understand how much good the Legion has done and how many lives and families it has supported. We're not in conflict at the moment, but there are so many people who need help. A lot of it is the unseen scars – the mental aspect of war and its aftermath. Witnessing intense combat and seeing people hurt is abnormal, and that's trauma. It's going to have an impact. We desperately need charities such as the Legion to continue to do their remarkable support work."

***Double Crossed* by Brian Wood (Virgin Books, £20) is out now.**

Below: At home in Bordon, Hampshire
Inset: Brian wrote a book, *Double Crossed*, about his experiences



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Our Commitment to Veterans



**GUIDANCE WHEN YOU
NEED IT MOST**

In June 2017, when Veterans' Gateway was launched, the Forces Pension Society was delighted to join the initiative as an expert partner for Armed Forces Pensions. Since then we have dealt with more than 4,000 enquiries. Almost half have asked "have I got a pension due to me?" And of those, the answer has been "yes" for roughly 550. In those cases we have begun the claim process with the veteran concerned and in very many instances pension awards have already been confirmed to the delight of the recipients (see comments panel).

At the Forces Pension Society we believe that commitment is a two-way street. Servicemen and women sign up to the principle of Selfless Commitment and we strive to reciprocate – not only on behalf of veterans but for the whole military community. We provide pension guidance across all aspects of the Armed

Forces Pension Schemes, hold governments to account wherever we identify injustices in the system, help the military community understand how to make better pension choices for themselves and their families and provide a voice where it matters on the MoD and Public Sector Pension Boards. We believe passionately that it pays to understand your pension.

The Royal British Legion has contributed much of the very welcome charitable funding for our Veterans' Gateway undertaking (the Society is a not-for-profit company rather than a Charity). We hope that funding will continue through 2020 from TRBL or an alternative source, enabling us to continue answering questions about pension entitlement and increase understanding among veterans, replacing confusion with clarity; sometimes uniting them with pensions they knew nothing about!

Comments from those we've helped

"Your advice and information was invaluable and gave us hope that we may just have a future without financial hardship...I received a letter with the award decision and my wife and I almost cried with relief".

"You've helped me tremendously as nobody else has given me any help in this matter".

"Thanks to you and Veterans' Gateway my bank account today is over £10,000 healthier. When we've paid some long-standing debts, we might even have enough left over for our first holiday in 8 years".

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Forces Pension Society

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1RL Tel: 020 7820 9988



There are five ways to contact Veterans' Gateway, with advisors available 24/7:

- Call 0808 802 1212 around the clock
- Visit the website for Partner information and self-help guidance: www.veteransgateway.org.uk
- Text 81212
- Live chat with an advisor online – you'll find this option on the website
- Submit an enquiry using the online form

REUNIONS

Check our listings to find out if old friends
are meeting up again soon

NAVY

HMS Ariadne

6-8 March, Aztec Hotel, Aztec West, Bristol
Ninth reunion – all shipmates welcome, along with wives, partners and guests.
Book through Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116. Further details from Dave Sprinks on 01761 239221, 07989 435701 or at dave-sprinks@hotmail.com

HMS Loch Fada Association F390

2-6 April, Best Western Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Hants
23rd annual reunion and AGM. Four-day reunion. Friday: venture into Pompey. Saturday: 10.30 AGM; 18.30 reunion dinner in the company of special guests the Lord Mayor and Escort of Eastleigh. Sunday: Mystery coach tour.
Book through Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116 or via www.iowtours.com. Alternatively, please email F390.sec@virginmedia.com, call 01252 310767 or write to F390 Sec, 91 Ayling Lane, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3ND.

HMS Ganges Association

17-20 April, Warner Gunton Hall Coastal Village, near Lowestoft
Annual reunion open to all those who served at HMS Ganges, as well as wives and partners.
For booking details, please contact Tony Willders on 07787 106202 or at tony.willders@btinternet.com

Loch Class Frigates Association

17-20 April, The Cardiff North Hotel, Cardiff
Annual reunion – all members of the Association welcome. (Membership is open to all who served on any of the Loch Class ships or their variants: Bay Class,

Admiral's Yachts, survey ships and repair ships. Some of these types of ships have their own Associations, but you can always join both.)

For more details, please contact Andrew Nunn, Hon Sec at andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk or on 0117 950 5835

HMS Saintes, HMS Cadiz, HMS Wizard (combined)

8-11 May, Novotel Nottingham Derby Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham
A combined reunion (each has its own AGM). All members from each ship are welcome, as are friends, families, wives and partners – the more the merrier!

For more details, please contact Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116 or at enquiries@iowtours.com

HMS Broadsword Association

22-24 May, Best Western Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Hants
Bi-annual reunion. All ex-Broadswords – Falklands conflict or otherwise – are invited to attend.

For more details and a booking form, please contact Kevin O'Kane at kokane@suremail.gg

HMS Dido

29-31 May, Hallmark Hotel Derby Mickleover Court, Derby
All-commissions reunion. >>

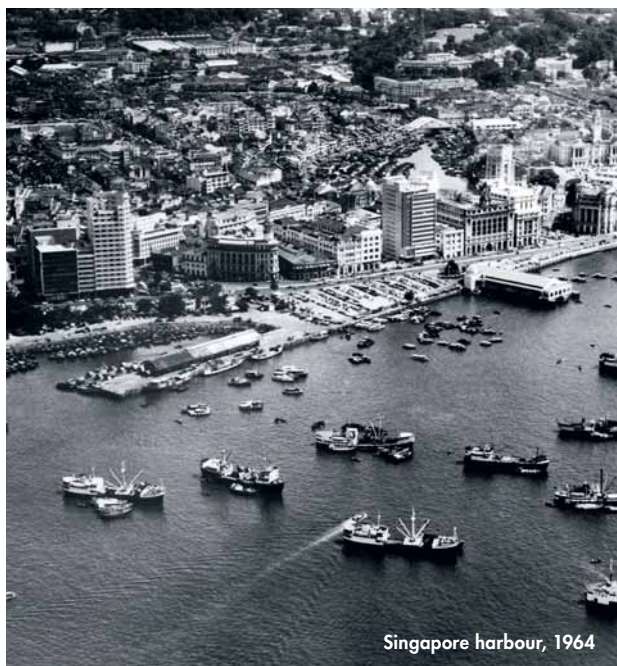


HMS Broadsword (F88) off Plymouth. July 1990

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY

REUNIONS

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY



Meet and greet with buffet on Friday evening. Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire, on Saturday morning, followed by our AGM and gala dinner on Saturday evening. Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday included. Total price £160 per person. Shoulder nights are available either side of the weekend for a longer stay. For further details, contact Colin Bates, Secretary, on 0121 742 8188 or at secretary@hms-dido.com

ARMY

Royal Army Pay Corps Regimental Association Gloucester Branch
12pm, 18 April, Dumbleton Hall Hotel, Evesham Reunion.

For more details, contact Derek Evans (Chairman, Gloucester Branch) at derekevans@sky.com

The Royal Artillery Boys and Junior Leaders' Association
24-25 April, Holiday Inn Birmingham – Bromsgrove 30th reunion. Every subscribed member of the Association will receive full details and booking forms as usual in the January

PLANNING A REUNION?

Send details, especially the date, time and location, with 'Reunions' in the subject line, to: membersmag@britishlegion.org.uk or write to **The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA**

edition of *Trumpeter*. If you think you are eligible to become a subscribed member, please contact the Secretary.

For more details, please contact Ted McKenzie on 07900 806235 or at exboysra.tm@gmail.com

Singapore Dawnwatchers' Society (SDWS)
24-26 April, Hard Day's Night Hotel, Liverpool
If you served in – or were attached to – the Intelligence Corps in Singapore, Borneo or Malay Peninsula in the 1960s or 1970s, you are invited to The 2020 Vision reunion.

For more details, please contact Dave Wakelam at davidwakelam396@gmail.com

RAF

RAF Boys Entrants 42nd Entry Telegs Association
21-23 April, Telford Hotel and Golf Resort,

Telford, Shropshire Annual reunion.
For more information, contact John Lewis (Chairman) at jaslmlewis@aol.com

RAF Administrative Apprentices Association
12-14 June, Northampton Marriott Hotel, Northampton 2020 AGM and reunion dinner.
For more details, please make contact via www.rafadappassn.org

RAF Locking 119/219/404 Apprentice Entries
23-24 October, Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1AJ
50th anniversary reunion. An informal evening on the Friday will allow ex-apprentices to gather before the formal dinner on the Saturday. Open to all RAF Locking 119/219/404 entry apprentices, plus wives and partners.
For more details, please contact Barry Cox at barrycox124@hotmail.com



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FAIRMINDEDNESS



PERFORMANCES

Monday 24th February 2020 at 7:30pm - London - All Hallows by the Tower Church

Tickets via www.eventbrite.co.uk

Saturday 27th June 2020 at 7.30pm - Oxfordshire - Crowmarsh Giffard Village Hall

Tickets via email to tochwessex2016@gmail.com

Saturday 25th July 2020 - Cleveland - Saltburn Community & Arts Association

Autumn 2020 (Date TBC) - Surrey - Thames Ditton - St Nicholas Church Hall

October 2020 (Date TBC) - Lincoln

Full details of all performances are available on info@toch-org.uk



*The Grave of Man
painted by
Eric H Kennington
At Talbot House,
Poperinghe*

This is the grave of man. No monument
Of patriot mourned by King and Parliament.
But it and the obscure and horrifying hand
Have thrust it up has long since left the land.
For the trim parke of heroes neatly planted
Through which the admiring tourist moves enchanted.

W J Turner.

LOST TRAILS

Searching for old pals or have a gap in
your family tree? We can help

≡ Arthurian legend

Matt James sent in this photo of his relative, Arthur 'Beckett' Welch (circled), who landed with the Inns of Court on Juno on D-Day, served in Dunkirk with the Middlesex Regiment, made it to Berlin and ended up in RCT before demob. If anyone knows Arthur – or anyone else in the photo – Matt would love to hear from you.

Contact: Matt James at mattjames69@googlemail.com



≡ Ring a Bell?

Craig Skinner is seeking information about his late grandfather, Private James Bell from Edinburgh (right). James served with the King's Own Scottish Borderers and later with the Parachute Regiment as a physical training instructor. During that time, he saw Service in the North African campaign and was eventually invalided due to a leg injury. Any information and/or wartime photographs would be much appreciated.

Contact: Craig Skinner at craigskinner3248@gmail.com

Mystery men

Jacqueline Bruce gave us this photo, which was taken in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, of her father John Carran (circled), a Guardsman in the Coldstream Guards. In the middle is John's friend, possibly Gerard Eckelboom, and on the right, an unidentified gentleman. Jacqueline would like to find out who these mystery men

are and if they're survived by any relations.

Contact: Jacqueline Bruce at kendall.bruce@sky.com



LOOKING FOR SOMEONE?

All we need is a photo, brief description and your contact details. Write to The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA or email membersmag@britishlegion.org.uk

An End to Getting Frustrated with your Smartphone

Finally discover how to get it to do what you want, easily
(and find out what else you can do with it, too)

*At last, using your smartphone
can be easy, simple and stress-free.*

Find out how...

Modern mobile phones, or smartphones as they're called, can do so much more than just make phone calls.

From browsing the web wherever you are, checking train times, acting as a sat nav... And best of all they can make it so easy to keep in touch with family and friends – in so many ways, from sharing photos to making video calls.

But using them isn't always as easy as you'd want – and that's putting it mildly!

Do the manufacturers do it on purpose?

Sometimes it can seem like the manufacturers deliberately make them complicated – and how you do things is often hidden away. It might be easy once you know, but until you've been shown the easy way, it can drive you mad.

In fact only yesterday I was talking to someone whose Mum had got a new all-singing-all-dancing phone – but she couldn't work out how to answer a phone call on it! She's not daft – it's just that it's different from what she'd used before and the phone didn't come with a manual telling her what to do.

Whether you have similar problems or you're trying to do something slightly more advanced, the thing is, it can be easy to use them... once you know how. But until you've been shown, it can be like talking a different language.

That's why I've published two new books: *iPhones one Step at a Time* and *Android Smartphones One Step at a Time*.

Plain English... and that's not all

They explain how to use the phone, in plain simple language with pictures of the screen showing you exactly where to tap or slide your fingers. No jargon!

What's covered?

I can't list it all here. But amongst other

things, you'll discover:

- The basics of controlling it – swiping, tapping, opening apps & so on.
- How to use it as a sat-nav... in the car or even on foot.
- Send emails from your phone.
- Most phones have a good camera so you can take photos: here's how to use it properly (and for videos).
- Share photos with friends around the world – quickly and easily.
- See updates, photos and video clips from friends and family – as soon as they "post" them.
- Make it easier to read the screen.
- Video phone calls – a great way to keep up with family who live a long way away
- Browse the web at home or out and about.
- Choosing and downloading apps.
- And obviously, you can make phone calls and send and receive text messages. ("Voicemail" is covered, too)

All explained nice and simply. (Find out more in the free information pack – read on...)

What one reader had to say:

*"Thanks for a fantastic smart phone book.
Very pleasant staff as usual.*

I think this book should be sold with every smart phone. I have learnt so much from it, the info you get with the phone is non-existent.

Smart phones are quite complex, and your books speak in plain English."

Only half the story

That's only half the story but I don't have room to explain here. I've put together full information on the books – who they're for, what they cover and so on. What's more



**Modern phones can be baffling,
but there's a solution...**

the books also come with a free gift – no room to explain that here either.

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The books aren't available in the shops or on Amazon – only direct from the publisher. Send off now to get a completely free, no-obligation information pack. It'll explain what the books cover, who they're suitable for and so on – showing you just how it could help you.

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LETTERS

Boudicca returns, remembering Sir Donald Gosling and honouring the Chindits

BOUDICCA'S LEGEND

I read with interest the September issue and would like to suggest something you might care to consider. In June, the Legion transported many veterans over to Normandy on *MV Boudicca* – 'Boudicca' is the current fashionable way of writing 'Boadicea'.

Involved in the support of D-Day and the landings, the destroyer *HMS Boadicea* was lost on 13 June 1944 off Portland Bill. In the *Eye Witness* article with Len Perry on page 35 of the September issue, you refer to the book *Destroyer*, edited by Ian Hawkins. Hawkins' father was captain of the *Boadicea* and died. Only 12 of the 182 crew survived the sinking by aerial missile, and my family lost John Hawkes. *HMS Beagle* – which Len was on – was a sister ship of *Boadicea*. (Search for 'HMS *Boadicea* H65' and 'HMS

Beagle H30' on Wikipedia to find out more.) Ian has written some significant books on the Second World War, including *B-17s Over Berlin*, after being partially incapacitated by a bizarre injury on a construction site in Saudi Arabia. I sincerely hope mention can be made of the coincidence of the names of the ships and their respective parts in a uniquely memorable event.

Nick Roberts, via email

A TRUE FRIEND

I hope the magazine intends to mark the passing of Sir Donald Gosling, who, throughout his life, was a great supporter of the Royal Navy. Although his own time in the Royal Navy was short, he made very significant contributions to a variety of maritime and naval charities. He recently donated £1 million to ensure the future of the Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich. Besides



such high-profile donations, there's many a matelot whose mess deck has benefited from the largesse of Sir Donald. His generosity and unstinting charitable work was recognised by a succession of honours and awards.

In 2012, HM The Queen made him a Vice Admiral of the United Kingdom, a ceremonial appointment within her personal gift. He will also be remembered by many of us who served in the Royal Navy in recent times. I never met him, but I know the Service has lost a true friend.

**Philip Avery,
Maidenhead Branch**

LEST WE FORGET

I read with interest your article on nuclear test veterans in the September issue. When I was 16, I served on *HMS Cavalier* (D73). The ship was sent to Christmas Island as a guard ship and I witnessed one nuclear detonation. I have tried several times to get this recognised, but no one has

ever got back to me. I have a brain tumour and other medical problems, which could be attributed to these tests. I retired in 1973 as a Petty Officer.

Roger K Brinton, via email

SCOUT'S HONOUR

I recently read the September issue of the magazine, and of course there was a lot about D-Day 75. So for our 10th-anniversary summer camp, 18 members of Lyme Bay BP Scouts (we are affiliated to Kilminster Branch 2346) set off from Poole Harbour on a ship en route to Cherbourg, where we alighted and cycled to our first campsite at Sainte-Mère-Église.

On Monday morning, we visited (in uniform) the Airborne Museum, and over the following week, we cycled along Utah and Omaha landing beaches, ending in Bayeux to see the tapestry record of another sea landing, and visiting the Normandy American Cemetery and >>



HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh present Sir Donald Gosling (right) with a flag during a ceremony to install him as Vice Admiral of the UK

LETTERS

Memorial (again in uniform, where we invested a Cub, two new Scouts and a new leader). On Saturday, the 13 Scouts and five leaders cycled back to Cherbourg and the ferry home. Scouts noted the enormous number of crosses (and Stars of David) in the cemetery and were impressed by the pictures of American soldiers – some of whom died and others who survived – hanging from every lamp and sign post, electric pole, etc. The French were thankful to the men from the USA who freed France. We also visited Maisy Battery – twice!

Richard Norman,
Kilmington Branch

ONE TO REMEMBER

Thank you for the very interesting November 2019 issue of the magazine. I noted, with some surprise and sadness, that it contains no mention of the Royal [country] Navies involved in the Second World War.

My father, Lt Cdr (E)JW Wright, joined the Royal Indian Navy in 1938, in preparation for the coming war. (He wore glasses, so was not accepted for the Royal Navy.) He was temporarily transferred to the Royal Australian Navy to work on improved torpedo design. On 15 August 1947, when India gained independence, he was momentarily in the Royal Navy, before becoming a civilian.

Not often mentioned is that anyone who was born in India or who was not conscripted



The Chindit Memorial in London

into the Royal Indian Navy received no assistance to come home. My father's wife and their two children had to find the funds to pay for four tickets to England. That was the distressing story of many Brits in India after Indian independence, when they were 'invited' to go away. The Royal Indian Navy was involved largely in Burma, but scoured the surrounding seas.

I noticed little mention of the Royal [country] Air Force, either.

Please remember the Service people in the Royal Navy and its other national branches.

Ian Wright, via email

OVER THE HUMP

I write on behalf of the Hong Kong & China Branch about the article in a recent issue of the magazine on the subject of the second Chindit operation 80 years ago. We were very glad to see this piece (particularly myself, being a 6th Gurkha Officer who annually commemorated the battle of Mogaung and the

award of two VCs to my Regiment in that campaign).

However, while mentioning the different nationalities included in the Chindit brigades, the article omitted to mention the Chinese component. These were men – both Servicemen and civilians – who had escaped from Hong Kong on foot, made their way into free China and been flown with the help of the British Army Aid Group over 'the Hump' to Calcutta. They all wanted to fight the Japanese and were absorbed into the British Army as 142 Company, Hong Kong Volunteers, listed under Brigadier Mike Calvert's 77th Indian Infantry Brigade. During the second Chindit campaign, they were split up into different detachments for several Chindit Brigades and suffered heavy casualties. It would be much appreciated if you would publish a short addendum to commemorate these brave soldiers.

Nigel Collett, Hong Kong & China Branch



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TONY HUNT
EX ROYAL MILITARY POLICE



Following the death of his wife Rowena, Tony found himself alone a lot of the time.

“When you are a couple, you socialise with other couples, but that wanes when you lose your partner.”

Tony found ways to keep himself busy in the day time, but the evenings were long and hard.

“Once that door closes, it's not quite the same. There's no one to say 'do you want a cup of tea?' at the end of the day, so you don't bother. The joy of doing everyday tasks such as cooking and keeping the house in order had been sucked out of me in the absence of someone to share them with.”

Tony joined the Royal Hospital Chelsea as a Chelsea Pensioner in January 2017. As soon as he arrived for his four day stay, he knew he was at home. Tony had long dreamt of becoming a Chelsea Pensioner and will always remember the pride he felt on the day he walked through the gates as a full time Chelsea Pensioner.

Since becoming a Chelsea Pensioner, Tony has a renewed vigour for life and is an active member of the Royal Hospital community. Tony has instigated a tea morning on his Long Ward and three mornings a week now, Tony and a few of his fellow Chelsea Pensioners sit down for a cup of tea, a biscuit and a chat. He is always volunteering to accompany other pensioners to hospital

visits and enjoys going out and representing the Hospital in his Scarlets, especially during the Remembrance period, collecting money for the Poppy Appeal.

“There's nothing like the camaraderie and friendship here - we help each other and have a bit of banter along the way. The staff are so friendly, they're doing a fantastic job and have made the Royal Hospital a home that I hope to be in for a long while.”

The Royal Hospital Chelsea provides sheltered, independent living for people like Tony, in some of the most beautiful and historic buildings in the UK.

To apply to become a Chelsea Pensioner you must be a retired soldier over the age of 65 and able to live independently on our long wards. As a resident of the Royal Hospital you will be an ambassador for your home and the wider veteran community.

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