



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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Veterans **WORLD**

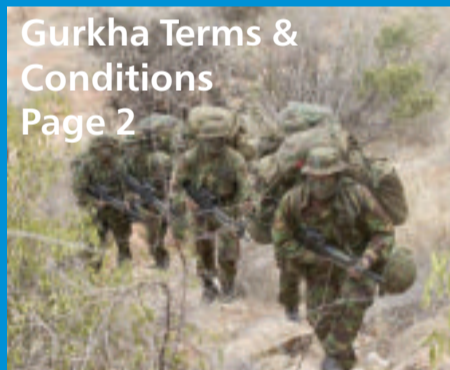
The regular newsletter for all those who serve the ex-Service community



MINISTER ACCEPTS CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO VETERANS

With the welfare of those injured or bereaved through Service very much in the media spotlight, Veterans WORLD has interviewed Under Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans, Derek Twigg MP, about the challenges that lie ahead...

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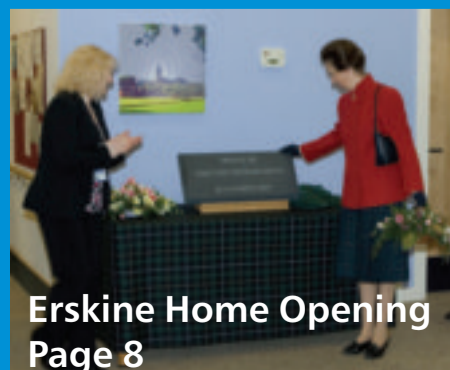
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Derek Twigg, MP

"I was delighted to be appointed Veterans Minister. I consider it a real privilege and an honour to be given responsibility for the recognition and support for those who have given service in the cause of their country. At the same time, I have no illusions about the challenges that the job brings with it.

"Of paramount importance is providing support for those whose lives have been adversely affected by their Service – whether this is because of physical injury on operations or because the strains of conflict have effected their mental health. Again there is much that my predecessors have already done – new pension and compensation schemes giving better focused benefits, improvements to health care and handover to civilian carers on discharge and extension of resettlement arrangements to vulnerable Service leavers.

"But this is an area of real challenge where we need to look at what more we can do to help. Nobody denies that there are improvements that we must make here. That is a key part of the task that I have set myself and we are in the process of reviewing the welfare and wider

support that we provide to identify and remedy the areas where the system is not currently working, as it should.

"The other area central to my agenda is the delivery of customer service improvements to veterans. The Veterans Agency has now come together with the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency to form the new Service Personnel and Veterans Agency. This is not a piece of bureaucratic re-arrangement of organisational deck chairs. It is a measure to improve service delivery by allowing the support to veterans to be seen – properly – as one integrated activity. We owe veterans a clear simple-to-understand service and the merged Agency together with our move towards a unified service for veterans - "Veterans-UK" - will help deliver this.

"My responsibilities as Veterans Minister are wide and varied. This includes helping the country to understand and celebrate the achievements of its veterans; it is not just that we should recognise them for what they have done but also that the commitment and sacrifice that they have shown should be taken as a model for society more widely; these are the qualities that the country should be asking of all its citizens.

"The institution of the UK Armed Forces Veterans Badge and Veterans Day are important markers of the value that we place on the service given but we will only have succeeded if this is underpinned by popular public recognition. This again will come into sharp focus this year as we commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict. It is perhaps easier for the public to accept this in

relation to the older WWII generation; but, if our work here is to be good for the longer term, we need to get younger people to recognise that there are veterans among them of their own ages.

"this cannot just be a matter of the Ministry of Defence working in isolation"

"Finally, let me say that this cannot just be a matter of the Ministry of Defence working in isolation. The veterans agenda is a matter for the whole of Government. It is also something that requires an effective partnership with the ex-Service organisations, other

public sector bodies and the voluntary sector. In short – people like YOU. If we operate in isolation, if our services are not joined up to deliver a coherent response to the full range of veterans needs, then we are failing the people who depend on us for their future well-being. This is another area where I am determined we should make progress."

Why are you getting Veterans WORLD?

Veterans WORLD is distributed to organisations that assist the public in a professional capacity. Its aim is to raise awareness of the extra help and advice available to veterans from the hundreds of organisations across the country. There will be information in Veterans WORLD directly relevant to your work.

Who is a veteran?

Veterans are former members of HM Armed Forces (Navy, Army or RAF - regular or reserve). Indeed the term applies to all UK ex-Servicemen and women. There are an estimated 5.5 million in the UK and with their wives, husbands, partners or children, they comprise the 10.5 million strong Veterans Community. Veteran's status also applies to a number of special groups such as those who served in Polish detachments under British command in WWII and Merchant Mariners who saw duty in military operations. Veterans need not have served overseas or in conflict.



Service Personnel
& Veterans Agency
An Executive Agency of the Ministry of Defence

SPVA has been formed through a merger of the Veterans Agency (VA) and Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency (AFPAA). The new Agency will provide for the first time, a range of 'through life' support functions direct to around 900,000 serving and ex-Service personnel from five main sites.

SPVA offers the following services to the Armed Forces and the Veterans community:

- Pay, allowances and expenses through 'Joint Personnel Administration' self service access;
- War Disablement Pensions;
- Armed Forces Pension Schemes;
- Armed Forces Compensation Scheme;
- Administration of medals and veterans badges;
- Casualty and Compassionate administration via the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC);
- A nationwide Welfare Service providing support to Veterans and Widows from 25 offices across the UK and Ireland;
- Pay and allowance dispute resolution via the Pay and Allowance Casework Cell (PACC);
- All mobilisation and termination administration via the Tri-Service Mobilisation and Termination Cell;
- Tri-Service arrangements for the storage of all Wills;
- Tri-Service Records of Service;
- A formal complaints procedure; and
- An enquiry centre service for Armed Forces personnel and helpline service for Veterans.

OUTCOME OF THE GURKHA TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE REVIEW



Prince Charles meets with Gurkhas

On 8 March 2007, Derek Twigg, Under Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans, announced the result of the wide-ranging and comprehensive review of Gurkha Terms and Conditions of Service. With certain exceptions to satisfy the Government of Nepal, the terms and conditions of service of Gurkhas will in future be the same as those of their British counterparts.

The new terms and conditions include an offer to serving Gurkhas to transfer from the Gurkha Pension Scheme to one of the Armed Forces pension schemes. Retired Gurkhas who gave service on or after 1 July 1997 are also eligible for the Gurkha Offer To Transfer (GOTT). This includes Gurkhas who left service before this date with condoned service, without which their

engagement or commission would have continued to 1 July 1997 or later. Those who left on redundancy terms before 1 July 1997 are not eligible.

Gurkhas were an overseas-based force before 1 July 1997 and therefore in a different position from the rest of the British Army. Only Gurkhas with service on or after 1 July 1997 (and those with condoned service) are being given the opportunity to join the same pension schemes as those available to other Armed Forces personnel. All their service, including that given before 1 July 1997, will be taken into account, if they decide to transfer their benefits into one of the two Armed Forces Pension Schemes. Service on or after 1 July 1997 will be given a credit of year-for-year in AFPS, while service before that date will have a credit worth broadly the same as the benefits earned in the Gurkha Pension Scheme before that date.

The GOTT Service Centre will shortly be writing to eligible retired Gurkhas at their last registered address. This is to ensure that they receive their information packs, which will be sent out during the summer. The MOD are asking those who think that their details are not correct to contact the GOTT Service Centre.

A briefing team from the Ministry of Defence will conduct roadshows in Nepal and Brunei, as well as a number of locations in the UK, to explain the details of the GOTT to eligible retired Gurkhas.

GOTT Service Centre, Mail Point 601, SPVA (Glasgow), Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow, G2 8EX, United Kingdom

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Service Centre Hours 0830 - 1630 BST
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THE NEW NAME FOR SERVICES TO VETERANS

On 2 April, the Ministry of Defence launched the new brand for services to veterans – **Veterans-UK**.

There are many organisations that provide help and support to UK veterans, both from Government and the voluntary sector. This can, at times, be confusing for those seeking help, as they are unsure about which organisation provides which services and from whom to seek help.

Veterans-UK will be the single brand or banner covering a variety of different veterans services provided by a range of different organisations. It will form a single point for accessing information.

The first steps have been the launch of a new veterans' website

www.veterans-uk.info replacing the previous Veterans Agency website. This provides a single website from which information can be obtained. Assistance provided by the Veterans Services Directorate of Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) will also come under the **Veterans-UK** name for promotional and publicity purposes.

For the future, it is hoped the new brand will include other Ministry of Defence services to veterans and later those from other Government Departments and possibly voluntary sector organisations. Again, the website will provide the focal point for accessing information on these services.

A NEW HOME FOR A VETERAN IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

A new website has been launched to help ex-Service people apply for veterans' housing anywhere in Scotland...

The website has been set up by Veterans Scotland (the umbrella group for ex-Service charities in Scotland) and funded by the Veterans Challenge Fund and ex-Service charities. It supports the housing initiative, which involves a number of organisations that specialise in providing housing for veterans. Together they have developed the Combined Housing Register (CHR). The CHR works by helping veterans find accommodation best suited to their needs with rent cheaper than normal rent arrangements.

The website is simple to use - the application process allows people to express interest in a suitable area of Scotland and by clicking on a map, browse all properties currently available. The application form can then either be completed online, downloaded or requested by calling the Housing Manager on 0131 550 1595.

Once the completed application is received, it is validated by Veterans

Scotland and then the request for accommodation is placed on the active list. A veteran will stay on the active list until he or she finds suitable accommodation.



For more information call 0131 557 2782, Email: enquiries@veteransscotland.org.uk or visit www.veteransscotland.org.uk

Contact Details

This newsletter is produced on a quarterly basis, by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, as part of the Veterans Programme.

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Audio versions of **Veterans WORLD** are also available on request.

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...MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES.....MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES...

SHIP - SELF-HELP INITIATIVES PROJECT

Facilitated self-help groups for veterans in Leeds



SHIP is a user led service, delivered by people who have experienced mental health problems and/or emotional distress. The ethos of the project is that self-help facilitates growth and enhances an individual's ability to cope with stress and change.

The project offers an alternative approach to traditional services and encourages people with mental health problems and emotional distress to find ways to help themselves and others. MIND mental health charity believes that this approach closely matches the philosophy of many veterans, that is to develop one's own self reliance and to offer mutual support to others who have gone through similar experiences and are now experiencing similar stresses.

Established in 1999, groups were initially attended by veterans

from Korea, Suez and Vietnam but over time veterans from more recent conflicts have joined. Veterans are given the choice of meeting in veterans only groups or joining groups open to all. Many civilians especially those from the police, fire service or nursing can also be faced with traumatic events that can leave emotional scars.

Why trauma leads to emotional distress

Trauma, particularly war trauma, can turn people who previously viewed themselves as active, self-reliant and confident into someone who feels frightened, helpless and uncertain. Continual or even episodic exposure to circumstances that are life threatening can be highly damaging to their



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confidence and self-belief. When usual methods of exercising control become ineffective (for instance in a theatre of war) they may be forced to develop other self-protective habits. Mental health problems often appear strange or alien from the outside but they are often no more than an attempt to regain a sense of being in control of one's life. When there is too much chaos in a person's everyday life, symptoms of a disorder such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder can become helpful to the person – perhaps finding solace and safety in the repetitions.

As each person is different, responses to stress are different; feeling out of control; withdrawing into themselves. Once a person has had to make this kind of adjustment, it will take care and attention to unpick. It may not seem appropriate to an officer for a soldier to break down during combat, but such behaviour after service may be highly productive in terms of hastening recovery. The way the human mind works, traumatic events are processed differently to ordinary events. Because they cannot be fully processed at the time of occurrence (because it is not safe or there is not enough time), they tend to repeat themselves as nightmares of

flashbacks. They require attention and the mind is often appalled at the overwhelming feelings such recollections contain. Talking about the trauma and regaining control over it by controlled replay can remove the poison from the memories and allow them to pass into the realm of the ordinary.

How Self Help Works

Companionship and trust can be found in groups where respect and support for each other are nurtured. On these foundations veterans can rebuild shattered confidence, process past, painful experiences, come to terms with what they have witnessed and start to recover from the ill-effects of events.

SHIP groups are organised in various ways meeting weekly or monthly, closed or open membership and timed or open-ended. Subjects addressed at the groups can vary and can include: improving relationships, stress management and dealing with flashbacks.

 For more information, call SHIP: 0113 245 5151, call Leeds Welfare: 0113 283 6568 or visit the Leeds Mind web site <http://www.leedsmind.org.uk>



LOOKING FORWARD TO WORK

How a mental health initiative in Cornwall has helped a veteran get back on his feet, Paul Hope, Naval veteran, reports...

Pentreath is a charity that offers an extensive package of training options such as; personal development sessions, projects aimed at improving fitness, social inclusion packages and various courses based around the job search. However, the training is from a much wider perspective than might be expected and is, very much client led.

Pentreath has formed a hard working and dedicated team who not only care but are very practical in outlook too.

This proactive, forward looking and positive ethos, together with the services on offer, make Pentreath in my opinion, unique.

I had a very varied and interesting career in the RN, which like most, had its ups and downs.

I was diagnosed as suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Alcoholism, in the late eighties, precipitated by a disciplinary incident. I was treated

in-Service with various courses to treat both my PTSD and alcoholism that provided me with a new positive vision of the future.

In 1998 I left the Navy, after 22 years, positive, confident and keen. Steady employment followed.

I then suffered a bout of illness affecting my health and outlook on life. The diagnosis of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and finding effective

medication took months, allowing the pain to be dulled sufficiently to function on a day-to-day basis albeit at a much reduced capacity. This meant I could no longer hold down my job. As I tried to come to terms with this, I sank into despair, clinical depression and the symptoms of PTSD returned.

It wasn't until I met my Community Psychiatric Nurse that my recovery process was kick-started. She encouraged me to contact Pentreath for a job and use the process to get as much experience as possible.

I now work as a volunteer Employment Placement Advisor four days a week. The change this has made in my life is startling and

the benefits to my self-confidence and self-esteem have helped me begin to build my life again.

I still have bad days with the IBS and the occasional wobble

emotionally but as I settle into the routine, they become less and less. Although it looks like the IBS is here to stay the other 'mental' symptoms seem to be

receding and I am able to get along pretty well. I am coping with day-to-day problems in a much healthier way.

Pentreath actively recruits candidates with "Life experience", those that have in some way been service users. Interestingly and coincidentally the ratio of 25% of the work force, reflects the same ratio of people who experience mental health issues, in the general population.

 For further information call 01579 349389, email pentreath@pentreath.co.uk or visit www.pentreath.co.uk

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FROM RESETTLEMENT

MOD RESETTLEMENT PROCESSES



All Service personnel leaving the Armed Forces have access to some assistance in making their transition from military to civilian life. The level of resettlement support provided to Service leavers is dependent upon their length of service and the circumstances of their discharge.

All Service personnel are entitled to access resettlement advice via their respective single Service Resettlement Advisers, including finance and housing briefings, at any stage of their careers.

Personnel who have completed a minimum of four years are entitled to access a range of services provided by the Career Transition Partnership (CTP).

Those who have completed the minimum four years service may access the Employment Support Programme (ESP), which comprises an interview with a Career Consultant or one-day workshop, and thereafter a job finding service with access to an Employment Consultant for up to two years post-discharge.

Service leavers who have completed a minimum of six years (five years if enlisted prior to 1 Sep 02), and all personnel who are medically discharged are entitled to the CTP Full Resettlement Programme. The latter enhances the ESP through providing access to vocational training, coaching in job interview technique, CV writing, and dedicated career consultancy support aimed at improving the Service Leavers's employment opportunities.

FACT!

Of those 13,500 Service Leavers who access the CTP programmes each year, 70% secure employment within one month of leaving the armed forces rising to 94% within six months of discharge.



For more information on CTP visit www.ctp.org.uk



Continued opposite...

SaBRE- SUPPORTING BRITAIN'S RESERVISTS AND EMPLOYERS

Since the start of 2003, over 13,000 Reservists from the Royal Naval Reserve, Territorial Army, Royal Marines Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force have been mobilised to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan.



When a Reservist is mobilised they leave behind not only their family but their job too. Without the support of their

civilian employers, it would be very difficult for the men and women who wish to serve their country in this way to train and then to serve on overseas operations.

SaBRE is a Ministry of Defence campaign, which offers advice to both Reservists and their employers on the rights and obligations associated with the employment of a member of the Volunteer Reserve Force. For example, it is illegal to terminate the employment of a Reservist at any time because he or she has a liability to be mobilised. But, both the Reservist and the employer are able to apply for the mobilisation to be postponed or cancelled.

The SaBRE campaign also actively encourages employers to make the most of the skills and experience their employees gain

Reservist employers seeing first-hand Reservists on operation in Iraq (last October).



through service with the Reserve Forces - particularly in areas such as leadership, management, team working, initiative, communication and organisation.



For further advice and information call the SaBRE helpline on 0800 389 5459 or visit www.sabre.mod.uk

VETERANS GET READY...

Working in partnership with Barclays, Leonard Cheshire has launched the Ready to Start programme. Over the three-year period the aim is that 600 disabled people will enter into sustainable self-employment.



Leonard Cheshire has been caring for the disabled for nearly 60 years. When Group Captain Cheshire opened his own home to disabled veterans little did he know it would become a nationwide organisation.

Working in partnership with Barclays and drawing on their vast experience of dealing with disabled people has enhanced the development of the Ready to Start programme. It's an innovative and forward-thinking programme that meets the needs of disabled people seeking self-employment. It provides the right training, sign posting and support, essentials to enable disabled people to start their own business.

27 'Ready to Start' programmes across England and Wales are being

The Newcastle Programme was launched in January.



set up over the three-year period. 14 Projects have been launched so

far including Newcastle, Banbury and Middlesbrough.

TO EMPLOYMENT



ABILITY FROM DISABILITY - RBLI EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS

RBL Industries Employment Solutions help and support people who want to return to work but are challenged by a health condition or disability. Skilled advisers help customers move into employment through on-the-job support and advice and help them settle in. Their services are funded directly by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), so no costs are passed on to the job finder or the employer.



Steve Hammond (pictured above), a disabled Army veteran from the Welsh Guards, is one of the

thousands of people RBLI Employment Solutions has helped back into employment.

Steve joined the WORKSTEP programme. Through the support of the programme he found employment as a member of the RBLI Estates team, followed by a move to the Royal British Legion Village, having decided to settle in Kent.

WORKSTEP is a DWP programme, which provides job support to over 26,000 disabled people who face more complex barriers to getting and keeping a job, but who can work effectively with the right support.

Throughout Steve's employment at RBLI he has always maintained a positive ethos about learning new skills and taking on new responsibilities, fully supported by RBLI Employment Solutions. He has received advice and guidance regarding his finances, additional training and personal development objectives. It doesn't stop there; in addition he has been fully supported in achieving further education, taking time out of work to study for City and

Guilts Motor Vehicle Servicing and Repair qualifications.

As Steve recalls, "I was in the right place at the right time. If it were not for RBLI I would be down and out! I like to give back, you know, doing as much as I can to repay them, for example, by representing the Legion at the Albert Hall on Remembrance Day."

 For further information call 0800 783 1144, email marketing@rbli.co.uk or visit www.rbli.co.uk

MOD RESETTLEMENT PROCESSES

(CONTINUED)

Early Service Leavers are those personnel who are either administratively discharged or leave voluntarily with less than four years service.

Early Service Leavers generally have no access to CTP services but receive a mandatory resettlement brief and interview by a suitable qualified interviewer prior to discharge. This includes an assessment of the individual's vulnerability to social exclusion, discussion on accommodation post-discharge and sign-posting to the agencies and organisations that can provide support.

Arrangements will be made to put Early Service Leavers in touch with Jobcentre Plus for employment, the Service leaver has immediate access to the "New Deal" programmes, and, as appropriate the Joint Service Housing Advice Office or the Single Persons' Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services (SPACES) and ex-Services charities such as the Royal British Legion and the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen Families Association for accommodation and welfare needs.

Exceptionally, arrangements for additional support will be made for those Early Service Leavers assessed as vulnerable to social exclusion, which may include limited access to some aspects of CTP provision.



ready to start

"I'm well aware of the demands and pitfalls involved in setting up your own business. It's not an easy ride, but it's one that can be made simpler with support and expert advice. Ready to Start not only provides training, but provides that vital support from experts - in the form of Barclays Buddy's - that I believe is invaluable when starting up on your own."

Chris Moon MBE, ex-Army Officer speaking at the National launch of the Ready to Start initiative in October 2006

Charlie's already started...

Charlie Hancock is a veteran based in Newcastle. He is a mature person who last year had a 'life changing experience' from a potentially fatal illness which has made him re-evaluate his employment options,



and he is now highly motivated to 'work for himself' in his job carrying out electrical testing. Charlie recognises that his illness means he needs to work more flexibly which being his 'own boss' would allow. Charlie was the first person to be accepted onto the Newcastle Ready To Start programme. He has already prepared a 'road map' of the steps he needs to take and has a good understanding of the market place and relevant legislation. He is currently undertaking modular training, through the support of

Ready To Start, in business start up, raising finance, the pitfalls of self employment, tax options and accounting. He will shortly be meeting up with his Barclays buddy who will provide further support, encouragement and mentoring to assist Charlie in his quest to advance his knowledge in business start up.

For more information call 08456 717173, email info@readytostart.org.uk or visit www.readytostart.org.uk



Focus on... The RAF ASSOCIATION

Welfare and care is the very heart of the Association, which serves the 1.1 million people who have served in the RAF and their dependants, from WWII veterans to current serving personnel.



Richard Peck House, one of the 3 respite care homes run by the Association

The Association, through its network of Branch Honorary Welfare Officers, also plays a key role in providing welfare and care for those who require it.

The assistance given varies enormously. It can mean anything from conversation and comradeship, to preparing and

submitting application forms for financial assistance or providing advice on war pensions. For someone with long-term needs, a respite break – either for them or their carer – may be a vital part of their welfare requirements.

The Association, with financial assistance from the RAF Benevolent Fund, runs three respite care homes - Richard Peck House in Lytham St Annes, Lancashire; Flowerdown House in Weston-super-Mare; and Rothbury House in Rothbury, Northumberland.

The homes offer short welfare breaks to any current or past members of the RAF and their families.

Supporting Service personnel and their families

The Association is also focusing increasingly on current serving personnel and their families in the UK and deployed overseas. Initiatives over the past year have included support for an Internet café at RAF Cottesmore and the refurbishment of contact houses on stations both in the United Kingdom and further afield.

The internet cafe enables families on the base to maintain contact with their loved ones stationed abroad and allow those in a similar situation to meet with each other in a relaxed environment.

Similarly, enhancing the fixtures and fittings in station contact housing has created a homely environment for those using them.

Tracing colleagues

For all those who are or have served, RAFA has set up a RAF dedicated website, enabling users to trace and contact former RAF colleagues, either by name, station, year or rank. The site features biographical details for all members, as well as bulletin boards, chat rooms and forums.

To find out more, sign up and visit www.raf-comrade-contact.co.uk

 For further information: call The RAF Association, call: 0116 2665224, Email enquiries@rafa.org.uk or visit www.rafa.org.uk

Ian and Gail Thackery

Ian, 51, was an air photographer in the RAF for 28 years, serving at RAF Stations throughout the world. It was during his last posting that the signs of what turned out to be a progressive brain disorder began to tragically appear.



He now relies on the support of his family to take care of him – and that is where the care provided at Richard Peck House has demonstrated its value. Its special care rooms, operated to National Care Standards, have meant Ian can visit alone if he wants to, and therefore more often, whilst still receiving the loving standard of care provided by his family.



The Association is a membership body which draws together those who have served in the Royal Air Force and provides, in its 500+ Branches located both in the UK and abroad, a spirit of comradeship and an ethos, unique to the Association, which comes from serving in the Royal Air Force.

Contact Houses

The houses are allocated to any RAF personnel who need them. They can be used for short term stays, to spend some much needed time with partners or children and are also a good facility for families to use while they are visiting sick and injured Service men and women on the base.



BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN CUSTODY AND THE COMMUNITY

Working in partnership with The Royal British Legion, the Foundation Training Company Ltd's prime focus is a stable life and a lawful career after release for ex-Service offenders in the East of England.

The Foundation Training Company Ltd (FTC) delivers Resettlement Training Programmes in nine prisons situated in the Eastern Region and has opened a Training and Resource Centre in Hackney,

London. In 2005/2006 FTC delivered full-time resettlement courses to over 1,600 prisoners, and interventions on personal issues and resettlement to a further 3,500.

Since May 2006, FTC has worked in partnership with The Royal British Legion (TRBL) in the Eastern Region, having one member of staff in each location trained as a TRBL caseworker. This has enabled FTC to start the referral process for ex-Servicemen in prison earlier in their sentence, which in turn means case notes arrive with TRBL County Officers faster for their consideration, with help readily available for their release. So far, FTC has referred 17 ex-offenders with a military background to RBL, of whom 10 have received direct support ranging from rent deposits to a grant to pay for the release of a car from the pound and payment of its MOT.

FTC Facts

FTC works in prisons delivering bespoke programmes aimed at reducing re-offending by providing information, advice & guidance, liaison with community based agencies and training packages focused on providing realistic opportunities post release.


FTC builds and develops partnerships with other organisations working with serving prisoners and ex-offenders with the sole aim to provide the best possible outcome for the individuals with whom we work.

FTC is reaching into the community by opening Foundation Training Centres that can provide continuity of support for those being released from prison and expert advice and training for those serving community sentences or at risk of offending.

FTC is about reducing crime and changing people's lives by positive and realistic intervention.



The Training and Resource Centre Hackney

 For further information call Tel: 01440 743214 or visit www.foundation-training.org

REMARKABLE CARE, FOR REMARKABLE PEOPLE

The Queen Alexandra Hospital Home strives to enable physically disabled or incapacitated ex-Service men and women to live as actively and independently as possible.



Founded in 1919 for soldiers who had been disabled in the First World War; the charity set an extraordinary standard of nursing

care, well ahead of its time. In 1933 the charity moved to Worthing where it has remained to the present day and has recently

completed a multi million pound development to offer single occupancy, en-suite accommodation and greatly expanded physiotherapy and occupational therapy facilities.

The charity is uniquely positioned to offer multidisciplinary nursing care and rehabilitation to physically disabled ex-Service men and women; specialising in treating those with degenerative and complex medical conditions and acquired brain injuries.

It is now nearly ninety years since the charity was founded and it has always moved with the times adapting to the needs of ex-Service personnel. Increasingly the charity has found that it is attracting residents from a younger age group, who are statistically more likely to be affected by acquired brain injuries.

Anyone who has served in HM Forces is eligible for a place at the unique 60-bed complex near the seafront with both long-term and short-term care applications being considered.

 For more information call 01903 213458, email fundraising@qahh.org.uk or visit www.qahh.org.uk

Some of the remarkable people....



TO REACH FOR THE SKY

How a charity, with strong links to the RAF community, has helped disabled veterans to realise their full potential through the pleasure, thrill and freedom of flying.

FSD students of 2006 with Chief of the Air Staff Sir Glenn Torpy, HRH Prince Feisal of Jordan and the Red Arrows



Flying Scholarships For The Disabled (FSD) was founded in 1982 in memory of Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader; its intention - to perpetuate his indomitable spirit. Since then, the charity has helped over 250 disabled men and women to 'reach for the sky'.

There are three types of scholarship available from a full Private Pilot Licence (PPL) scholarship (a six-week residential course in South Africa which

includes 40 hours of flight training, in South Africa) to a mini scholarship at Goodwood School of Flying. All scholarships include accommodation and subsistence at no cost to the student.

Full scholarships are held overseas because many of the scholars have never had to look after their everyday needs, always having family and carers for support. A residential course far from home really helps them regain confidence and self-esteem.

"This has improved the standard of my life as I am no longer living in a fog, I feel totally alive again and also most importantly, I feel what is to be me"

Sam Parmenter



Sam chats with HM Queen Noor of Jordan (Patron of the charity)

Veterans who've 'reached for the sky'...

Sam

Sam Parmenter enlisted in the RAF; sadly she developed an eating disorder, which forced her to leave. She had just begun to rebuild her life when she was involved in an accident, which left her with a back injury and dependent on pain-killing drugs.

She applied to FSD and in order for her to be considered for flight training, she found the strength to come off her pain-killing medications and was awarded a six week Scholarship in California. Today she is the proud holder of a PPL, is a qualified accountant, is soon to be married and has a bright and fulfilling new life before her.

Martyn

Martyn Lloyd was a RAF navigator before a road accident left him a paraplegic. Martyn gained a PPL through the charity, and now lives in the USA, where he undertook further flight training to gain an instructor's license. He now teaches other disabled people to fly.

 For more information call 0870 800 1942, email info@toreachforthesky.org.uk or visit www.toreachforthesky.org.uk

BIRMINGHAM CHOSEN TO HOLD NATIONAL VETERANS DAY

Birmingham will be at the forefront of 15 regional events planned across the UK including Blackpool, Nottingham and Weymouth, to celebrate Veterans Day...



Get involved

The Ministry of Defence has funded almost 40% of the cost of Birmingham's celebrations. Funds have also been given to support numerous other events across the UK.

One of the key criteria for funding is to highlight the wide range of support and advice available to Veterans, through the public, charity and voluntary sector. If you serve veterans and want to highlight the services you provide, contact your local Veterans Day Organiser to see if they will display your publicity material at their event.

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown and Derek Twigg, Minister for Veterans, announced on 13 March 2007, that Birmingham had been chosen to hold this year's national Veterans Day event taking place on 27 June 2007.

Birmingham City Council has planned five days of Veterans Day celebrations starting on 27 June 2007, which it hopes, will attract up to 100,000 visitors.

"It is a great honour that Birmingham has been chosen to lead the UK in the celebrations of Veterans Day. I hope other towns, cities and local communities will follow our lead and stage memorable events to celebrate the contribution made by this remarkable section of our community."

Mike Sharpe, Lord Mayor of Birmingham

 For further information on the Birmingham events or other events planned across the UK visit www.veterans-uk.info or call 0800 169 2277.



HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL OPENS THE ERSKINE PARK HOME IN BISHOPTON

HRH The Princess Royal officially opened The Erskine Park Home within the grounds of the Erskine Estate on Thursday 8 March 2007 and met with many of the 40 residents currently being cared for within the new dedicated dementia care home



The Princess Royal met with many of the 180 residents from The Erskine Home including 44 year old Joanna Martin (pictured above), Royal Auxiliary Air Force and many residents from both World War II and more recent conflicts including Korea, Northern Ireland and The Falklands.



She was then joined by Flight Lieutenant John Cruickshank VC when she visited one of the four houses within the Erskine Park Home, which has been named after the World War II hero, the only living Scottish holder of the Victoria Cross.

At the launch, Erskine's Chief Executive, Colonel Martin Gibson, said:

"We are delighted that the Princess Royal has taken time out of her busy schedule to meet so many of our residents and their families today and acknowledge the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers."


"HRH met Erskine veterans from World War II and younger residents from more recent conflicts including Iraq, who are currently in our care. The relevance of our work is emphasised by the current military operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan and Erskine is currently reviewing its strategy to determine its future role in caring for younger ex-Service men and women."

 For further information call 0141 814 4633, email information@erskine.org.uk or visit www.erskine.org.uk

FEEDBACK FROM DMS WEBSITE



The Defence Medical Services website featured in the last issue – Log on for medical news – received over 600 extra visits to the site per month since the article was published.

 For further information visit www.dmsd.mod.uk



FALKLANDS VETERANS AND OTHERS NOW ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS LAPEL BADGE


The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Minister for Veterans also announced that the eligibility for the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge and UK Merchant Seafarers Veterans Badge has been extended to include those Veterans who served up to 31 December 1984. This means that all those who served during the Falklands Conflict in 1982 can now apply.

The HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge was launched in May 2004 and since then its availability has been gradually extended from the First and Second World War veterans, to whom it was initially issued, to successive generations of veterans so that all may be united under one badge.

The UK Merchant Seafarers Veteran's Badge was introduced, in 2006, as a special version of the HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge to reflect the unique relationship that the Merchant Navy and fishermen have held with the Armed Forces over the years.

"The enormous debt that we owe to the veterans who have faithfully served their country over the years should not be forgotten. This is why we established the Veterans Badge in 2004. It has proved enormously popular, with over 400,000 badges issued to date. I am particularly delighted to be able to include those who served in the Falklands Conflict in this year when we will mark their extraordinary achievements in the South Atlantic 25 years ago."

Derek Twigg, Minister for Veterans

 for further information or to apply, call 0800 169 2277 or visit www.veterans-uk.info


WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR AREA?



An on-line calendar of commemorative events and other ex-Service events around the country is ready for use. The National Veterans Events Calendar is published on the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency Website and contains details of events, parades, meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences, etc that are of interest to veterans and those who serve them.

Should any individual or organisation have an event that may be of interest, then the Agency would be delighted to publish its details on the calendar.

To do this, organisers need simply complete and submit an on-line application form; the details will then be entered onto the calendar.

 The National Calendar can be found at: www.veterans-uk.info

If you don't have access to the Internet and wish to either submit an event or find out what's happening in your local area please call 0800 169 2277.