FORCES FAMILY DAY AT COMPTON VERNEY ON SUNDAY 8 APRIL 2018

Created in Conflict: British Soldier Art from the Crimean War to Today

Compton Verney Art Gallery and Park is inviting serving personnel and veterans, and up to four family members, to visit Compton Verney for FREE on Sunday 8 April 2018. This is part of Compton Verney’s commitment to the local military community and the Armed Forces Covenant, which they signed last year.

It’s an opportunity for families to enjoy a day out exploring the grounds, playing in the forest playground, viewing the Created in Conflict exhibition, and generally enjoying all that Compton Verney has to offer. All you need to do is simply show your Armed Forces ID card, Veterans Badge or Defence Discount Service card on the day to receive your complimentary tickets.

‘Created in Conflict’ challenges perceptions about war and behaviour and presents a new dimension to soldiers’ experience, creativity and skills, working in partnership with the National Army Museum. With important loans from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Imperial War Museum, and the Museum of Military Medicine this exhibition will feature a rich variety of items including tankards made by soldiers in the trenches during World War I, game pieces carved by Prisoners of War during World War II, and toys and quilts made by convalescing soldiers as well as exhibits from conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The exhibition runs from 17 Mar - 10 Jun 2018 and throughout the exhibition paintings, photographs and insightful collaborations between veterans and contemporary artists will reflect the power of artworks to make us feel both better and worse about war.

Compton Verney also offers discounted entry for current and former UK Armed Forces personnel throughout the year on day tickets. For further information please visit the Compton Verney website.

Sapper Adam Williams painting a blast wall in Iraq © Nick Johns

The weight of duty © Anna Redwood

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescovenant
During 2017, Kineton Station celebrated 75 years of service to the country. Over the past 75 years Kineton Station has been supplying the military its ammunition, Ammunition Technicians and skills in Improvised Explosive Device Disposal. Built during World War II Kineton Station has met the challenges of the storage, supply and disposal of ammunition during a number of conflicts such as the Falklands, Gulf Wars and a number of UN missions around the world.

During this time Kineton Station has always been a part of the local community and, as a mark of the 75 years, undertook a 75 mile march broken down into sections in the weeks and months leading up to the formal celebrations. Soldiers and staff from Kineton Station visited towns and villages across south Warwickshire as part of the march.

During the weekend of 21-22 July there were a number of celebrations including a ‘Freedom of Warwick’ parade, an open day for veterans and former staff who have worked at Kineton Station and a Station ‘Open Day’ and ‘Party in the Park’. Although the weather was against the celebrations it didn’t dampen the enthusiasm of all those involved!

A community ‘Big Sleep Out’ in Leamington Spa raised over £13,500 for ‘Helping Hands Community Project’ a local charity supporting individuals and groups who are homeless, fleeing domestic violence or on low incomes. The ‘Big Sleep Out’ was supported by the CSW Covenant Team, Warwick District Council, soldiers from Kineton Station and other agencies. As part of the event there was recognition that some of those who are homeless are ex-Armed Forces personnel who have previously served the country and are in need of support.

The soldiers from the Ammunition Technician Support Group at Kineton Station supported participants in ensuring their shelters were good enough to cope with the overnight conditions and conducted ‘roving patrols’ throughout the night to ensure their safety.

Over 100 people attended the event and heard from local MP Matt Western on his plans to address homelessness in the area. More than 65 people slept out and emerged from their various ‘luxury’ abodes to enjoy a well earned cup of tea and bacon butty!

The Big Sleep Out 2018 is planned for 9 Nov to coincide with Armistice Day. For more information please contact helpinghandslwk@gmail.com.
Jesse was remembered for his service with the Royal Marines in the Special Boat Service, as a Policeman with Warwickshire Police and as an exemplar Veteran supporting many causes both military and civilian. Jesse was also a local swimming instructor and taught many people to swim. Jesse is also remembered as the “Voice of Remembrance” for his service as Parade Marshall at many Remembrance Parades across the Borough.
INTRODUCING

Nick Caswell: Ex Armed Forces Community Action Team Leader
Voluntary Action Coventry have secured funding through the MOD Covenant Fund to develop a project aimed at helping ex-Service personnel and their families integrate with civilian communities through the sharing of time, skills and resources as part of the Coventry4Good programme.

The project will bring people together to tackle local issues or to participate in joint activity where the skills and time volunteered by everyone involved are recognised and valued. Collaborating in this way will help overcome barriers that prevent Service leavers from gaining employment by increasing self-confidence, emotional wellbeing and providing opportunities to work and achieve in a civilian environment.

Nick Caswell, who served for 20 years with the Royal Corps of Signals, is the Ex Armed Forces Community Action Team Leader. Nick will be recruiting ex-Armed Forces personnel and their families onto the project and liaising with voluntary and community groups to identify suitable activities.

If you are ex-Armed Forces or part of the Armed Forces community and are interested in being part of the project then Nick would love to hear from you. You can contact Nick at n.caswell@vacoventry.org.uk or call 024 7622 0381.

Chris Mackie: Veterans Integration Project
I am the Co-ordinator for the Veterans Integration Project, which is based at the Veterans Contact Point in Nuneaton and covers Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull. I served for 5 years in the Royal Engineers and saw service in Northern Ireland, the Falklands and Beirut.

The project aims to provide Peer Support Volunteers working within the Veterans Contact Point and local Community Organisations. My role is to recruit, train and then co-ordinate the new volunteers in their various roles.

Since its launch on the 3rd July 2017, the Project has enlisted the services of 23 new volunteers through its normal channels and with the assistance of WCAVA. These volunteers have come from Leamington, Rugby, Tamworth and Nuneaton and are from both Veteran and Non Veteran backgrounds.

There is a comprehensive training programme for volunteers including Military Mental Health First Aid, Peer Support training and First Aid at Work.

If you are interested in joining the Veterans’ Integration Project then please call Chris on 07554 894911 or email chris@veteranscontactpoint.co.uk

NEW DEVELOPMENT PAYS TRIBUTE TO YOUNG SOLDIER FROM WW1

North Warwickshire Borough Council in partnership with Harper Group and Waterloo Housing Group has officially opened their new build development at Church Walk, Mancetter of 6 houses and 14 flats and paid tribute to a young soldier who lost his life during World War I.

The 14 flats have been named Joseph Cadman Court and the houses are situated on Cadman Close.

Joseph was born in 1893 in the ward of Mancetter and worked at the local stone quarry as a loader and also as a miner at Baddesley Collieries until he volunteered for the mining section of the Royal Corps of Engineers and he was stationed in France.

Sapper J J Cadman 132729 was killed on June 3rd 1917 in France/Flanders. His death was due to shell wounds received when going from his camp to his work. Joseph was a member of the 177th Tunnelling Company and was buried in Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery near Ypres in Belgium.

The development was officially opened by Brenda Hall (nee Cadman) who is 88 years of age and was the niece of Joseph and his eldest living relative. Brenda was joined by other members of Joseph’s family tree.

VETERAN’S RECOVERY AND WELLBEING WORKSHOPS

Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust (CWPT) Ex-Armed Forces Project are beginning an exciting new project with the Veterans Contact Point and the CWPT/Mind ‘Recovery and Wellbeing Academy’. The project is to create and deliver a brand new course/workshop specifically for Veterans. The course will have personal recovery, incorporating the following three elements, at its heart:

- Having control of your life and wellbeing
- Having opportunity to build a life beyond illness
- Having hope and belief that we can all pursue hopes and dreams

To get this project off the ground the Project Team need a group of veterans to come together to plan and create the course/workshop, which puts veterans at the heart of the process from the beginning. The group will bring ideas to discuss what veterans would like and, in a veteran’s opinion, what is needed from such a course/workshops to aid any veterans personal recovery. This could obviously involve family members and carers.

If you are interested please contact Nancy Tomlinson (CWPT Ex Armed Forces Pathway Manager) on 07771 984394 or Len Hardy (Veterans Contact Point) on 024 7634 3793.
AFC WEBSITE 2.0!

A great deal of work has gone into refreshing the local CSW Armed Forces Covenant website. This new version focuses on Regulars, Reserves, Veterans and their families in order to give them the info they need. It also includes information for professionals working with the Armed Forces community as well as information on the Covenant itself and MOD grants.

CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY FOR SOME OF OUR VETERANS

Some veterans within North Warwickshire and Nuneaton were given an early Christmas present this year in the form of a food hamper supplying fruit, vegetables, a turkey, crackers and some Christmas goodies.

This was part of a project run by Edible Links which is a partnership between the Healthy Living Network, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council and Ocado to help relieve pressure on people and families during the Christmas period.

Sonya Johnson, Manager of Healthy Living Network who manages the Edible Links project said that the feedback they have received is that recipients of the hampers appreciated that the project cared enough to prepare a hamper.

Peter Knight, Member of the Board of Trustees from Veterans Contact Point, stated it was an honour to be able to collect these hampers and deliver them to veterans nominated within the community. The veterans were very surprised by the generosity and wish to pass on their appreciation.

Edible Links are always looking for volunteers, if you have any time to spare, from as little as an hour, or you are looking to gain new skills and help you get back into work, why not try volunteering. If you are interested in finding out more, contact them by email on lrowley.ediblelinks@gmail.com or alternatively call Bill Mc Cann on 01827 719220 or Sonya Johnson on 07789 512230.

FORCES FOR WARMTH

Fuel poverty charity National Energy Action (NEA) has launched a designated energy advice and support service for serving and ex-Service personnel and their families across England and Wales. A survey by the Royal British Legion found that a significant number of the ex-Service community over the age of 65 had experienced fuel poverty, and many simply couldn’t afford to replace essential items such as cookers and boilers if they broke down.

This new service, Forces for Warmth, which has official recognition from the MOD, works directly with Service and ex-Service personnel and their families to provide in-depth tailored energy advice, practical support, and access to a crisis fund to help with heating and energy efficiency measures where eligible.

As well as supporting client referrals, NEA also provide training for welfare staff from the Royal British Legion and other support agencies.

Key to the success of Forces for Warmth is getting the message out that NEA is here to support those in need. To this end, NEA are able to talk to groups, attend events, set up advice surgeries and more. If you need individual advice & support or would like someone to address your group, please contact Andy Littlewood at NEA on 07834 178975 or email forcesforwarmth@nea.org.uk.

LEARN ALL ABOUT IT!

A collaborative project from the Covenant Team in CSW has produced 3 more e-learning modules on the Armed Forces Covenant aimed at particular audiences. The first module aimed at Frontline Workers is being used by over 20 different Local Authorities up and down the country. A module focused on the issue of Housing and Homelessness affecting the Armed Forces community has now been produced along with modules directed at Armed Forces personnel themselves and Families of Armed Forces personnel.

These e-learning modules involve a range of partner agencies including Rear Admiral Simon Williams CVO, Royal Navy, Dr. Dan Barnard from Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust, Jane Grant from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Jenny Ward and colleagues from the Naval, Army and RAF Families Federations.

The modules are available for organisations to use. Please contact afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk for more information. Individuals can access the modules at http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescovenant#learning

The modules will also be available on the MOD Armed Forces Covenant website.
THE VETERANS ON HAND TO HELP AND READY TO LISTEN

Established to be the first point of contact for support, Veterans’ Gateway is a new service connecting veterans, their families and their carers, to the right organisations who can help on a range of issues including housing, finance, mental health and employment.

Still in its first year, this new 24-hour service for Armed Forces veterans comprises of an expert network of organisations that support the Armed Forces community.

With a team of knowledgeable advisers the £2 million project is to be the first point of contact, directing a range of issues including housing, financial and welfare issues to specialist charities and organisations.

Veterans can get in touch via a 24-hour online chat, phone and text service as well as via email. Amongst the specially trained operators providing help and guidance, are a number of veterans who are using their own knowledge of transiting from service life to civvy street to help others.

Craig Slicker, a 43 year-old former Lance Corporal in the Army, left the infantry in 2013 having been made redundant. After 17-years’ service he found the transition to “Civvy Street” incredibly difficult but, unaware of what support services were out there, did not reach out to any charities for guidance. He believes Veterans’ Gateway will be a great help for others like him struggling to adapt to life outside the military.

Craig said: “When I was told I was leaving, I had to think what next and after being in the Army so long, it was a shock to the system. I didn’t know what I could do or what I wanted to do, or where I could turn for advice. A service like Veterans’ Gateway would have been hugely helpful because I had no idea how to find out what support was available to me.

Stacey Hodnett grew up in a forces family and loved the camaraderie of military life so joined up and spent 19 years in the British Army. She was diagnosed with PTSD in 2014 and was medically discharged the following year. It was only when she was talking to a friend that getting help was suggested to her and that made her realise she needed to seek support.

Stacey said “In the beginning I was not aware of what help was out there and how I could go about getting that help, to be honest I grinned and bared it for a long time because I didn’t know where to turn.”

Because the service enables people to talk, type or even text questions the operators do the rest so accessing the right help isn’t as overwhelming. Stacey says “Veterans’ Gateway means that people like myself won’t be alone, the right help isn’t as overwhelming. Stacey says “Veterans’ Gateway is worth its weight in gold. A lot of people in the forces are clueless about what help is out there – it’s a fantastic idea.”

Veterans’ Gateway is available to you whether you’re in day one of your new life on Civvy street or if in weeks, months or even years down the line you are in need of help and advice. Whether there is a simple question you need answering or you have a case that may need specialist care, contact the service and our experts will do the rest.

To contact Veterans’ Gateway
Call: 0808 802 1212
Visit: www.veteransgateway.org.uk
Text: 81212
Ray Turner’s world was turned upside down in 2009 when he was suddenly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis – a neurological condition with a variety of symptoms such as fatigue, vision and mobility problems. The condition meant forklift driver Ray had to give up work and was left wheelchair-bound 18 months after being diagnosed and over time he was not able to push himself around, neither could his wife Jill following a knee operation.

Desperate for help, Ray, who served in the 3rd Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers between 1971 and 1977, approached SSAFA – a charity which provides lifelong care to those who have served in the British Armed Forces.

A qualified SSAFA volunteer caseworker visited Ray in his home to assess the situation, Ray’s service history, non-service work history and his financial situation. SSAFA worked with a range of organisations to raise funds for a lightweight electronic wheelchair, stair lift and holiday for Ray and his wife. This took some time and SSAFA kept Ray up to speed and assisted with the process of purchasing and installing the equipment.

As a goodwill gesture, Ray and his wife Jill were part of 30 SSAFA volunteers collecting donations at Wasps Aviva Premiership clash with Newcastle Falcons at the Ricoh Arena on Saturday, November 18. The fundraising is part of Wasps’ 150th anniversary celebrations, where they are raising money for SSAFA, who are one of the club’s official charity partners.

Ray, 60, from Wood End, said: “SSAFA has been amazing and were there for me when I needed them most, so fundraising for them is the very least I can do.

“Things got so bad that when my wife & I went to the supermarket, I would have to stay in the car and wait for her. Now with the electronic wheelchair I can go anywhere I like on my own as it is light enough for me to lift.

“Words can’t express just how grateful my family & I are for what SSAFA has done for us and we are determined to help raise funds for them so that other veterans like me can receive the same type of help when they need it.

Kevin Bowman who is the County Secretary for SSAFA Warwickshire and Coventry branch which reached out to help Ray added: “Ray’s story typifies the great lengths we go to as a charity to help our current and former Armed Forces personnel.”

“Every penny we raise goes towards helping to change somebody’s life, whether it’s helping with relationship breakdowns or debt and homelessness through to health, social care and mentoring services, so we’d urge as many people as possible to donate where they can.”

To donate to SSAFA and Wasps’ two other official charity partners, as part of the club’s 150th anniversary season, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/wasps-rugbyclub.

If you need help you can contact the local Warwickshire and Coventry branch via warwickshire@ssafa.org.uk or by telephoning 01926 491317 or by post to 41A Smith Street, Warwick, CV34 4JA.
The Veterans’ Gateway is the first point of contact for veterans seeking support.

Call 0808 802 1212
Speak to an advisor in our contact centre. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Live chat
Connect with an advisor online.

Text us on 81212
Send us your details to request a call back.

Email
Get advice and support from an advisor by email.

www.veteransgateway.org.uk

Exciting opportunity to get involved in creating a brand new course for Veterans wellbeing

The course will have personal recovery for Veterans at its heart, incorporating the following three elements:

- Having control of your life and wellbeing
- Having opportunity to build a life beyond illness
- Having hope and belief that we can all pursue hopes and dreams

First we need Veterans to give their viewpoint to aid with the course content, making it relevant for Veterans.

If you would like to get involved please contact Nancy Tomlinson (CWPT Ex Armed Forces Pathway Manager) on 07771 984394 or Len Hardy (Veterans Contact Point) on 024 7634 3793 for further information.

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