

# DESPATCHES

JIM'S STORY

## Victory over Japan Day



### FUNDRAISING

Putting heart and soul into fundraising



### VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Jane Jennings, SSAFA Gloucester



### SUPPORT

Making an impact during a pandemic



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from our  
**NATIONAL CHAIRMAN**



**What a remarkable year  
we have all experienced!**

Who would have thought back in February when I wrote the last foreword for Despatches that we would have seen such a remarkable turn of events across the world, throughout the country and within the Charity? The pandemic has dominated and complicated all our lives. **I must pay tribute to our volunteers and employees for the way you have dealt with the massive challenge of COVID-19.** You all adapted to this strange environment swiftly and have continued to deliver high quality support remotely, without missing a beat. A significant portion of the employees have also taken a huge financial hit, either being furloughed or operating on a reduced contract. I appreciate how difficult this has been and am grateful for your loyalty and for your sacrifice.

**We have managed to operate effectively as a charity because we have all learned to work remotely, mostly from home, finding new ways of communicating, collaborating and supporting our beneficiaries.** The internet has facilitated much of this (thank you Tim Berners Lee) but it really has been down to the agility and adaptability of our volunteers and employees who have ensured that our services and support activities have continued, largely unabated. Notably we have become adept at bringing staff and volunteers together on Microsoft Teams (thank you Bill Gates). Whilst meetings have been conducted on the platform almost every day, perhaps our biggest technical challenges have been the larger gatherings of the Chairman's Chairmen's Conference (100+) and the Annual Member's Meeting (350+). Well done to all those involved in producing these virtual extravaganzas.

This is our first online only version of Despatches and is a veritable potpourri of content, looking back at contingent VE Day 75, VJ Day 75 commemorations and our Personal Support and Social Work Service that have celebrated 30 years of supporting the Royal Air Force. There is also an interview with one of the Military Wives Choirs employees, several volunteer profiles as well as case studies to ensure we share and learn from our experiences.

**Will we be able to return to more normal activities next year?** I certainly hope so, but the impact of the pandemic is likely to remain with us for years to come and could have a profound effect on the charitable sector, ours included. Remarkably, SSAFA is in pretty good shape right now, but I sense there will be an even greater demand for our services in 2021 and our finances will become stretched as we meet that demand and adapt for the future. Inevitably, any success we have will rely upon the dedication of our volunteers and employees in supporting the Armed Forces family in need. I hope this edition of Despatches provides you with some of the inspiration necessary to keep up the great work you are famed for.

Lieutenant General  
Sir Gary Coward KBE, CB  
**Chairman**

# VE DAY

# 75



SSAFA marked the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day with the launch of two commemorative VE Day 75 books and a unique concert by Katherine Jenkins, which enabled us to raise awareness of our charity like never before.

The 75th anniversary of VE Day saw the Nation remember the service and sacrifice of men, women, and families of our Armed Forces during the Second World War and SSAFA is proud to have been part of the celebrations. The ever changing and challenging circumstances caused by COVID-19 in March and April meant plans had to be quickly adapted. This presented us with the opportunity to be more innovative in the way we raised funds and awareness during this special time. SSAFA successfully rose to this challenge by encouraging virtual 'street' parties and a very special online event filmed from an empty Royal Albert Hall.

## SSAFA'S ROYAL ALBERT HALL CONCERT

Katherine Jenkins OBE, one of the world's best selling classical singers, performed to an empty auditorium at the VE Day 75 concert at the Royal Albert Hall, held in aid of SSAFA. This powerful half-hour performance was live around the world and raised more than £30,000 for SSAFA!

## SSAFA IN THE NEWS

During 7 May and 8 May (VE Day 75 anniversary weekend), SSAFA was seen or heard by nearly 90 million people via TV broadcasts, newspapers, social media and more. In the month of May alone, more than 117 million people saw our SSAFA media coverage, which is the highest ever recorded figure. This included appearances from our Controller, Andrew Gregory, on BBC One as well as an interview with one of our beneficiaries, Bert Turner, RAF Flight Engineer, who flew on a Short Stirling heavy bomber.



## MESSAGES OF SUPPORT

We were honoured to receive messages of support from Her Majesty The Queen, Patron of SSAFA, and His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent, our SSAFA President.

**Her Majesty The Queen said,**  
 "I am pleased to send my best wishes to the beneficiaries, volunteers, employees and all those concerned with the charity on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of VE Day. At this increasingly challenging time, I know that you have continued to provide

support to members of the Armed Forces and veterans, together with their families."

**Prince Michael of Kent added,**  
 "For many, though the War ended on 8 May 1945, their personal battles continued; SSAFA was there for them then, just as it is today for those who need assistance. You should be extremely proud of the support you provided."

## SSAFA IN PRINT

### VE DAY 75

To mark the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, a souvenir coffee-table book entitled VE Day 75, has been published by SJH Group, in partnership with SSAFA. Funds raised through sponsorship and book sales will help to continue to fund SSAFA's vital services, supporting those from the Armed Forces community. VE Day 75 presents the stories of Victory in Europe Day celebrations throughout

the UK and around the world. Recounting the events of that extraordinary day and reflecting on its impact, right up to the present day, this fully illustrated, hardback publication also includes an extensive photographic record of the day. The result is an in-depth and visually striking record of one of the most significant days in modern history.

For more information about this wonderful book and to purchase a copy, you can visit the SSAFA store here; [www.ssafastore.org.uk/products/VE-75-book](http://www.ssafastore.org.uk/products/VE-75-book) or order direct from SJH Group: [www.veday75.net/official-book/veday75](http://www.veday75.net/official-book/veday75)



### VICTORY75 - WE'LL MEET AGAIN

We are also delighted to offer friends and supporters the opportunity to purchase Victory75: We'll Meet Again. This 150 page album chronicles Britain's road from defeat to victory in a conflict which threatened the future of freedom in this country.

To purchase your copy visit the SSAFA store: [www.ssafastore.org.uk/products/Victory-75-book](http://www.ssafastore.org.uk/products/Victory-75-book)





James Wren and his fellow Royal Marines.



SSAFA's Controller, Andrew Gregory and VJ Day veteran, Jim Wren, in their home town of Salisbury.

# VICTORY OVER JAPAN DAY

# VJ DAY 75

## COMMEMORATING 75 YEARS SINCE THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

**2020 also marked the 75th anniversary of VJ Day - Victory over Japan Day - the moment the Japanese surrendered and the Second World War finally ended. To honour those who fought in the Far East, SSAFA observed the national two minute silence at 11am on 15 August.**

Tens of thousands of Armed Forces personnel from across the British Empire fought and died in the Second World War against Japan, whilst thousands more suffered as Prisoners of War. More than 12,000 Allied Prisoners of War also died building the Burma 'Death Railway'; a 400km railway from Thailand to Myanmar (then Burma).

The war with Japan began in December 1941. The Japanese attack on the American naval base of Pearl Harbour, on 7 December, drew the United States into the War, whilst Japan's attack on British territories in Hong Kong, Malaya (now Malaysia), Singapore and Burma drew British and Commonwealth troops into a jungle war.

After almost four years of fighting in the Far East, the war came to an end. Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender on 14 August 1945, following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki - the first and only time in the history of warfare such a destructive weapon has been used. The bomb that landed on Hiroshima flattened everything within a mile, killing more than 70,000 people, with many more dying of radiation exposure.

Japan's surrender was welcomed joyfully but also soberly, following the atomic bombings and the uncertainty over the fate of many British and Allied Forces still in the Far East. 15 August then became known as VJ Day in the UK.

# JIM'S STORY

James Wren, ex-Royal Marine and VJ Day veteran

**James (Jim) Wren shares his story with SSAFA. He served during the Second World War and was a Japanese Prisoner of War, but unlike many men, Jim was fortunate to return home.**

In January 1940, Jim joined the Royal Marines and from Autumn 1941 he was aboard the HMS Repulse until it was sunk by Japanese bombers in December 1941. Though hundreds died, Jim survived and joined an Army unit in jungle warfare within Singapore.

On 12 February 1942, as the enemy closed in, Jim and other Royal Marines made plans to escape on ships, attempting to save civilian men, women and children. However, as they approached Palembang, Sumatra (Indonesia), the ships were either sunk or captured by the Japanese, with those onboard killed or imprisoned.

Jim became a Prisoner of War for three and a half years, in four different camps. The prisoners were subjected to slave labour, horrific living conditions, no washing facilities, scarce food, and brutality. Jim witnessed many atrocities, which he still finds difficult to discuss, even 75 years on. Yet, he remembers the strong bond between the prisoners too.

The prisoners had no contact with the outside world; but in August 1945, the Royal Navy raided an oil refinery opposite where the prisoners were forced to work. Jim said, "A few days after that, we were all called out one morning... We stood there and waited, and waited, and the Japanese camp Commander came. He got up on his podium and told us 'the war is over. And then, he ran and left."

**'When the war ended, some chaps just stood there, dumbfounded. Others hugged their chums, others fell to the ground and cried. I shed a few tears - I can tell you.'**

Allied troops came, but it was some days until Jim and others were able to leave the camp. Jim was taken to Singapore first, given clothing and equipment, before boarding HMS Antenor to head home. The journey took six weeks, arriving in Liverpool on 27 October 1945.

Jim explained "When I arrived home... my mother and father were there, and to my huge surprise, Margaret was there waiting for me. Before I was sent to Singapore, Margaret and I had been together for about four months. To think that she waited all that time... We got married the following year."

By this point, Jim had served half of his 12-year contract with the Royal Marines and he served the rest on HMS Vanguard.

Jim added, "I'm glad the war ended... And what happened at the end of the war shouldn't be forgotten either. The bomb saved my life, and the lives of thousands of men, but it took many lives as well. It's a thing I never want to see again. Never."

Jim is one of four men who served on HMS Repulse, still alive today. Sharing these stories are a way of honouring what Jim and those who served did for us. **Thank you for your service.**

**IN ADDITION, PRINCE CHARLES HAS COMMISSIONED A PORTRAIT OF JIM FOR BUCKINGHAM PALACE.**



# D-DAY VETERAN AWARDED LEGION D'HONNEUR

Dennis Roy Cooper, aged 102, was awarded France's highest order of military merit, the Legion D'Honneur, for his services during D-Day. This great achievement called for a celebration, so SSAFA Dorset stepped in to organise an official ceremony at Blandford Camp to recognise Dennis and his service to our country.

Dennis said, "It was initially a bit of a surprise when I found out about the award, but the job we did was very important and incredibly risky. We are all here today because of the sacrifices made in those dark days."

The award ceremony in February was attended by Admiral The Lord West of Spithead, a former First Sea Lord, The Lord Lieutenant for Dorset, Mr Angus Campbell, Service personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Signals, as well as SSAFA representatives, including Dennis's Caseworker, Nicholas Bate of SSAFA Dorset. Madame Josette Lebrat presented the medal, assisted by Lieutenant Colonel Guillaume Veys (French Army).

## ABOUT DENNIS

Dennis was enlisted into the Royal Navy in 1940 from his hometown of Portsmouth, where he served three years on HMS King George V and then on minesweepers.

One of his roles in 1944 was escorting the two Mulberry harbours to Normandy, Sword and Omaha Beaches.

From 5 June 1944 and during D-Day, Dennis was engaged in minesweeping from Sword Beach to Cherbourg.

In addition to Operation Overlord, Dennis was deployed to the Mediterranean during the Italian invasion and also to Africa, where he escorted US troops.

Dennis has previously been awarded the following medals:

- **1939-1945 Star**
- **Africa Star**
- **Italy Star**
- **France and Germany Star with Atlantic Bar**
- **Defence Medal**
- **Victory Medal**



Note: Photo taken prior to March 2020.

**ON BEHALF OF SSAFA,**

**CONGRATULATIONS DENNIS!**

Dennis retired from the Navy at the end of the war and began a career in the motor industry. He lives in Dorset with his wife, Mary.

As well as arranging this ceremony, SSAFA has also helped Dennis with his wife's care and with developing his beloved garden.

*We are sorry to confirm that Dennis has since passed away since sharing his story and we send our condolences to his family. We believe it is even more important to share and celebrate his story.*



## SUPPORTING THE RAF COMMUNITY

**SSAFA'S RAF PERSONAL SUPPORT AND SOCIAL WORK SERVICE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF DELIVERING VITAL SUPPORT ON BASE.**

**We are delighted to have celebrated 30 years of supporting the Royal Air Force (RAF) community on base, through our Personal Support and Social Work Service contract, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.**

The 60 strong SSAFA team, headed up by Cathie Johnson, understands that military employees and families face some unique challenges such as regular deployments, having to live apart and frequent moves. The team provides comprehensive and confidential support, with a special focus on services for adults, but also for children, young people and their families.

For anyone in the RAF community, our Social Workers and Personal and Family Support Workers are there to help when times get tough.

This can be support with stress, depression, difficult relationships, financial problems, resettlement, housing, childcare, equality issues, bereavement, military discharge or deployments. The team also liaises with local authorities and services, whilst maintaining a client focused confidential service - operating outside of the RAF chain of command.

RAF veteran, Paula Finch, now works as part of the team to make sure those serving and their families are supported. Paula said,

"My service background has helped me to be more empathetic. I understand what it's like to be a single mum on deployment - I was in the Falklands when my daughter was just one year old. I understand the isolation - I married a serving person, so I know what it's like to be left at home, to keep everything running as smoothly as possible. I can really empathise with those I support."

Sir Andrew Gregory, SSAFA Controller, added, "SSAFA is extremely proud that, for the last 30 years, we have worked in partnership with the RAF to deliver personal support and social work to servicemen and women and their families. Our work has been essential in ensuring that RAF military personnel can fulfil their roles which, in turn, keep our Nation safe. Our employees have worked tirelessly to meet this remit, adapting as necessary, especially in recent months. I personally thank all those who provide this vital support."



For more about SSAFA's RAF PS&SWS, visit: [www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/raf-personal-support-and-social-work-service](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/raf-personal-support-and-social-work-service)



Sandra staples (centre) pictured with SSAFA National Chairman, Sir Gary Coward. Photo taken prior to March 2020

# Sandra Staples

Sandra Staples joined SSAFA more than 30 years ago and worked as an RAF Social Worker from 1999 to 2010. Sandra remembers some of her experiences and wishes the SSAFA RAF team - **Happy 30th Birthday!**

## TELL US ABOUT YOUR CAREER WITH SSAFA...

My husband was in the RAF and we travelled all over the world for his work. I first joined SSAFA in 1989 as an In-Service Committee volunteer in Belgium, where we were stationed at the time. When my husband retired, we came to live in East Yorkshire, and I volunteered for the local branch. Then a job opportunity to work as a RAF social worker came up and I ended up supporting RAF personnel in Buckinghamshire and Lincolnshire at RAF stations until I retired in 2010. We then moved back to East Yorkshire and I became Branch Secretary there.

## “Happy birthday to the service and everyone who is still involved!”

### WHAT MADE YOU JOIN THE RAF SOCIAL WORK SERVICE?

Being in the military and being part of the military family is completely different to being a civilian. I felt I had a lot to offer because I could ‘talk their language’ and understand their needs.

### WHAT SUPPORT DID YOU PROVIDE?

I worked on lots of things from marital breakdowns to people having to leave on medical discharges. I often helped people with housing, if they were leaving the service. We also helped families with children with additional needs.

During my time at the service, the Second Gulf War took place, as well as the war in Afghanistan. I supported with a lot of the psychological decompression work alongside padres and doctors, for those men and women returning. We’d give them the space to talk if they needed to.

### ARE THERE ANY CASES THAT PARTICULARLY STICK WITH YOU?

When I was working with the RAF Social Work Service at High Wycombe, I dealt with a few medical discharge cases, where their injuries or illness had completely changed their lives. I worked with the RAF Benevolent Fund and we got them housed. The Fund bought them houses. To be able to help

**“I worked on lots of things from marital breakdowns to people having to leave on medical discharges.”**

people leave the service and live where they wanted with a future ahead, was a big thing for me.

I also remember helping a young married guy, with a little girl. He had a severe back problem and was medically discharged. I remember him saying ‘I can’t even play with my daughter.’ We got him a bungalow with the help of the Benevolent Fund.

Fortunately, the service invalidity system now provides more support for those going out on a medical discharge.

### WHAT ABOUT THE EFFECT OF NON-MILITARY CURRENT AFFAIRS?

The financial crash affected personnel. Across the country people lost jobs and all their money and savings. The services weren’t shielded from that. It was stressful for those retiring and leaving too.

I am concerned we’ll see these problems again because of the economic effects of COVID-19. It’s important to have the RAF Personal Support and Social Work Service - it means our RAF families have somewhere to turn if they are affected.

### ARE YOU PROUD OF YOUR TIME WITH THE SERVICE?

Yes, if I’ve made a difference to people’s lives, then that makes me feel good. I’m proud to have been part of the service and SSAFA. I was also touched to have received a commendation by the Air Officer Commanding of Air Command for my work with the Social Work Service.

I know that the service continues to be valuable to our RAF families and long may it continue.

**“DESPITE COVID-19, OUR ARMED FORCES, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES KNOW THEY CAN STILL TURN TO US”**

# MAKING AN IMPACT DURING A PANDEMIC

**After 30 years in the RAF, working closely with SSAFA on personnel welfare, Alan Thomas MBE, became a SSAFA Caseworker helping those in need in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.**

Alan Thomas MBE started volunteering for SSAFA three years ago, having come across our charity during his time serving in the RAF. He also gained great experience in welfare matters in his role as Warrant Officer in charge of personnel services at RAF Lyneham (Operational Unit flying the Hercules Transport Aircraft), where he had regular contact with the SSAFA social worker on base, as well as submitting numerous cases to the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Alan added, “My career after the RAF also gave me a fantastic grounding to carry out casework. I joined the Department for Work and Pensions and was a manager on State Pensions and Pension Credit for five years. I then moved to non-working disability benefits and was a decision maker and case manager on Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment. I also worked as a volunteer Community Panel Member for the Bristol Youth Offending team for 10 years. All this

experience means I understand the system, I understand the military and I understand people.” Alan has worked on numerous cases in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, from helping people to secure white goods for their homes, to helping a veteran, who needed a heart transplant, with travel and accommodation costs.

Alan said, “With the current situation - COVID-19 - the workload has reduced. We are having to put some work on hold, such as construction work and modifications to homes, or occupational therapist reports. It is not safe to attend people’s homes due to the pandemic, so that halts progress for some of our cases, but we are still able to reach people who need us. I recently delivered food vouchers to a gentleman who was struggling to afford his weekly shop because his income has been reduced. Despite COVID-19, our Armed Forces, veterans and their families know they can still turn to us.”

Last year, Alan was also a runner up in the English Veterans Awards, nominated by his Branch Chairman, Dawn Civill-Williams (Alan and Dawn pictured right). However, to Alan, success is a completed case, “I really enjoy volunteering for SSAFA. I have had several cases where the sheer delight of the client is so obvious and that is fantastic because you can experience the difference you have made.



**“DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, WE HAVE SEEN HOW COMMUNITIES CAN PULL TOGETHER”**



**“EVEN WHEN THE HELP IS QUITE MINIMAL IT CAN STILL HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON SOMEONE”**

“I remember I was able to secure funding for a mobility scooter and ramp for a lady who had lung and bowel cancer. Though she was very ill, that made a huge difference to her quality of life and she had greater freedom. It showed me that even when the help is quite minimal it can still have a profound impact on someone, because they know there is someone willing to help them in their time of need.”

Alan is now encouraging others to consider volunteering for their local SSAFA branch to support veterans who need them. He explains, “Recently, due to the pandemic, we have seen how communities can pull together to help those who need it. We see people helping strangers because they care deeply about others around them, but also because the needs of some of our worst off in society have become increasingly apparent.

“There are still many people who will need our help for many years to come and with the kind and generous donations provided by the community, SSAFA’s outstanding work can continue.”

*Read more about SSAFA’s response to COVID-19 here: [www.ssafa.org.uk/about-us/our-response-to-covid-19](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/about-us/our-response-to-covid-19)*



“ I’VE LEARNT THAT WHEN YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING CHALLENGING YOU REALLY HAVE TO PUT YOUR MIND INTO IT. ”

# PUTTING HEART AND SOUL INTO FUNDRAISING

**Nine-year-old primary school pupil, Mano Veljic, cycled 500km across South Korea in nine days** to raise money for the SSAFA Service Committee in Brunei.

**Mano Veljic, at the age of nine, undertook the amazing feat of cycling 500km in nine days, in a country he’s never been to, alongside his father Vlada. Mano, who studied at the British Forces Brunei Garrison’s Hornbill Primary School, and Vlada, a Year 4 Learning Support Assistant at the same school, raised an incredible £834 for their local SSAFA Committee.**

Prior to the flight from Brunei to South Korea, Mano and Vlada trained hard to prepare for their bike ride, whilst also spreading the word within the Garrison community and on their JustGiving page to raise funds for the SSAFA Committee in Brunei.



“ THE MONEY RAISED WILL GO DIRECTLY BACK INTO THE GARRISON COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT PROJECTS AND EVENTS THAT WILL BENEFIT EVERYONE. ”

One of the challenges of the journey was packing all their kit for the flight. Father and son had to take their bicycles, enough clothing to last the duration of the ride and even a tent. There were no luxury hotels at the end of each weary day, instead Mano and Vlada would pitch their tent along the route that took them through Seoul, Sangiu and Suanbo.

In addition to supporting SSAFA, Mano and Vlada wanted to use the journey to build their confidence, overcome fear of the unknown and uphold the values of Mano’s school at Tuger Lines. The bike ride proved extremely challenging at times, with long days, harsh weather and steep climbs, requiring determination and perseverance as they encouraged each other on the journey.

Father, Vlada, said, “I felt that both Mano and I needed a goal to work towards building our mental strength. This journey was the perfect opportunity. It also gave us the ability to give back to our Garrison community by raising some money.

“I was just happy to spend invaluable time with Mano and to see his true character when under pressure. The longest distance we cycled in a single day was 80km (50 miles). We left early in the morning and rode until 9pm. It was a long day, with many short breaks.”

Vlada added, “Luckily, we had the full support of my wife, Julie, who stayed at home in Seria to look after Mano’s younger brother, Luka.”

Mano, who has since started secondary school near Brunei’s capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, explained, “I’ve learnt that when you want to do something challenging you really have to put your mind into it.”

He added: “What I enjoyed the most was the Korean food. Also, the scenery along the route was amazing!”

SSAFA Committee Brunei Chair, Lynda Black, said, “We were totally in awe of this amazing adventure that Mano and Vlada undertook. We followed their journey on Facebook, where they posted regular updates on their progress.

“In total, Mano and Vlada raised a fantastic BN \$1497 (£834) for our SSAFA Committee in Brunei through their JustGiving page and money gifted within the Garrison.”

Lynda added, “We are extremely grateful that they chose the SSAFA Committee Brunei as their charity. The money raised will go directly back into the Garrison community to support projects and events that will benefit everyone.”

*SSAFA Service Committees are groups of volunteers supporting serving personnel and their families who work, study and live on base, station, garrison or shore establishment in the UK and overseas.*

**Find out more about Service Committee volunteering at:**  
[www.ssafa.org.uk/service-committee-volunteer-roles](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/service-committee-volunteer-roles)



# HELPING IN A MOMENT OF NEED

**Sue Larking, Divisional Secretary for New Forest in Hampshire, talks about her various **volunteering roles within SSAFA** and supporting her local Armed Forces community.**

**After Sue Larking retired, she began volunteering for SSAFA - that was 16 years ago. She said, "There was a SSAFA advert in the paper and my husband and I thought we'd go for it and rang."**

Sue has a background in nursing and has a connection with the military as both her grandfathers served during the First World War and then in the Home Guard in the Second World War. Her husband was also in the Merchant Navy.

Soon after they made the call to SSAFA, Sue and her husband started volunteering. Sue became a Caseworker and then three years ago, Sue took on the role of Divisional Secretary for SSAFA New Forest. She added, "I really had no intention of becoming the Divisional Secretary, because I love casework, but there was a chance that the division would have to close if no one stepped forward... and before I knew it, I was in the role and haven't looked back. I love it."

**AS WELL AS BEING DIVISIONAL SECRETARY AND A CASEWORKER, SUE FUNDRAISES FOR SSAFA BY WRITING, DIRECTING AND PUTTING ON LOCAL SHOWS.**

She explained, "When I was younger, I wanted to be an actress, but it was a time when you didn't go off and do things like that if you came from humble beginnings. But I used to do lots of amateur dramatics

and now my creativity is being unleashed again. It's a great way of raising awareness for SSAFA." Every year, the Division directly helps approximately 70 people and completes 50 or more cases. Across the country SSAFA must be prepared to work within the context of local areas. Sue says it is important to recognise that the need in the New Forest is different to urban areas.

"There's a lot of little distinct communities here. It's hard to

**"We decided to buy a bed with our local funds - the lady was overwhelmed that we did that for her. It was fantastic to be able to help her in her her time of need."**

get from one to the other easily without a car and people tend to stay in their own area, so we must bear that in mind when working with beneficiaries."

For Sue, volunteering for SSAFA is part of her identity. One achievement that stands out for her was when she supported a lady suffering from terminal cancer who needed a new bed. The lady had served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service during the Second World War on gun batteries in the South of England.

Sue explains, "Unfortunately, a member of her family who was responsible for the lady's finances, would not share vital information for us to raise funds for the bed through our usual process. She was clearly in distress, and the GP and hospice which managed her care said a new bed was important for her quality of life. We decided to buy a bed with our local funds - the lady was overwhelmed that we did that for her. It was fantastic to be able to help in her time of need."



## SOCIAL CLUB IN NEW MILTON

On top of her usual tasks, Sue has also set up a social club in New Milton for the Armed Forces community in the local area. She said, "A lot of people are isolated and need human connection. That's why I set up a social club to address some of that need. It's a new project, but we are hoping to develop it. The people who attend the social club love chatting about their military exploits. It means a lot to them. We have a lot of National Servicemen in too, which is great. They don't always realise they can access support from SSAFA but they can. I think most of them feel that their service life, although it was hard, was one of the better times in their lives. Through us they feel that camaraderie again."

**Well done to Sue and SSAFA New Forest for all their efforts in for helping those in need from the Armed Forces family.**

*If you have a SSAFA story to share, please send to our Case Study Manager, [Bryony.Waite@ssafo.org.uk](mailto:Bryony.Waite@ssafo.org.uk).*

# SUPPORTING VETERANS' IN EUROPE

## SSAFA IS SUPPORTING THOSE VETERANS IN CYPRUS FOR AFTER UK EXITS THE EUROPEAN UNION.

**92-year-old SAS veteran, Arthur\* moved to Cyprus almost two decades ago. Now as the UK prepares to leave the European Union, SSAFA has supported him to make sure he has the right to remain in the place he calls home.**

Arthur is a National Serviceman and served in the SAS from 1947 to 1949. He was first introduced to SSAFA in 2012 when he met our Cyprus Branch Chairman, Tina Graham. She and the charity have supported him on numerous occasions.

Now the rules around residency for British citizens in Europe are changing due to Britain's exit from the European Union (EU), Tina has been helping him. This has involved working with partner organisations to secure the documentation he needs to stay in Cyprus. However, as Arthur lives a frugal lifestyle in a caravan on an unregistered campsite, he has no permanent address and cannot provide water or electricity bills, making his case more complicated. He does not have health insurance and lives off his weekly pension of £101, as well as an annuity that SSAFA helped to secure from the SAS and Officers' Association.



**"CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESIDENCY MAY BE DIFFICULT, BUT IT IS BETTER TO HAVE THEM NOW AND SSAFA CAN HELP YOU."**

## SSAFA IS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (FCDO) ON A PROJECT TO HELP UK VETERANS APPLY FOR RESIDENCY TO CONTINUE LIVING IN COUNTRIES ACROSS EUROPE AS BRITAIN EXITS THE EU.

Tina explained, "When Arthur first arrived in Cyprus, he was given an 'Alien Registration Certificate', which is meant to last until 2024, but after Britain's exit from Europe, that will not allow him to remain. The rules are changing, so British citizens living within the EU need to reapply for either an MEU1 or MEU3 registration document".

"Without the correct documentation, after Britain's exit from the EU, Arthur would be at risk of deportation. He wouldn't be able to access NHS care and if he left the country, he would only be allowed back to Cyprus for a maximum of three months. I'm here to make sure that doesn't happen."

SSAFA is running this project until 31 March 2021 and is targeting the overseas UK veteran communities in France, Germany and Cyprus. SSAFA volunteers are often in contact with vulnerable groups including pensioners, disabled people, people living in remote areas and people who need translation support.

Tina is working closely with the Cyprus Residency Planning Group and the British High Commission to resolve Arthur's case as quickly and painlessly as possible. Tina said, "If Arthur had to leave the country, his mental health would suffer, he would be insecure, extremely vulnerable, isolated and lose positive friendships in his life. A loss of his usual routine, such as swimming in the sea daily would impact his health, as would the change in climate. I'm glad we can support Arthur and all our Armed Forces families in Cyprus. Every case where you get a fantastic outcome

encourages you to keep volunteering. I do casework too, and there can be days when I am dealing with difficult cases and I feel emotionally labile, with a lot on my mind, or the phone just doesn't seem to stop. When something goes right it just lifts you up. It invigorates you."

Sarah Kay, SSAFA's UK Veterans in Europe Project Coordinator, added, **"We want the message about this programme to go out to all veterans living in the EU. It's best to sort out your paperwork as soon as possible and SSAFA can help you with this.**

**"We know there are some who are living in these countries, who perhaps are there illegally or under the radar, but we want to assure you that we can support you to put your affairs in order. Conversations about residency may be difficult, but it is better to have them now and SSAFA can help you. There is time to sort this, and the outcome will be better if you try to access the correct papers in time."**

Our SSAFA volunteers working on this project have been through this process themselves to secure their own residential status. They understand the process well and are on hand to support individuals.

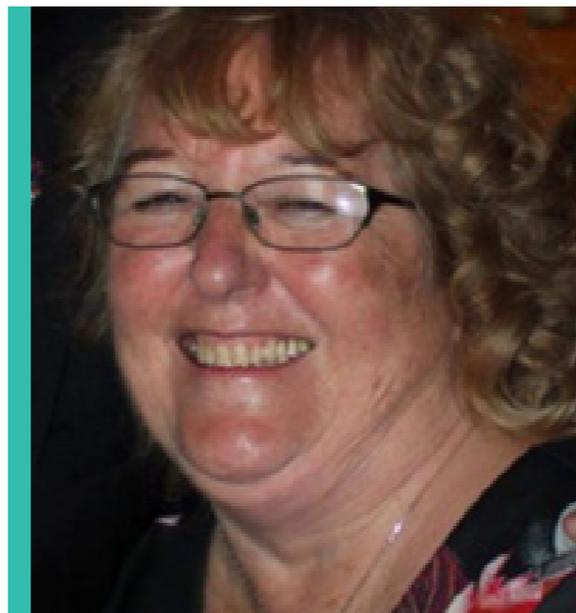
The French portal has just opened on 19 October, so our SSAFA France volunteers will now also be able to provide the same support to those veterans there. The Germany portal has yet to open.

*If you or someone you know from the Armed Forces community is struggling with their EU residency application, contact SSAFA for support at [sarah.key@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:sarah.key@ssafa.org.uk)*

**\*Name has been changed to protect client's identity**

## 5 QUESTIONS WITH...

# ROSEMARY SCOLLICK



**1 WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?**  
I started as a Caseworker in Sittingbourne, Kent, and became Divisional Secretary for several years and was also Treasurer. When we moved to Chesterfield, Derbyshire, I joined the local SSAFA as a Caseworker and am now Divisional Treasurer.

**2 HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT SSAFA?**  
I have been with SSAFA for over 25 years, being presented with my Long Service Award at our Annual General Meeting, on the Chatsworth Estate in 2018, by Lt General Sir Gary Coward KBE CB.

**3 WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT YOUR ROLE?**  
I enjoy meeting our different clients and hearing their stories. In Kent, many of the clients were retired Naval personnel and had many stories to tell of their times onboard and ashore in different parts of the world. In Derbyshire, we see and get to support many younger clients who have served in the Gulf and Afghanistan and are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

**4 HAVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY BEEN IN THE ARMED FORCES?**  
I was never in the services, but my husband was a Royal Marine and our eldest son served 26 years in the Royal Marine Band Service, ending as Drum

**5 WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE?**  
Major. My great uncles served in First World War. One is remembered on the Mount of Olives war memorial and another died on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. My grandad served in the Royal Horse Artillery in the First World War. Other family members served in the Second World War at Arnhem with the Royal Artillery.

If you're a SSAFA volunteer or employee and wish to be featured, we'd love to hear from you.  
**Email [tellus@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:tellus@ssafa.org.uk)**

## LATEST UPDATES

### CMS2 UPDATE

We have started what we hope will be the final end-to-end test for CMS2 which, if successful, would enable the announcement of a go-live decision, anticipated to be in Spring 2021.

We will commence Caseworker and Case Manager refresher training three months ahead of the go-live date. The training will be through webinars, with approximately 10 sessions running each week and flexibility in timings to give volunteers a range of options to choose from. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is unlikely to be possible to run face-to-face training sessions but this is being reviewed on a regular basis as Government (and devolved administration) advice changes.

### POLICIES UPDATE

#### COVID-19 and Caseworking policy and guidance

Our COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Policy for volunteers is available on SSAFAnet and still advocates face-to-face activity only in essential circumstances. To determine if an activity is essential, we have created a flowchart, a health questionnaire for both the volunteer and beneficiary and an activity checklist. These are all available on **SSAFAnet** and should be completed prior to any face-to-face activity taking place.

We also have our COVID-19 Policy for employees on our intranet **here**.

#### FUNDRAISING TOGETHER POLICY

This recently updated document explains how SSAFA's volunteer network and central office can best support each other in their fundraising activities for the benefit and sustainability of the whole network to deliver SSAFA's charitable objectives.

It also explains the structure of the central Fundraising team and how they raise funds to support SSAFA's services. If you haven't read these important guidelines yet, please do! **You can download our Fundraising Together Policy from SSAFAnet** and if you have any questions, please do ask your Regional Fundraising Manager.

#### SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Following the publication of our revised Safeguarding Policy in July 2020, we will be making further revisions, particularly in relation to regional variations, i.e. Northern Ireland. This work will be carried out in the coming weeks and once the revised version is ready, we will share with you all via SSAFAnet and enews.

You can view the current Safeguarding Policy **here**.

#### DATA PROTECTION GDPR POLICY

We have updated our **Data Protection Policy** and we encourage you to all read and ensure you understand this latest version. Policies often change in response to new scams, mistakes made, lessons learnt and new legislation.

Useful reminders contained in the policy extend beyond working methods and should help with all matters in day-to-day life where common sense and best practice should be adopted. Don't leave protecting sensitive data to chance. If you have any questions, email **[data.governance@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:data.governance@ssafa.org.uk)**



# HEART OF GOLD

Richard Martin, SSAFA Clwyd Divisional Secretary and Royal Navy veteran, from north Wales has been **supporting those in need during COVID-19, in spite of his heart condition.**

**Richard Martin has been a Caseworker for SSAFA Clwyd for four years, taking on the role of Divisional Secretary in 2017. He is also an Assistant Pharmacy Technical officer for the NHS, volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic at his local hospital.**

Though Richard has a heart condition that makes him more vulnerable, he had it set on supporting others. So, with the necessary precautions in place, Richard has continued in his SSAFA and NHS roles throughout the pandemic to support those in need.

Richard explained, "Due to my heart condition, I was volunteering to support my NHS colleagues from home - but now I am back in the pharmacy at the hospital, away from the frontline. I want to do my bit for the NHS, as well as carrying out my SSAFA casework. The work all my colleagues are doing is just incredible."

As a veteran and coming from a military family, Richard has a special place in his heart for the Armed Forces community. Richard added, "I was born in a military hospital in Hong Kong. My father was in the British Army,

he finished as a Regimental Sergeant Major. I travelled with him and my mother around the world, and he would inspect me every morning.

"At 16, I joined the Royal Navy from Rhyl and worked mostly in supply. My history gives me the insight to do what I do, for SSAFA, well and get people the support they need. I'm proud to do it."

Not only has Richard been helping the NHS, he has also been carrying out vital work for veterans in his local area. This includes supporting a veteran

**"BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC, WE HAVE HAD TO DRAMATICALLY CHANGE THE WAY WE WORK. WE HAVE HAD TO INNOVATE, BUT THAT HAS ALSO CREATED OPPORTUNITIES."**

and his vulnerable 14-year-old daughter relocate from overseas after fleeing, due to concerns for their safety and welfare.

The father, an ex-RAF policeman, contacted SSAFA to explain that where they were living was becoming unstable and his wife's children, from a former marriage, were involved in crimes which he felt put his daughter at risk. Therefore, the father made the difficult decision to leave his wife and return to the UK with his daughter.

They returned to the UK as the COVID-19 pandemic started, so accessing support was difficult. Yet, SSAFA continued to offer support and Richard stepped in. Richard said, "The father and daughter moved into a hotel, but due to COVID-19 they were asked to leave so homeless people had a place to stay. The pair were then made homeless for one night, and a friend took them in. Next, they were moved to a B&B, but were made to leave so prisoners on early release could access a room. Soon after, we ensured children's services were involved, so they could be moved to a caravan while they waited for a suitable permanent home."

The family has been through a very difficult time, with a lot of change in a short space of time. However, thanks to Richard, they now receive child support funds and Universal Credit.



*If you're a SSAFA volunteer, like Richard, and wish to share your story, please email [tellus@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:tellus@ssafa.org.uk)*

Richard said, "Because of the pandemic, we have had to dramatically change the way we work. We have had to innovate, but that has also created opportunities. We are working with local businesses to get the family the provisions they need, and I have reached out to the local network to get the family help. People have been so generous with their advice and support. The important thing is, we have a duty of care to this veteran and his child, and what we offer is making a difference."

Collectively SSAFA, RAF Benevolent Fund, The Royal British Legion, local charity CREST, Conwy Council's Homeless team helped the father and daughter, fully

supported by the NHS, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, local MP Darren Millar and his employees, Abigail and Tara.

We are very pleased to announce the pair successfully moved into their new home at the beginning of July. The new home is fully carpeted, furnished to a basic level enough to support all their needs. The daughter has secured a place at school and has a free school uniform and free bus pass. Additionally, the pair are both receiving the correct medical support. This has all been achieved through COVID-19 within Wales during strict restrictions.

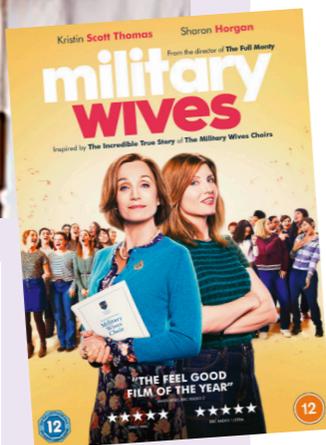
## 10 QUESTIONS WITH...

## JULIA HUDSON

I manage everything relating to Music and Performance for the Military Wives Choirs



militarywives  
Choirs®



1

**WHAT'S YOUR ROLE AND WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?**

I manage everything relating to Music and Performance for the Military Wives Choirs (MWC); we are a charity in our own right and part of the SSAFA family, with 2,300 members in 73 choirs across the UK and abroad.

I support our choirs locally, with their Musical Directors, events and repertoire, and direct our national musical strategy, including performances, commissions, recording projects, concerts and tours. I work closely with our agent, UTA, record labels, producers and musical family to facilitate opportunities for the choirs, including external events and media appearances; recent highlights include BBC Radio 2, The One Show, the NATO leaders' reception at 10 Downing Street, and the Lord Mayor's Banquet. I am also responsible for internal projects which bring together the whole MWC network, including albums, concerts and workshops.

2

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT SSAFA?**

I've been with MWC for four years.

3

**WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR ROLE?**

The best part of my role is orchestrating once-in-a-lifetime experiences for our members. It's scientifically proven that group music-making has a significant positive impact on mental and physical health, and I'm privileged to be able to support the amazing women in our network through music. During the pandemic, it was important to me to help this to continue virtually, which has been a significant collective achievement.

4

**HAVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY BEEN IN THE ARMED FORCES?**

My father was a Major in the Blues and Royals.

5

**WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE?**

For me, my biggest achievement was the conception and delivery of our 2018 album, 'Remember'. It is our biggest project to date, with seven consecutive weekends of grant-funded workshops and recordings involving 1,500 choir members at 14 venues. I was responsible for the music, arrangements and instrumentation, workshop activity, managing the record label, venues, producers, sound engineers, conductors, guest artist Laura Wright, musicians from across the Armed Forces, session musicians, editing, mixing and mastering, a launch event, and filming a music video at RAF Odiham, RMA Sandhurst and HMNB Clyde, while concurrently planning my wedding, which was just ten days after the launch!

6

**DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES?**

I sing in a number of semi-professional chamber choirs around the UK, and have met many of my friends (and my husband!) through music, so am a passionate believer in its ability to bring people closer together and achieve something great, together.

7

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE FILM?**

I probably have to say 'Military Wives'! It reached No. 1 in the charts, and features footage of our choirs, which I toured the country to film on location at their bases. Working with the Director, Peter Cattaneo, the producers, 42, and the distributors, Lionsgate, was a fascinating insight into the film world.

8

**WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PODCASTS?**

I'm a big fan of The High Low, which offers a compelling, female perspective

9

**WHAT PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY DO YOU USE THE MOST?**

Apart from our mixing desk and other musical tech, I am obsessed with Trello, a free web-based project management tool. It's pretty and effective; I would highly recommend it!

10

**WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN?**

Many people say that if you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life; as a tiny charity with a team of four, that's definitely not true! But when you're passionate about what you're working to achieve for your beneficiaries, it's easy to love what you do despite the many challenges faced by our sector.

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# SUPPORTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING COVID-19

Volunteers from SSAFA and Tri Service set up Newcastle **foodbank to support struggling veterans during the pandemic.**



SSAFA Staffordshire, alongside the Tri Service & Veteran Support Centre (Tri Service), have set up a charity foodbank at Veterans House in Newcastle. A team of avid volunteers have been packaging and delivering food parcels to veterans and their families across North Staffordshire and South Cheshire, reaching those who are isolated or in need during the pandemic and lockdown. Initially the food parcels were all provided by public donations of food and cash. However, increased demand for the service, meant the team needed to expand quickly. Tesco were

offering local charities a grant to help those in need of food, which helped enormously. The volunteers contacted Wendy Cotterill and Rich Stephenson-Evans, the Tesco supermarket's Community Champions in South Cheshire and North Staffordshire, and they linked us to FareShare, an organisation providing food to charities from warehouses across the country. This food is heavily discounted and several collections have been made to stock the foodbank. This food was paid for using several public cash donations, National Lottery funding and funding from SSAFA Staffordshire. Local businesses also helped by donating food, including Warburtons, Mellor's Oatcakes and Ornuo Foods at Leek.

With the Tesco and National Lottery funding, the team were also able to purchase essential equipment, such as fridges, freezers and shelving to expand the food offering to local veterans.

The foodbank team consists of Kathy Munslow of SSAFA



Staffordshire, Geoff Harriman and John Painter from Tri Service, plus willing volunteers, including veterans and members of the public. SSAFA Caseworker, Kathy Munslow, said, "Since the pandemic, life has changed for us all and we found many veterans and families were in lockdown with no one to help them with shopping and day-to-day activities.

"Many had no means to buy food either, so SSAFA and Tri Service set up the foodbank. We have a small, dedicated team who are sourcing food using donations from the public."

"Tri Service own a minibus that we use to collect and deliver food. When delivering parcels, we stop and visit several individuals in lockdown as a welfare check, often talking to them through their kitchen windows from a social distance and leaving them a small parcel of 'treats' to enjoy

**"WHEN DELIVERING PARCELS, WE STOP AND VISIT SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS IN LOCKDOWN AS A WELFARE CHECK, OFTEN TALKING TO THEM THROUGH THEIR KITCHEN WINDOWS FROM A SOCIAL DISTANCE"**



We've helped people who have been furloughed or made redundant."

In addition to food parcels, the team have also set up a 'Free Food' Community programme that runs every Saturday. This runs entirely separately from the veterans' foodbank. This enables the team to provide food to the general public, those who too are struggling during the pandemic. This food comes from the surplus donations from the supermarkets. The team support other local charities too, such as The Macrae Centre (local homeless charity) and 'Open Door', both in Hanley, as well as Salvation Army in Kidsgrove, ensuring none of the food goes to waste.

Well done to all involved in these incredible services supporting those in need. The veterans foodbank has gained well deserved recognition and promotion, having appeared on ForcesNet, the online news website for UK Armed Forces, Forces TV and BBC Central TV, as well as Kathy, Geoff and John receiving certificates of merit from Jonathan Gullis, MP for Stoke on Trent North.

**Additionally, Kathy also won a SSAFA Sir James Gildea Award recently for her amazing work.**

with a brew. There are many veterans and families in our area who need support and we will continue to reach out and help where we can."

The team of volunteers have been working hard and in the month of June they saw a significant increase in demand for food parcels. Following this, the service announced the delivery of their 5,000th meal in July; averaging around 25 deliveries a week, with around 10-15 collections from Tesco, Aldi, Marks & Spencer's and Morrisons. The team expect these numbers to grow as lockdown continues and more people may be made redundant.

Geoff Harriman, Chairman of Tri Service added, "Food parcels have been going out to a mix of people, from a 101-year-old veteran to veterans aged 35, and people with families.

**"SINCE THE PANDEMIC, LIFE HAS CHANGED FOR US ALL AND WE FOUND MANY VETERANS AND FAMILIES WERE IN LOCKDOWN WITH NO ONE TO HELP THEM WITH SHOPPING AND DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES."**

*If you know of a veteran who needs help in in the North Staffordshire/ South Cheshire local areas, please call 01782 713963 or email [info@veteransupportcentre.org](mailto:info@veteransupportcentre.org) to find out more.*

## 5 QUESTIONS WITH...

# JANE JENNINGS

1

### WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?

I retired from casework in 2018 after almost 30 years but am still a member of SSAFA Gloucester, having received Life Branch Membership last year.

2

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT SSAFA?

I joined in 1990. I was a qualified social worker and at the time I didn't need to do the caseworker course and went straight out on cases unaccompanied. I did the course about four years later! I became Branch Secretary in 2001 and held the post for 10 years, doubling up as Training Officer. I also worked with the Adoption team in central office, placing five children in two placements. Plus, I was lucky enough to be a guinea pig for the SSAFA NVQ training to qualify caseworkers in Advice and Guidance, gaining Level 4 and Assessor's qualifications.

3

### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT YOUR ROLE?

Meeting such interesting people during my visits and hearing tales of their military life. I have one memory of a chap who was in the Merchant Navy, and when I asked the question about 'taken up from trade' active service, he confessed he that hadn't been, but that 'Portsmouth could be pretty dangerous on a Saturday night'! I enjoyed almonising and it enabled me to develop strong relationships with the various funds.



4

### HAVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY BEEN IN THE ARMED FORCES?

I served for several years in the Royal Naval Reserve (Sea Cadet Corps). My father, brother-in-law and nephew all served in the Navy. My grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great grandfather were all in the British Army, my great-great uncle was an Army Bandmaster and my great-aunt was in the Auxiliary Territorial Service and was awarded a military MBE after the war. Six generations of military service!

5

### WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE?

In terms of cases, probably when I raised over £20k for a specialised wheelchair for a chap injured in a motorbike accident, just after he left the Army. I am also proud of the fact that for around 10 years, Gloucestershire had a fully integrated SSAFA and Royal British Legion County Office. Re-organisations meant the closure of the office in 2013, but I still meet caseworkers who recall it with enthusiasm.

If you're a SSAFA volunteer or employee and wish to be featured, we'd love to hear from you.  
**Email [tellus@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:tellus@ssafa.org.uk)**



# WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PRINTING CHARITY

**SSAFA works in partnership with The Printing Charity to provide practical and emotional support to people of all ages who work, have retired from or are connected through immediate family to the UK printing, paper, publishing, packaging, and graphic arts sector.**

This partnership is important to both the charities' welfare and wellbeing work. The Printing Charity especially values the long-term association with SSAFA, where we have worked together to help people with a print and Armed Forces' connection. In some cases, The Printing Charity also part-fund grants with other organisations, co-ordinated by SSAFA.

Financial assistance can be provided for essential living expenses, as well as one-off grants for things like mobility aids, white goods, and home adaptations to help people live independently in their own homes.

**To find out more about how The Printing Charity can work with you as a SSAFA volunteer caseworker,**

**Email: [support@theprintingcharity.org.uk](mailto:support@theprintingcharity.org.uk)  
 Visit: [www.theprintingcharity.org.uk](http://www.theprintingcharity.org.uk)**

# DATES FOR YOUR

# DIARY 2020

ALL YEAR

## VIRTUAL MARATHON SERIES

This exciting new event will provide the opportunity to take on an incredible challenge and raise money for the Armed Forces and their families.

Whether you or anyone you know want to beat your fastest marathon time or take on the challenge with a team, there really is something for everyone.



## JSL PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS BATTLE PROMS PICNIC PARTY

2021  
JULY &  
AUGUST

### BATTLE PROMS

It was a shame that the Battle Proms concert series didn't go ahead this summer but SSAFA have been reconfirmed as charity partner and we are very excited to get back to the picnic concerts in 2021. If you'd like to book yourself a treat looking forward to next summer, tickets are available to purchase [here](#).

8  
NOVEMBER

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and in light of the risks posed, the annual Remembrance Sunday March Past the Cenotaph will not take place this year.

The Royal British Legion is encouraging people across the nations to ensure Remembrance Sunday is still marked appropriately by taking part in **remote and socially distanced Remembrance activity, whether that be watching the service on television or pausing for the Two Minute Silence in their home or on their doorsteps.**

2  
DECEMBER

## SSAFA CAROL CONCERT

The traditional London Carol Concert at the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks will not be taking place this year. The committee and Special Events team are however working on a virtual version, with a fundraising auction alongside; please look out for further details during November as this event will be open to all.

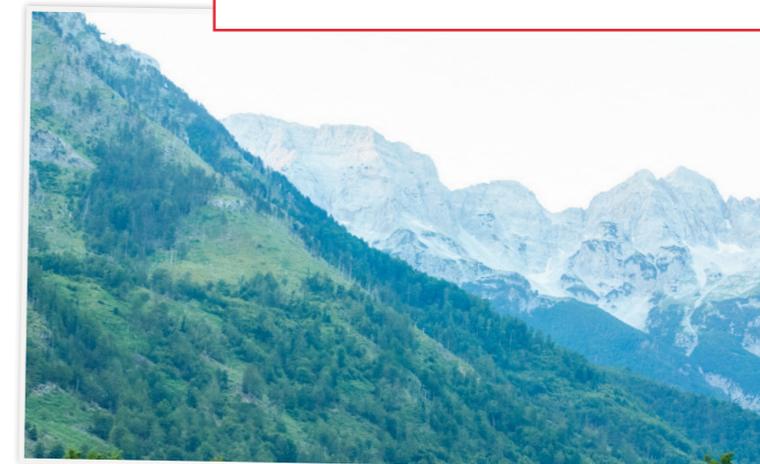


13  
JUNE 2021

## BALKANS TREK

This beautiful secret European trek will see you climb three of the highest peaks in the heart of the Balkans - Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia. This mountain area offers towering peaks and jagged ridges, pristine valleys and green meadows strewn with wild berries. We will be welcomed as guests into remote villages and shepherds' homes, witnessing cultures and traditions that have been preserved for centuries. Not to be missed!

[www.ssafa.org.uk/support-us/challenge-events/trek/trek-the-balkans-2021](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/support-us/challenge-events/trek/trek-the-balkans-2021)



2021  
SEPTEMBER

## RIDE TO THE SOMME

Get your bicycle ready and join us on a historical and beautiful ride through the Somme in France, providing a unique opportunity to discover the area's history, particularly the location of the Battle of the Somme. An historian will be with us during this three-day ride. You also have a choice of cycle rides, 50-miles-a-day or 75-miles-a-day. Join us today for the experience of a lifetime!

[www.ssafa.org.uk/support-us/challenge-events/cycle/ride-to-the-somme-2021](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/support-us/challenge-events/cycle/ride-to-the-somme-2021)



2020

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