

exposure

August 2022

The combined magazine for the nuclear community

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What we have learnt from the study so far

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Foreword

Welcome to this years summer Exposure magazine, the official magazine of the Nuclear Community Charity Fund.

At this moment we face uncertain times, the cost of living crisis is hitting us all, and record high fuel costs have been announced. With this in mind we have provided a guide that may help some who face financial difficulties. Don't forget that if you are a Nuclear veteran or descendant you can apply to the Care Wellbeing and Inclusion Fund, if you have a specific need. We have placed an ad on the inside back cover of this issue explaining the fund and how to contact the NCCF for an application form.

In future editions we would like to publish more stories from you our readership. If you have a story that you'd like to have published then don't hesitate to get in touch with us. Our December edition will feature an article on self publishing for anyone who's interested in telling their story to the world.

In the issue we also feature an important article from the CHRC at Brunel University, Genetic and Cytogenetic Family Trio Study. It explains what the study has shown so far and what is next.

We hope you enjoy reading the magazine.

Editor - Exposure

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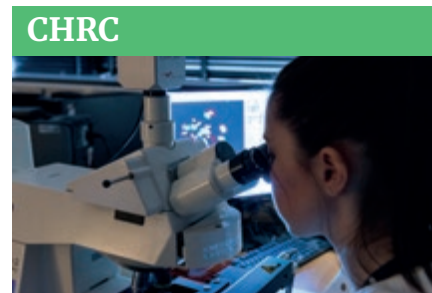


NCCF

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CHRC

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exposure

The Nuclear Community
Charity Fund



Making that difference

CHRC

Centre for Health Effects of Radiological and Chemical Agents



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WW2 Evacuees

In late summer 1939, the order came to send children away. Around the country mothers didn't know when they would see their children again. It was named operation Pied Piper.

In September 1939 my twin brother Terry and I arrived at our school, Parkhill Ilford. We each carried a small suitcase carrying our clothes, toothbrushes and gas-mask. When we arrived at school there were coaches waiting for us, and we thought that we were going on a coach trip. Then one of the teachers told us that we were going on a long Journey by train, we could not understand why a lot of the parents were crying!

We got onto the coaches and arrived at Paddington Station, and were then put onto a stream train and off to a journey that was to change our lives for ever.

During the journey I was looking out of one of the windows to look at a train that was coming from the opposite direction, when it went past our train the rush of air took my cap off of my head and that's the last I saw of it. I cried because I thought that I'd be in trouble for losing it, I often wonder who found it.

After a very long journey we arrived at Taunton in Somerset, around 30 of us were taken onto a coach and after half an hour we arrived at Cothelstone Manor, a large country house going back to SAXON times. It was only then I noticed that my brother was not with us.

I was not all that bothered as I thought that he would arrive on the next coach, but he never did turned up. We were led into a large dormitory where we ate as well as slept.



Ken Grainger / Cothelstone Manor and Church of St Thomas / CC BY-SA 2.0

The manor house had large grounds and lovely gardens where we'd spend most of the time as well as walking the local lanes. I still have a scar on my knee to this day as a reminder of my time there, when I won the longest jump down the steps to the entrance to the Mansion. My teeth ended up embedded in my knee.

After a week or so my Mother arrived with my Brother, was I glad to see them again! I was taken to the village Hatch Beauchamp where my brother was staying. We stayed with a Mr and Mrs Newman who were a nice couple who lived in a council house with their son Dick. Dick was older than us and went out to work, while we went to school.

The head teacher at our school was a Miss Brown, we spent a lot of the time roaming the country side, picking wild strawberries along the railway bank (it had a railway station in those days), occasionally we would travel to Taunton on the train.

One night in June 1941, several Berman bombs dropped locally. One landed in a school playground in the next village, and blew the school to bits, thankfully no-one living in the school, the only other damage was a few windows and doors blown out in nearby cottages with a few of the occupants had cuts and bruises. Another bomb landed beside the railway line a couple of miles away and another one in open farm land.

Most evenings you would see the German Bombers flying overhead on the way to bomb Bristol and Bath and Yeovil, they would drop silver strips of paper to try and disrupt the radar, it would be hanging from the trees and phone lines. The bombers made a loud droning noise, you could see the German crosses on the planes, some of the farmers used to fire their shotguns at the planes, and one chap who was in the Home Guard would fire his Sten-gun at them, I don't know where he got his bullets from?

A few days after this bombing raid our Mother came and took us back to Essex again as their was very few bombs being dropped there. After a few weeks the bombing in Essex was getting worse, so mother took us back to Somerset again, we arrived at the village of Wrantage. My mothers friend Mrs King was taking her boys back to Essex so my brother and I replaced them, but in the mean time we had to stay temporarily with Mr and Mrs Ernest Dove at "Newport Manor" which was a large country house, with a Chauffeur, Gardener, also a maid, they also had a games room and stables.



"Uncle" Edmond Duke



"Auntie" May Duke



Dukes Cottage

About a week or so later we were taken on the back of Mr Dove, and his Daughters bikes, they couldn't take us in their Rover car as they had no petrol. We were taken to a Mr and Mrs Edmond Duke, (Uncle Ed and Auntie May), they lived in an old cottage which was about 200 years old, it was built of cob walls with a thatch roof, it was warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Uncle Ed was a stone mason and Auntie May used to be a post girl and also a cook (and what a good one she was), after we had been there for about twenty minutes the front door opened and in walked a boy of about seven, this is David! Auntie May said, he is also staying here with us, and is also an evacuee. David had come from Plaistow also in Essex, he had had several billets before coming to Auntie May's, and was not treated very well at some of them, she felt sorry for him so took him in, now she had three evacuees to look after. This was a hard job as the cottage had no electric and the toilet was about fifty yards down the garden. Once coming from the toilet a posh lady who was visiting said to uncle Ed I noticed that there was no lock on the door and Uncle Ed with a dead pan face said "we've been here for over 20 years now and no one has taken a bucket of s--t yet!

There was an open range fire with a oven which all of the cooking was done, the fire had to be kept going all the time, and the kettle was always on it. At Christmas time Auntie May would be busy making Christmas cakes and made about a dozen for various people in the village as well as Christmas puddings, with silver coins in them (we would have two or three helpings just to get the silver coins). I used to help her ice the cakes, and after a while I got quite good at it. We liked Christmas and would go up in the woods and get a Christmas tree, holly and mistletoe. We also made paper chains to decorate the cottage.

The garden was about a third of an acre, which produced all of our fruit and veg. Auntie May would make jam from the Strawberry's, Blackberries, Plums, Gooseberry's, and Blackcurrants. There were also a few fruit trees in the garden Victoria plums, greengages, as well as apples we were self sufficient with all the produce from the garden. When we were older we had to help out in the garden doing one hours gardening after school before we could go out to play. Once after school we had to put some cabbage plants, as we were eager to go out to play, we put them as quickly as we could.

When Uncle saw them he made us put them in all again as the rows were not straight enough for him.

We would saw up logs for the fire with a cross-cut saw, Dave and myself were very good at it, we could saw through a large tree trunk in one go without stopping. When a farmer had trees taken down you could buy one for ten shillings, and they would deliver it for you in a farm wagon. We began to be quite adept at tasks in the garden, I was responsible for cutting the privet hedge which went up and down like the Loch Ness monster. There was a well in the garden where all the water for the garden was drawn. We made our own liquid manure with chicken droppings, you put the droppings into a sack and submerge it into water into a metal container, (we used the liner from an old boiler), after about a week or so the liquid manure which you diluted with water would be ready to use. I was responsible for collecting the milk from the farm about half a mile away. I only spilt the milk once and that was on a cold frosty morning when it slipped out of my hands. I had to go back to the farm for some more milk.



Terry and Tony

When the weather was bad we played indoor games like snakes & ladders, draughts, cards and ludo. We played cricket and football with the local lads in the fields, and spent many an hour in the woods, making hideouts and playing cowboys and Indians

The kettle was always on the boil at Auntie May's. When any tradesmen called such as the baker, butcher, and the Indian gentleman who travelled around on his bike selling handkerchiefs and silk scarves, Auntie May would give all of them a cup of tea and a piece of her home made cake, it was more like a cafe than a cottage.

Uncle Ed had served in the army during the First World War and was a now a sergeant in the Home Guard. We and some of the local lads would watch them every week when they were on manoeuvres. We liked to watch them when they were on the rifle range. They had a man "who was a crack shot" who would teach them how to shoot. Uncle Ed would bring home a lot of the Home Guard equipment to look after, we found a smoke bomb amongst it one day and let it off in the garden, it caused a traffic jam in the village.

One time when we were watching the Home Guard training there was a hay-rick which was on fire nearby, several of the Home Guard and ourselves went to try and put the fire out.



Dave

Uncle Ed burnt his Home Guard trousers in trying to put the fire out, he was really angry about it, its the only time that I have seen him so angry as he was such a mild mannered man. Uncle Ed he had a hard but simple life, beside gardening, he was also the village cricket clubs umpire. In the evening he loved to listen to the radio and when Lord Haw-Haw was on we were not allowed to speak. He had a tin of boiled sweets next to his armchair and most evenings would have a half pint of home-brew beer, but never went to the pub.

The cottage was at a crossroads and there were rumours of ghosts. One dark evening I had a strange encounter, I was walking down a country lane towards the cottage when I saw a figure approaching me, wearing an old fashioned cloak. When they were level with me I said good evening but received no answer. As I turned around the figure was no longer there it had disappeared. I mentioned this to the locals they all seem to know about it, claiming they had also seen it. We would often see a figure in a white sheet around the cottage, we would all run in doors and tell Auntie May what we had seen. It was quite some time later that we found out that it was uncle Ed having a game with us.

Opposite the cottage was a patch of grass and two or three times a year Romany Gypsies would come and stay there for a week.

They lived in a barrel-top caravan pulled by horses and would come to the cottage for water and old tins such as corn beef etc. They made Dolly pegs that were used for hanging the washing on the line and used thin strips of tin to tack around the pegs. Auntie May would get all of her pegs from them, they made other things as well. Us boys would sit around their fire for hours watching them, Dolly pegs are quite collected now, sometimes they would get their horse shod by the local village blacksmith Ted Spiller.

Once a fortnight when we where at school we would go to Taunton for woodwork lessons, we would travel by a local private bus company called Hutchings and Cornelius which was nicknamed Hot & Cold. The woodwork teacher would throw your woodwork at you if it was not correct, he would often throw tools at you as well.

Americans

We came in contact with the Americans on quite a few occasions, and got quite friendly with some of them, I can still remember some of their names, (Garza, Chuck and Butch). The USAAF Station AAF-464 at Isle Abbotts renamed Merryfield.

At the airfield there were up to seventy C47s planes and gliders dispersed on the airfield, which was about three to four miles from Wrantage. We and some of the village lads would cycle there from time to time and help them to unload and load up the planes. Wounded soldiers were flown from the war in Europe to the airfield and then taken to the 6th general hospital in Taunton, which was built by the Americans, now called Musgrove hospital.

When the Americans were filling in the canal at Wrantage with bulldozers to level a field for a local farmer, we spent hours watching them. They would give us gum, butter, and jam etc.

On one occasion an American Tank-Carrier had driven onto the grass verge outside our cottage to let a RAF lorry by, but the weight of the Tank carrier broke the pipes underneath it that carried the ditch water. It was stuck there for about three days until the engineers came along to recover it, Auntie May supplied them with tea and cakes until they had finished.

On another occasion we saw an American convoy that had stopped for a break outside our cottage. It was a hot July day, there was a knock at the front door and standing there were two Americans privates. They asked if they could have a drink of water. Auntie May replied she had something better than that and gave them a bottle of her potent home made elderberry wine! Twenty minuets later a loud voice bellowed where did get that from, they had both got quite intoxicated through drinking it, "you will both be on a charge when we get back to camp a sergeant said". They had to get another driver to drive their Jeep back to camp.

Quite often that the Americans would get drunk on Somerset cider in the local pubs, it was quite cheap at about 3p to 4p a pint, and the Americans had plenty on money to spend. All you could get in the pubs during the war was beer or cider, occasionally the landlord would have a bottle or two of spirit's, but it would only last a couple days, once word got around.

I once fell into a canal while throwing large rocks into it from a wooden bridge. I lifted a heavy one above my head to throw into the canal but I followed it in when I lost my balance. As my head came up I heard Dave say that was a big one Tone, little did he realize that it was me that had fallen into the water as well. On getting out I noticed that I had lost one of my shoes in the water, so Dave lent me his shoes to walk back to Auntie May's. It's a good job that the Italian prisoners of war taught us how to swim in the River Isle.

We would come across them helping out on the farms etc, I can remember us having an apple fight with them once, when they were picking up cider apples on a local farm.

We went to the village school, (the village hall, which was an old army hut from WW1), it was also used for dances and other functions, such as whist-drives. I can remember us going to whist drives when we were about 13, there would be quite a few whist-drives just before Christmas time. The prizes were mainly goose, chicken, turkey, pheasant and pheasant. The villagers would take it quite seriously as they were keen on winning. If they did manage to win It would solve their Christmas dinner, as you would only have poultry at Christmas time. At one whist-drive, Dave and I were sitting at the same table but with different partners. Dave's partner had already won the trick for them, but Dave who was the last one to go and couldn't follow suit. Instead of throwing away a low card of another suit down, he stood up and slapped the ace of trumps down and said "that's mine Kiddy". With that his pensioner partner got up and was about to hit Dave over the head with his walking stick, we managed to restrain him just in time.

The School had been bombed several weeks previously, but we also had to move as you only stayed their until you reached eleven. We had to make our own way over to our next school over in the village of North Curry two miles away.

One lunch time while at school in the village hut, several of us boys ventured about 200yds down the road and went into an orchard. They had various types of apples, Morgan-sweet, Tom Puts, Cox, Beauty-of-Bath, cookers, cider apples, as well as pears and plums trees. In the middle of the orchard was a Barn, we all went in to have a look inside and found some barrels.

One of the lads pushed the bung in at the top of the barrel and said look all the barrels were full of cider! I then noticed that up in the loft there was some straw which farms used for thatching their ricks with, so we got some and used the straws to suck up the cider from the barrel. We had to help one or two of the boys back to the school, as they were quite intoxicated. When we got back to the school one of the boys sisters told one of the teachers what we had done and the teacher then marched those of us weren't intoxicated, back to the farm to apologise to the farmer. We were expecting the worse but the farmer Mr Whittle said you have been naughty boys don't do it again.

About five years later Uncle Ed and myself were doing some building work on the same farm as I was working for him then and the farmer remembered me as one of the boys who had drunk some of the cider. He said I can remember the day the teacher brought you lads back to apologise to me, and said I was not a bit annoyed with you boys, in fact I found it difficult to keep a straight face. I thought that it was really ingenious how you boys managed to get the cider out of the barrel, and with that said my cider cellar is down there on the left help yourself to it.

We would spend hours roaming the fields and woods, playing at cowboys and Indians, also we would catch fish in the streams and ponds such as minnows, sticklebacks and newts. Another hobby that all the boys had was collecting birds eggs, and we would only take one egg from each nest, I think that we had about eighty in our collection. I remember climbing the cliffs at Seaton Hole to get some seagulls eggs, but I had to climb up them twice as the first egg that I had put into my shirt pocket, had broken on climbing down. I had to climb all the way up the cliff again to get another egg. When I go past the cliff's these days I wonder how I ever climbed up them.

In the next village Curry Rivel, high above the village stood a tall column, called Pynsent Monument. It was 140 feet tall with a ledge on the top and we would go there often to play and climb up to the top of it. The top was a ledge about 24in's wide, we would take our bikes up there and ride them around and sometimes do hand stands on the ledge.

We would pick cowslips and elderberries for making wine, and primroses, blackberries, wild strawberries, field mushrooms, as well as hazel nuts and chestnuts. I would climb up the chestnut tree and jump onto the branches so that the nuts would fall to the ground, Terry and Dave would collect them. Once when I was jumping on a branch it broke and I came crashing down but fortunately managed to cling to a branch near the bottom of the tree. Auntie May would make wine from the cowslips, and elderberries, as well as wine from some of the garden produce, (parsnips, rhubarb, etc), what a lot of people do not know is that besides cowslips you occasionally would come across an Oxslip which is larger and darker than an cowslip, they would stick up in the field like a sore thumb. When we saw one we would all rush to see who could get to it first, I would win nine times out of ten. We would also catch the odd rabbit, pigeon and eels which would help to supplement our war rations. If we were lucky we might get a pheasant, one could live quite comfortable off the land in the country side. We also got quite good at making things such as catapults, bows and arrows, slings, and kites in Uncles Ed's shed.

Another country pastime was to catch eels with worms, which was called 'Clatting', you would do this after heavy rain fall, which would make the water in streams/ rivers muddy, to catch them would involve getting large worms about six to eight would be enough. With a large needle threaded with wool you would thread it through the worms, join the ends of the wool together then fold it over a few times.

You'd then tie them onto a pole or stick and with a weight such as a large nut or a lump of lead, put it on the end of the string then put the worms into the muddy water. When you caught one they would give a sharp tug, you could then gently lift it out of the water and shake it into a bucket. The first one I caught I flicked it over my head and it landed about 10 yards behind me. The amazing thing is that they would make their way back towards the water, they must have built in radar as they seem to know which way the water is. They are very difficult to pick up with your hands from the ground as they are so slippery. An old local man (Jack Duke) who would sometimes be sitting next to us clatting, but he would catch about six eels to our one. I noticed that he had a piece of wire running up his pole when I asked him what it was for he said! "It's an lighting conductor" but to this day I still do not have a clue what that wire was for. I have a theory that the reason that he caught more eels than us could be to do with putting something like aniseed on his worms to attract the eels.

During the school holidays and at weekends and sometimes in the evenings we would help out on the farms, mainly for Mr Richards at Hammons Farm. We would do most of the things on the farm such as cleaning out the cow stalls, feeding the animals, working in the fields, and even driving the tractor.

We would help put on harnesses on the horses and take the horse and putt into the fields and load it up with various things, such as mangos and logs. Jack Richards had a pony and cart and used to deliver milk and eggs to the village of North Curry. The customers would bring their jugs out which would be filled with milk from a brass churn which had a tap at the bottom of it. Later he had milk bottles for the customers, as well as the school. Us boys used to fill the bottles with milk when we worked on the farm during the holidays and at weekends.

On school holidays and weekends Terry would go with Mr Richards to deliver the milk and eggs. On one occasion Mr Richards told Terry to take the pony and cart onto the next customer while he was dealing with another one, unfortunately Terry went to close to a grass bank and the large cart wheel went up the bank and the milk cart turned over on its side. There was milk and broken eggs all over the road they had to go back to the farm to get some more.

During the harvest everyone would help the farmers to get the crops in, even the village policeman would help, (every village had one in those days). Some farmers would bring a cream tea onto the field's in the evening for the helpers also the cider jar which would be handed around. One local farmer had two or three Land girls working for him and he never had any trouble in getting help during the harvest time, Dave had a soft spot for one of them her name was Lilly, she later married a farmer and had a son, Dave managed to track her down in the 1980's.

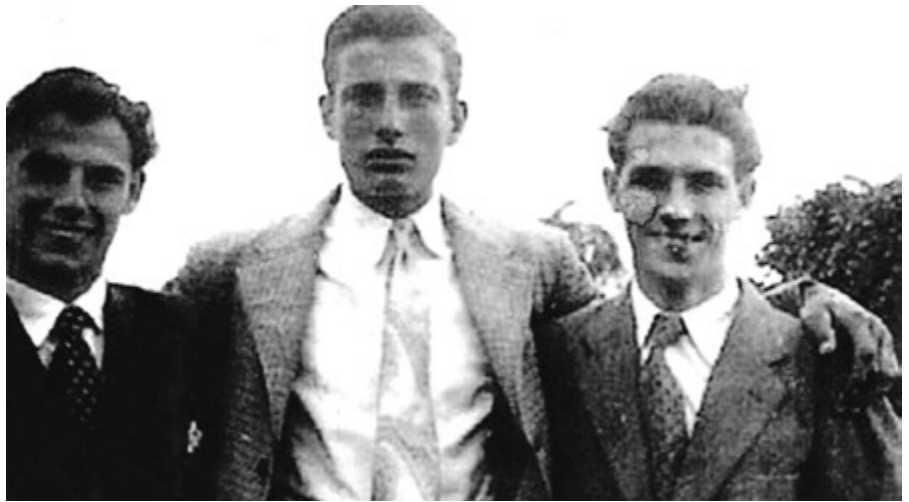
We would help to load the farm wagons with corn sheaves, and also help out on building the ricks, I have one interesting story about thrashing on one of the ricks, Terry Dave and myself were working on a farmers rick, (Mr Totterdells), some farmers would put wire netting around the rick when they were thrashing, this was to stop the rats from getting away. There could be up to two to three hundred rats in one rick), they would also be a couple of terriers around the rick as well. We were working on the rick one day and were near the bottom of it, when there was a lot of blood around we all thought that someone had put his pick into a rat, but a few minutes later Terry turned white, as the blood was coming from him. He that had put the pick through his boot and into a vein in his foot, right opposite across the road was the Canal Inn, they took Terry over to the pub and the landlord gave him a brandy, and then took him to have it stitched up.

Sadly the pub is no longer there (it closed in 2008), up to then my brother could probably have been the only person to have got a free drink there.

Mr Richards son Jack had an old 1930's Wolseley car and occasionally he would take us to Beer (a fishing village in Devon), to go mackerel fishing. We did manage to catch a few mackerel from time to time. Most Saturdays he would take us to Taunton cattle market we would dress up in breeches and leggings and looked like young farmers, he was quite proud of us.

It was quite a dangerous job working on farms and there were quite a few accidents, Jack Richards was gored by their bull once, and he broke his arm when trying to start up his tractor with the starting handle and it back kicked on him. I nearly had an accident once on the farm, I was riding the cob horse back from the fields there was no saddle on it I was riding it bareback, at walking pace at first but then the cob started to get into a trot and then a gallop. As he came into the farm yard I could see that the five-bar gate which led out onto the road was shut, I thought that if it tried to jump it I would bound to fall off but I managed to stop him just in time and got off ok, I then noticed that the strap around his tummy was undone, I have often wondered if it had come undone on its own or someone had undone it? When the farmer and his son come running into the farm yard they were so relieved to see that I was still in one-piece.

The time that I liked the best was when they were harvesting, cutting the corn, barley and oats. It was very exciting, when they got near to the centre of the field with only a small strip of corn left to cut, sometimes there would be rabbits running every where or hiding in the corn especially when there was not much corn left to cut. As many as a hundred rabbits could be in one field of corn. Most farmers would give you a couple of rabbits if you caught any, but there was one farmer who would



Terry, David and Tony

not let you have any. I remember one time that there were only two rabbits in his corn field, and I managed to catch both of them. The farmer would not give me one, so after that if we caught any rabbits in that farmers fields while he was cutting the corn, we would hide them either under a hedge, then go back later after dark to retrieve them.

Some farmers did not like you in their fields at any time and they would set their dogs onto you, but the dogs never got me, but I think they did get Terry and Dave a couple times. If you came across and gate or hedge when you were being chased by the dogs, you either had to jump over it or go through it, I think that's why I was so good at running and jumping. I used to win everything at the school sports, 100 Yards Dash, High Jump, Long Jump and Hurdles, Terry won the slow bicycle race.

In the summer of 1946, my last year at school, we decided to finish our education in Somerset, even though the war had ended. Several schools were competing against each other for a cup. After having won all of my events, and with only the girls and boys relay to come, we were level on points with another school. I told our head teacher Mr Johns that I could not run in the relay as we had to be home by 6pm, he begged me to run in the relay and would come back to Mr and Mrs Duke to explain if we were late back. Mr

Johns persuaded the other schools to run the boys race first and the girls race after the boys. Our boys won their race. I came home without knowing if we had won the cup or not, while we were at home having our tea there was a knock on the door and Mr Johns was standing there with the cup in his hands, he apologized to Mr and Mrs Duke for us being late home, he thanked me for staying for the boys race and said that the girls had also won their race.

When we reached eleven we had to go to the school at North Curry, which was over two miles away, we used to walk there at first and used to meet other children on the way. Most of them had bikes to ride to school, so we decided that it would be best for us to get ourselves some bikes so we could ride with them. I was lucky as I had a bike given to me but it was a heavy 1920's model, the make was an Armstrong, its probably a collectors item by now. I think that Dave's mother bought him one, but Terry didn't have one, so we decided to get him one.

In the summer months in the evenings and at weekends the three of us would go out picking blackberries and sell them for between 5p and 6p a pound, about 2p to 3p in today's money. It was difficult getting bikes during the war, as new ones were not being made, and second hand ones were very expensive, but we did manage to get him a second-hand one for £7 and 10 shillings,

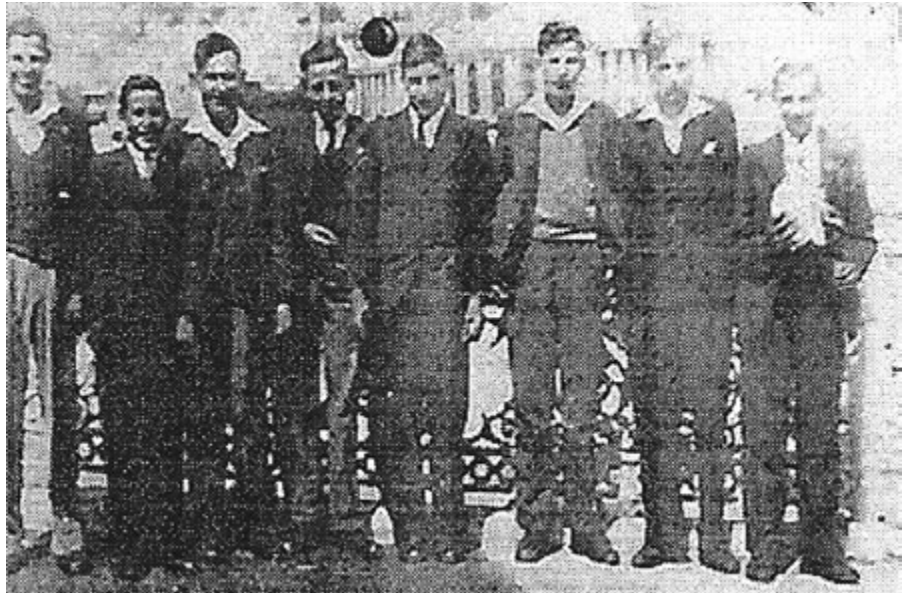
about a farms workers wage for about a week and a half. It took a couple of days to learn to ride them and Terry slightly longer. While he learning he fell into a ditch which was outside a farm and was full of effluent that had discharged from the farm. He had to have a good bath when he got back.

We had a lot of fun with our bikes over the years, and learnt how to do tricks on them, we travelled miles on them, but it was hard work riding bikes with no gears. When we reached fourteen we bought ourselves new bikes which were just arriving in the shops, so we bought one each, they had three speed gears which made it a lot easier for going up hills.

We were made to cleaned them every weekend, we got on fine with the local boys and we would ride miles on our bikes with them, about eight to ten of us would cycle to Weston-Super-Mare, Seaton, Pollock and Minehead. We did have an accident once when one of the boys who was in the front fell off, and we all piled up on top of him. I was lucky as I was also at the front, and did not fall off. We all carried on with only a few cuts and bruises and arrived at our destination which that day was Weston-Super-Mare.

There as a lot of flooding in the village at winter times or when we had heavy rain, when the roads flooded we would come home from school at North Curry the long way around which was over a mile further, at the bottom of a long hill "Newport hill" the road would be flooded for about 100yds. We would come down the hill as fast as we could put our feet on the handlebars when we reached the water and see who could go the furthest. After about 20/30yds our bikes would come to a stop. We then had to pedal through the rest of the flood getting our feet wet.

We also had a youth under 15 football team and all of the team would have to cycle to the away matches, which could be up to ten miles away.



Dave and myself and village lads at Weston 1946.

We held dances and raffles to get the money for football shirts and balls etc. On Sunday evenings the lads would go to the pictures in Taunton, about five miles away. On the way back from the pictures, some of the lads decided to have a race. Dave and another lad, whose name I have forgotten, were leading in the front riding with their heads on the wrong side of the road and not looking where they were going and also going around a corner when they collided with a 1930's Morris Minor car. One of them went through the front windscreen and the other one took the wing off the car, they both ended up in Taunton Hospital. The occupants of the car were shaken but not injured, Dave and the other lad had cuts and bruises and one of them had a broken arm. I think that the car was a write off, while the bikes were badly damaged. We managed to repair Dave's in time for him to use when he we released from Hospital.

Most people in the country during the war went to chapel on Sundays, and we went twice, once in the morning and in the evening. We also went to Sunday school in the afternoon. One Sunday we were early for chapel some of the local boys were playing football in the field behind, so we decided to join them.

After a while we heard them singing the first hymn, so we decided rather than be late not to go to chapel, and carried on playing football. The next day it was all over the village that we had missed going to chapel, we might of got away with it but the lady who played the organ mentioned it to Auntie May when she saw her the next day. We didn't get into trouble and Auntie May and Uncle Ed decided that we need only go to chapel on Sunday mornings. On some Sundays we would cycle with the Dukes to Uncle Ed's sister Mable, who lived in the next village at North Curry where would all go the chapel there. Afterwards we'd would go to Uncle Ed's sisters for tea. Occasionally all five of us Auntie May, Uncle Ed, and ourselves, would cycle to Auntie Mays sister who lived in Porlock, about 25 miles away. We'd have tea there and ride back. The roads were empty during the war, and had hardly any traffic on them, also not many people had cars in those days, and if you did had a car you couldn't get petrol for it.

In the 40's we had quite a few bad winters, during one I think that it was 1945/46, we had about 18in's of snow overnight and had to walk to school. It took us quite a while to walk the two miles there and when we arrived it was closed and stayed closed for two or three weeks.

On another occasion all of our class had to write out a hundred lines. The ceiling's were very high with dark boards and if you looked carefully you would see dozens of pens stuck into it. Pens in those them days had a wooden handle with a steel nib. Several of us boys were throwing our pens up into the ceiling when someone called out the head master, Mr Johns, was coming. As he was walking through the classroom one of the pens fell out and landed on the floor in front of him, so hence the hundred lines became "we must not throw our pens into the ceiling".

Uncle Ed made us a wooden sledge and we had some great fun going down the hills, even the hill on the main road, on one very steep hill we let Terry have the first run down it. As he sped down the hill on the sledge as he went over some large bump, his cap came off his head and landed on it again, before he disappeared into a thick hawthorn hedge. Dave and I ran down the hill and pulled him out, he had a few scratches on his face and hands, but he was ok. The local Baker would tie our sledge behind his van and tow us around the village on his rounds in the snow, Uncle Ed also made us a trolley from pram wheels, large ones on the back and smaller ones on the front. You could steer it with your feet or a rope and also stop it with the hand brake, we even use to came down the hill with it on the main A378 road.

About 200yds from our cottage was the local Blacksmith Ted Spiller. Us boys would stay and would watch him for hours shoeing the horses and mending the farm implements. We would also pump the bellows for him to keep the fire hot. One day some men came along to cut down his railings and gates and loaded them into a lorry and then took them away, they also took all of his old horse shoes "it was all for the war effort to make guns tanks" he was quite upset as he had made all the railings and gates by hand himself. He would often send you down to the village shop to get him some cigarettes (woodbines),



Wrantage under 14 Football Team 1945/46

I think that they were about 5p a packet, Mr Spiller also had ducks and chickens Auntie May would get all here eggs from him.

When we had some money on us which was quite often, we would go down to the village shop to buy some cigarettes for ourselves and say that they were for Mr Spiller, we managed to get away with it quite a few times, until one day when we went into the shop to get some cigarettes for ourselves but the shop keeper Mr Goss would not give us any. Mr Spiller had just sent someone down here about ten minuets for some, so we got caught out. The strange thing is that neither of us have smoked throughout our adult life, I expect that it was to do with Mr and Mrs Duke being non-smokers.

Every winter the Somerset levels flooded over with water, it would only be about 12in's deep, when it froze over in the winter every one would go skating on it. We didn't have any skates ourselves so we would go on the ice and slide on it with our hobnail boots which had steel clamps and studs in the bottom of them. When the ice began to thaw there would be about an inch or so of water on top and when you fell down your clothes would get wet through.

We'd get some twigs from the hedgerow and lit a fire to dry them. Once when we went looking for more sticks for the fire our socks fell down into the fire and got burnt, we had some explaining to do when we got home.

One day the Americans gave us headphones with a mouthpiece. We had great fun with them, I would climb up the telegraph posts connect them to the wires and listen to phone conversations, we would also have conversations ourselves. I expect that it was illegal, but we never got caught doing it.

Most cottages in the villages did not have electric, so peoples radios worked by using large 120 volt batteries plus acid accumulators. When Terry was 14 his first job was going around helping to deliver the batteries and accumulators to the local villages in an Austin Van. One day whilst Terry was at the top of a steep hill delivering to a cottage and seeing to a customer the driver said to him I'm going down to the next house Terry when you have finished with that customer get into the van let the hand brake off and coast down to the next customer where I will be waiting.

Terry got into the van and let the hand brake off ok and the van started to moved off slowly down the hill but as it gathered speed he could not stop it! It was quite a long hill with a bend half way down, and a main road at the bottom, there were about three to four people pursing the van down the hill. When Terry got to the main road he was still going too fast, managed to turn the corner ok but landed up with the van on its side in a ditch. Terry was ok but it could of be serious with all the acid accumulators in the van.

Well that's some of my experiences as an evacuee, I think that we were very privilege to have been evacuated to the west country, and to have had such nice foster parents as the Newman's and the Duke's. I learnt so much about country life, and meeting country folk. That was over 70 years ago now, and its a different world today, children living in the country theses days don't seem to know very much about it. The other day I ask some school children how many eggs does a pigeon lay also a pheasant, none of them knew the correct answer, (pigeon lays two and pheasant about a dozen or more), and some of them said none, even their teacher didn't know.

I still see one or two of the lads from the village from time to time but most of them have all moved away to the towns now or have passed away, and are old men like myself. It would be nice if you could turn the clock back again to those day's.

In 1946 when we left school Terry and myself went back to Essex, Dave was still staying at Auntie May's, and still going to school. Terry and I got a job in a factory in Essex, but neither of us liked it, so we both came back to Somerset to stay with the Dukes again. I worked for Uncle Ed when I came back, that's was until I had to go in and do my national service in November 1950.

e-mail: newsdesk@countygazette.co.uk

SOMERSET

Evacuees step back in time

THE Canal Inn, in Wrantage, was the venue for a special reunion of a group of Somerset evacuees on Wednesday evening.

Essex twin brothers Tony and Terry Brown were among those evacuated to the village in the Second World War.

During those years, the brothers became members of a youth football team in the village.

After an absence of 60 years, Tony decided it was

about time he caught up with his old team-mates.

He said: "It was a really terrific, enjoyable evening. I don't think it could have gone any better.

"Although one or two couldn't turn up, it was quite nostalgic, because some of the people there I hadn't seen for 50 or 60 years.

"The pub put a super buffet on, and they had old photographs put up on the walls.

"We were up until the

early hours of the morning."

Tony said he hoped the reunion would now become an annual event.

"I would like that. Somebody else can organise it next time, though," he said.

Tony's happy memories of his time as a Somerset evacuee have stayed with him.

"I've got some wonderful memories. It was lovely — that's why I'm still here now," he added.



■ FRIENDS REUNITED: Brothers Tony (left) and Terry Brown and friend David Hibble.

Photo: Richard Siphorpe

Tony, Dave and Terry - the caption is the wrong way round. Article - Somerset County Gazette

Terry got a job in the village learning to become a sign-writer, and then got a job with a local builder as a painter and decorator but only stayed with them for a short while and then went back to stay with his mum back in Essex. Unfortunately Uncle Ed passed away while I was stationed in Ceylon. On my demob from the RAF and with no job to come back to, I got a job at Heathrow working for the Civil Airport Authority, working in Air Traffic Control.

I stayed with them for 35 years, Terry went into the RAF and stayed in for 22 years, Dave joined the Grenadier Guards, and after had his own business as a panel-beater and sprayer. Terry and I are both still in contact with Dave until this day, and we still see each other from time to time, I am now back living in Somerset, Terry lives in Dorset and Dave lives in Bucks.

Tony Brown



The Nuclear Community Charity Fund

Life becoming unaffordable

Advice on where to look for help if you are struggling financially.

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Getting Around

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Life is becoming unaffordable for pensioners on low and modest incomes

Life is fast becoming unaffordable for many older households on low and modest incomes, with millions unable to pay for basic items, according to a new report published by the charity Age UK.

Life is fast becoming unaffordable for many older households on low and modest incomes, with millions unable to pay for basic items, according to a new report published by the charity Age UK.

In a new report, *It Doesn't Add Up*, they are warning that those on the very lowest incomes are spending almost a fifth of their after-tax household income on energy bills because of April's price cap rise, with one in three older households in England spending more than 10 per cent of their post-tax income on energy bills.

With inflation at a 40-year high – and warnings of worse to come – Age UK is estimating that two million older households won't have enough money to cover their essential spending over the next year.

Calling on the Government to get a grip on this growing crisis, the Charity is urging Ministers to bring forward a package of measures to support those who lack the income and resources to cope with rising inflation.

Even before Ofgem's warning that the energy price cap is likely to surge to £2,800 in October – an increase of around £800 a year on the average bill – many older people were looking ahead with trepidation and increasingly using desperate coping strategies to cover their

essential costs. Many older people are now only leaving home for health appointments and have cut back on seeing grandchildren, family and friends, to save on fuel and travel costs – leaving them feeling lonely and isolated. Some are going to extreme lengths such as eating just one meal a day or showering just once a fortnight in a bid to keep costs down, whilst others are going without dental treatment, cutting their own hair, borrowing money to buy heating oil, and staying in bed all day to stay warm.

The report outlines how people with disabilities and those caring for them face higher costs to keep safe and well. Even as the weather gets warmer, they still need to use significant amounts of energy for things like doing a lot of laundry, keeping their home very warm or using specialist medical equipment.

In a recent snapshot survey by the Charity, over 36,000 older campaigners said they were worried about the cost of living, extreme budgeting and having to make daily decisions about what to cut back on are undoubtedly taking their toll on people's mental health, with many reporting feeling anxious and depressed.

Lynn said: *"I am constantly anxious about how I am going to make ends meet. State Pension is not growing in line with inflation... I'm afraid that, as*

I get older, I'm also getting poorer and I dread reaching my eighties without enough money. I don't want to be a drain on my children."

Pauline, a single pensioner, explained: *"It's affecting me probably more than many because I'm a single pensioner. I have to heat a house, run a car (as I live off a bus route), buy food, heat my home, all done on a single pension, with a little extra from a personal pension. There isn't enough money to live. I cut back on heating and make meals that last 2-3 days and hardly use my car. Prices have gone up but in comparison, the State Pension hasn't kept up with inflation. The triple lock was taken away."*

Robert, who is completely reliant on the State Pension, said: *"I feel anxious and depressed. I only shower once a fortnight and use the oven once a week. I do not know what else I can do to meet the bills."*

One pensioner couple told Age UK: *"My husband and I are both on the basic State Pension. I am disabled and on lower rate PIP and he has Raynaud's Syndrome which means he must keep warm at all times. We can't afford to get out much, especially now with heavy petrol increases. With the triple lock gone and food also escalating we are just having to eat less and less. Sometimes dinner is just biscuits."*

Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director at Age UK said: "Talking to older people who rely on their State Pension certainly brings home just how serious the situation is for them. It comes to something when you hear a woman in her seventies describe how she is adopting strategies learned from her own parents' experience during World War Two, to stay solvent in 2022.

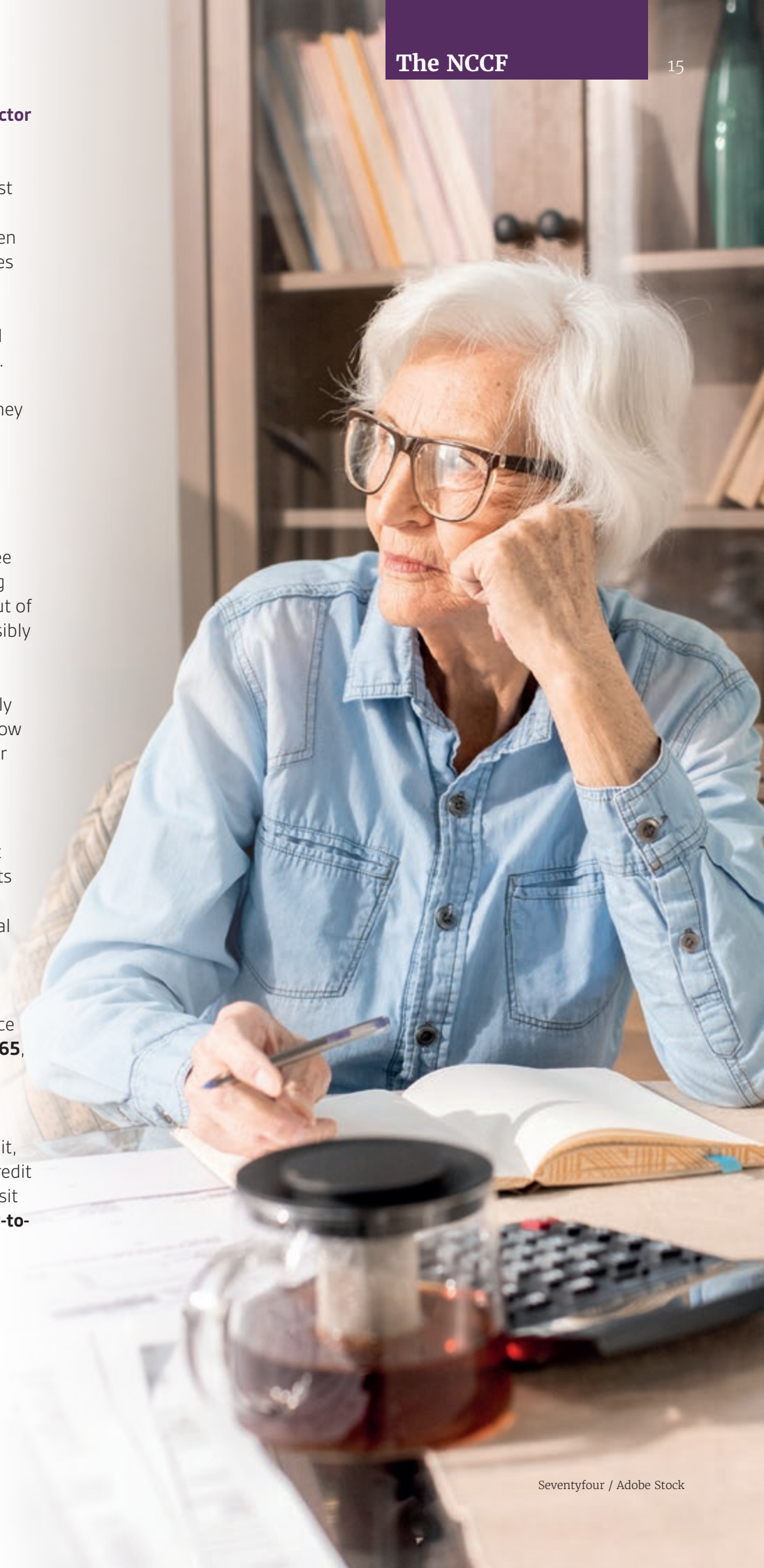
"Older people aren't stupid and they realise that if they are struggling to keep their heads above water as things stand, the chances are they'll slip under altogether in a few months. This makes it a horrible time for them, as they see their modest expectation of living decently in retirement slipping out of reach, certainly temporarily, possibly forever.

"The Government must act quickly and decisively so pensioners on low and modest incomes can weather this storm."

Age UK is urging anyone who is struggling to pay their bills to get in touch urgently for a full benefits check in case they are one of the many who are missing out on vital benefits such as Pension Credit, which opens the door to a wide range of other financial support. [vi] People can call Age UK's Advice Line on freephone **0800 169 65 65**, contact their local Age UK office, or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk**.

To make a claim for Pension Credit, people should call the Pension Credit claim line on **0800 99 1234** or visit **www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim**

Adapted from original article published by Age UK



Debt Advice Services

If you're struggling with debt, it can be hard to know where to turn. But with lots of free advice services available across the UK, you can find help in a way that's best for you.

How will a debt adviser help you?

A debt adviser will:

- Never judge you or make you feel bad about your situation
- Always be happy to talk to you, however big or small your problem might be
- Find ways to manage your debts even if you think you have no spare money
- Suggest ways to deal with debts that you might not know about.

Did you know?

Most people who have received debt advice say that they feel less stressed or anxious and more in control of their life again. All of the services listed in this article are free, confidential and hold a standard or membership code accredited by the Money and Pensions Service and are recommended by the UK Government.

Debt Advice Services

Online services are secure and you can get immediate, personalised help with some services are available 24 hours a day. Telephone services are usually available weekdays, evenings and Saturdays, you can speak directly with an expert adviser.



StepChange Debt Charity

We help change the lives of thousands of people every week. Get free, confidential advice and practical solutions to help you deal with your debts. We've helped over 1.7m people. Create a budget and get a personal action plan with practical next steps. Get free help from the UK's leading debt charity.

Whole of the UK inc Northern Ireland
www.stepchange.org
0800 138 1111

The logo for National Debtline, consisting of the words 'NATIONAL DEBTLINE' in white capital letters inside a green speech bubble shape.

National Debtline

National Debtline offers free debt advice online through its digital advice tool and its web guides, fact sheets and sample letters. The National Debtline has helped millions of people with their debts, they'll talk you through options and give clear advice on how to take back control of your finances.

Whole of the UK inc Northern Ireland
www.nationaldebtline.org
0808 808 4000

PayPlan[®]

PayPlan

PayPlan's supportive, non-judgemental team of advisers help thousands of people beat their debts every year. Their online debt solution tool, can give you a personalised debt solution in as little as 15 minutes. They also offer free live chat and email support for immediate help or you can call and speak to an advisor who will treat your call in the strictest of confidence.

Whole of the UK inc Northern Ireland
www.payplan.com
 0800 280 2816



Financial Wellness Group

Financial Wellness Group provides free advice and solutions for people struggling with money, debt and budgeting. We have 27+ years experience supporting people to find a route to become debt free.

England only
www.financialwellnessgroup.co.uk
 0161 518 8285



Debt Advice Foundation

Debt Advice Foundation is a national debt advice and education charity offering free, confidential support and advice to anyone worried about debt.

England and Wales only
www.debtadvicefoundation.org
 0800 622 61 51



Advice NI

Advice NI deliver a range of advice services to the public including Debt and Money, Tax and Benefits, EU Settlement Scheme and Business Debt.

Northern Ireland only
www.adviceni.net/advice/debt
 0800 915 4604



Money Adviser Network

The Money Adviser Network offers free debt advice backed by MoneyHelper. Provide your contact details in confidence and we'll connect you with a qualified and regulated money advice provider so you can get back on track.

England only
<https://adviser.moneyhelper.org.uk>



Youth Legal and Resource Centre

Youth Legal is an independent charity based in Wandsworth, assisting marginalised and vulnerable young people across the London area offering legal and debt advice.

London Area
<https://www.youthlegal.org.uk>
 0203195 1906

Round Round Get Around - Can You Get Around?

Help with the cost of transport if you're disabled

Many people do not realise that they are eligible to receive help with travel costs. From making the weekly shop to visiting friends and relatives or taking a much-needed holiday we all need to 'Get Around'.

The help is not just financial, a Blue Badge is a fantastic benefit to people with reduced mobility allowing them special access to the places they need to go. You don't need to be a driver and you don't even need to own a car to get a Blue Badge! Use it when a family member or friend takes you somewhere in their car, even if you are a passenger you can still access the benefits and provisions of the Blue Badge scheme.

With the recent increases in the cost of public transport Rail Cards and Bus Passes are also a great way of getting around benefiting from special rates.

This article has been written using information from the UK Government and Citizens Advice.

Bus Passes and Rail Cards

You can apply for a disabled person's bus pass or railcard if you have a condition that makes it hard to get around. You don't need to have a physical health problem - people with learning disabilities can apply too.

Someone else can apply on your behalf if you need help with the application. You'll be able to travel for free by bus or get 30% off your train tickets.

Getting a disabled person's railcard

You are eligible for the Disabled Persons Railcard if you:

- Receive Personal Independence Payments (PIP)
- Receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at either:
 - the higher or lower rate for the mobility component, or
 - the higher or middle rate for the care component
- Have a visual impairment
- Have a hearing impairment
- Have epilepsy
- Receive Attendance Allowance or Severe Disablement Allowance
- Receive War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- Receive War or Service Disablement Pension for 80% or more disability
- Buy or lease a vehicle through the Motability scheme.

Getting a disabled person's bus pass

You'll be able to get a bus pass if:

- You're blind or partially sighted, deaf or unable to speak
- You can't walk very far because of a disability, illness or injury
- You don't have arms or can't use your arms
- You have a severe learning disability
- You've been refused a driving licence because of your health (but not because of problems with drugs or alcohol).

If you live in London you'll need to apply for a 'Disabled Person's Freedom Pass' instead. The eligibility criteria are the same as for the rest of England

Blue Badge Scheme

If you're disabled or have a health condition that affects your mobility, you can apply for a Blue Badge. You can also apply for a badge if you care for a child with a health condition that affects their mobility. Councils can charge for a blue badge. The most you can be charged is £10.





Who can get a Blue Badge

You're automatically eligible for a Blue Badge if you:

- Are registered as blind
- Get the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - check your decision letter if you're not sure
- Get War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- Received a lump sum payment as part of the Armed Forces Compensation scheme (tariffs 1 to 8), and have been certified as having a permanent and substantial disability
- If you get Personal Independence Payments (PIP)
- You're automatically eligible for a Blue Badge if you either:
 - scored 8 points or more in the 'moving around' area of your PIP assessment
 - scored 10 points in the 'planning and following journeys' area of your PIP assessment and were put in category 'E' - this means your stress, anxiety or other mental health issue stops you from leaving the house
- Check your PIP decision letter if you're not sure.

If you're not automatically eligible you can still get a badge if:

- You have long-term problems walking or going to places - including problems caused by stress, anxiety or other mental health issues
- You have severe problems using both your arms
- You're applying on behalf of a child aged over 2 who has problems walking or going to places, or a child under 3 who needs to be close to a vehicle because of a health condition.

Get Help and Further Information

You can find out more about the Blue Badge and make an application by following the UK Gov website at: <https://www.gov.uk/blue-badge-scheme-information-council>

The Citizens Advice can help you with applying for any of these benefits, you can find your nearest Citizens Advice on-line at: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/>

Getting a Blue Badge if you have a terminal illness

Your council will usually fast-track your application. You'll need to send a copy of the medical form that shows you have a terminal illness – this is called form **DS1500**. You can get form DS1500 from your doctor or consultant.

Contact your local council and ask if you can fill in a paper form - tell them you're terminally ill when you call. You'll still need to prove you're eligible but your application might be dealt with quicker. They might give you instructions that will make the application easier, for example you might not need to answer all the questions on the form.

If you apply online, tick the box to say you have a terminal illness.

Inheritance Tax

It has been said that in life there are only two certainties: Death and Taxes. We decided to take a look at one of the least talked about taxes, those made on inheritance. Of course, no one really wants to talk about a family member's possible passing, but with some forward planning, the additional stress of losing lumps of inheritance to the taxman can be avoided.

The majority of the information in this article has been drawn from an excellent on-line guide written for Money Saving Expert by Clare Casalis. Much more information is provided in her guide along with further details on reducing potential tax burdens. A link to the web page can be found at the end of this article.

How much is inheritance tax?

Inheritance tax is a tax on the 'estate' of someone who's passed away.

How much you pay depends on the value of the deceased's estate – which is worked out based on their assets (cash in the bank, investments, property or business, vehicles, payouts from life insurance policies), minus any debts.

Importantly, there is normally no tax to pay if:

- The value of the estate is below **£325,000**
OR
- You leave everything over £325,000 to your spouse, civil partner, a charity or a community amateur sports club

If neither of the above applies, your estate will be taxed at 40% on anything above the £325,000 threshold when you die (or 36% if you leave at least 10% of the value after any deductions to a charity in your will).

However, this £325,000 tax-free threshold might be even higher depending on your circumstances – in some cases, it can be as high as £500,000, or even £1 million. We'll explain more on this below.

What happens if I inherit my parents' home?

In the current tax year, 2022/23, no inheritance tax is due on the first £325,000 of an estate, with 40% normally being charged on any amount above that.

However, what is charged will be less if you leave behind your home to your direct descendants, such as children or grandchildren. This is because you will then have two tax-free allowances:

- **£325,000** – this is the basic inheritance tax allowance, which still applies.
- **£175,000** – since 2015 you've also been able to take advantage of something called the 'residence nil-rate band', commonly known as the 'main residence' band. This is an additional allowance you'll receive ON TOP of the existing £325,000 inheritance tax allowance if you pass on the main residence to your children or grandchildren.

This means inheritance tax might not be due on the first £500,000 of your estate (£325,000 + £175,000), depending on who you leave your home to.

However: The £175,000 main residence allowance only applies if your estate is worth less than £2 million.

On estates worth £2 million or more, the main residence allowance will decrease by £1 for every £2 above £2 million that the deceased's estate is worth.

Your home won't qualify for the £175,000 main residence allowance if it's in a discretionary will trust, even if the beneficiaries of the trust are your children or grandchildren.

Are the rules different for married people?

There are special rules for married couples or those in civil partnerships – they state:

When you die, assets left to your spouse or registered civil partner, provided they're living in the UK, are exempt from inheritance tax.

On top of this, your partner's inheritance tax allowance rises by the percentage of your allowance that you didn't use, meaning together a couple can currently leave £1 million tax-free (2 x £325,000 tax-free allowances + 2 x £175,000 main residence allowances).



How can you reduce the tax bill?

Money given away before you die is still usually counted as part of your estate unless you live for a further seven years or more after making the gift. People you give gifts to will be charged inheritance tax (on a sliding scale up to a maximum of 40%) if you give away more than £325,000 in the seven years before your death – therefore early planning of how to pass on your assets is important.

There is a range of other exemptions worth taking into account to help lessen the tax bill:

- You can give £3,000 away each tax year inheritance tax-free. If you don't give it away one year, you can carry it forward for one tax year
- Gifts to charities and political parties are inheritance tax-free
- You can give £250 each year to anyone you know. Gifts of up to £250 per person each tax year are excluded from inheritance tax, the recipient can not be a beneficiary of a £3,000 gift

- You can give away money from income without having to pay tax (as long as it doesn't affect your lifestyle). Inheritance tax is a tax on your assets. However, if you have an income (pension or earnings, for example) and you give money regularly from that which leaves you enough income not to affect your lifestyle, then it is exempt
- Wedding gifts are tax-free but they are subject to limits depending on your relationship to the happy couple.

What constitutes a gift?

A gift must be a genuine unconditional gift that you will not gain from; something given to someone without any reservation, no nods, winks or mutual back-scratching. The biggest asset most people have is their home, yet trying to give half of this to your children won't work if you continue to live in it.

Many gifts are valid ways of reducing your inheritance tax bill. Yet if any are given conditionally (barring a wedding gift), with the intention of receiving something in return, they could fail to work, so watch out.

We would always recommend you take independent financial and legal advice on matters discussed within this article.

Planning for inheritance tax falls within having a properly constructed will. You can have a will professionally written by a solicitor local to you courtesy of the NCCF. Simply get in touch with us and ask for our free Wills and Funerals package.

Source article:
<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/inheritance-tax-planning-iht/>

NCCF Free Funeral and Will Writing Services

In the last edition of Exposure Magazine we launched two very special services available only to Nuclear Community members. We have received many enquiries and a number of people have already benefited from using the free Will Writing Service.



pikselstock / Shutterstock

Balancing the response we are able to widen the scheme to allow more community members access.

The NCCF Free Will Writing Service is open to any British Nuclear Test Veteran, Spouse or Widow and any direct bloodline offspring over the age of 18.

The NCCF Free Direct Cremation Funeral Plan application criteria has been reviewed and we are now able to take applications from any British Nuclear Test Veteran, Spouse or Widow and any direct bloodline offspring over the age of 50 providing they meet the following conditions:

- UK Resident
- Less than £6,000 in savings or investments
- No current pre-paid funeral plan in place
- Not received compensatory payment for Test Attendance from outside the UK.

There is still lots of funding in the allocation for 2022-23 so, if you are looking to make a will or simply need to update an existing one or you would like to receive a free funeral plan, please don't hesitate to contact and request the simple to complete application form.

Contact the **NCCF** today and ask for your Pre-Paid Direct Cremation Funeral Plan Application Form.

Call: **0115 888 3442**

Email: **office@thenccf.org**



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Genetic and Cytogenetic Family Trio Study

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Is that a coincidence

Exploring health perceptions and
the causal attributions of physical
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Exposure Editorial Summer 2022



The Genetic and Cytogenetic Family Trio (GCFT) study is the largest body of work currently being undertaken by the CHRC. As many of you are aware, the study seeks to examine if there is any evidence to support there being a genetic legacy from participation at historical British nuclear test sites and has (and will continue to), involve numerous researchers working on multiple, different projects.

As outlined in this Edition of Exposure, peer-reviewed manuscripts of parts of this study are being published and are also being made available in different formats through www.chrc4veterans.uk

For some, the Moorhouse et al., 2022 publication may raise more questions than we can currently address. For instance, why does the Moorhouse et al. paper talk about finding no evidence for a genetic legacy when the Rake et al., 2022 paper and, various non-peer-reviewed studies, describe self-reported examples of veterans with children or grandchildren with adverse health conditions.

The GCFT study was designed to seek evidence for genetic damage likely caused by exposure to radiation in veteran fathers and, to look for any genetic alterations in children born to such exposed fathers. It is the case that having a higher level of genetic damage may increase the risk of developing some medical conditions but, this outcome is fortunately not an absolute.

What this means is that if we were to find evidence of radiation-related genetic damage in the test veterans or in their families we could not conclude that this was the cause of any reported ill health issues.

What it would do would be to direct additional research studies where the meaning for health may be explored in much greater detail. Moorhouse et al., compares all families within the test veteran group with all families within the control veteran group. The conclusion of this analysis is that we find no difference in the amount of newly arising germline mutations between those two groupings. As outlined in 'What have we learnt from the Genetic and Cytogenetic Family Trio study so far?', published in this edition of Exposure, it is only upon the completion of all parts of this study that we will be able to undertake a deeper examination of our findings from across all parts of the GCFT study. Keeping in mind that no individual study, including the GCFT study, will be able to answer the health questions of the nuclear community once and for all, what we are generating is an incremental contribution towards that.

Dr George Collett, a recent PhD student at CHRC, has published another body of work from his PhD thesis. 'Is that a coincidence?: Exploring health perceptions and the causal attributions of physical health conditions in British nuclear test veterans' has just been published in SSM-Qualitative Research in Health. A summary of this work is published in this edition of



Dr George Collett

Exposure and a link is provided for those who wish to read the entire manuscript.

I would like to finish by reminding you of our 'Basic Information' series which is available as either flip-books or interactive versions, through our Knowledge Hub page on our website www.chrc4veterans.uk.

Thank you again to all our volunteers who have contributed to all of our projects and published works. CHRC staff are contactable via email at chrc@brunel.ac.uk.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhona Anderson'.

Dr Rhona Anderson, Director, CHRC

What have we learnt from the Genetic and Cytogenetic Family trio study so far?

The Genetic and Cytogenetic Family trio (GCFT) study is the first study to obtain blood samples from a group of British nuclear test veterans and their families. The overall aim is to look into whether there is a genetic legacy associated with being a UK nuclear test veteran: whether exposure to radiation at nuclear test sites in the 1950s and 60s has resulted in DNA damage, and if so, whether this is observed as being passed down to the next generation.

Progress, like many research studies, has been negatively impacted by covid-19 however, over the preceding months we have seen the publication of the first of our expected research outputs and, the open access (free to all) sharing of these scientific publications with accompanying lay summaries through our and, veterans' organisations', websites' <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/>

These publications are just the beginning however do inform on two major elements of work undertaken (see Figure). This article aims to provide an overview of these, highlighting what can and what can't be learnt from the work published to date and, what work remains ongoing.

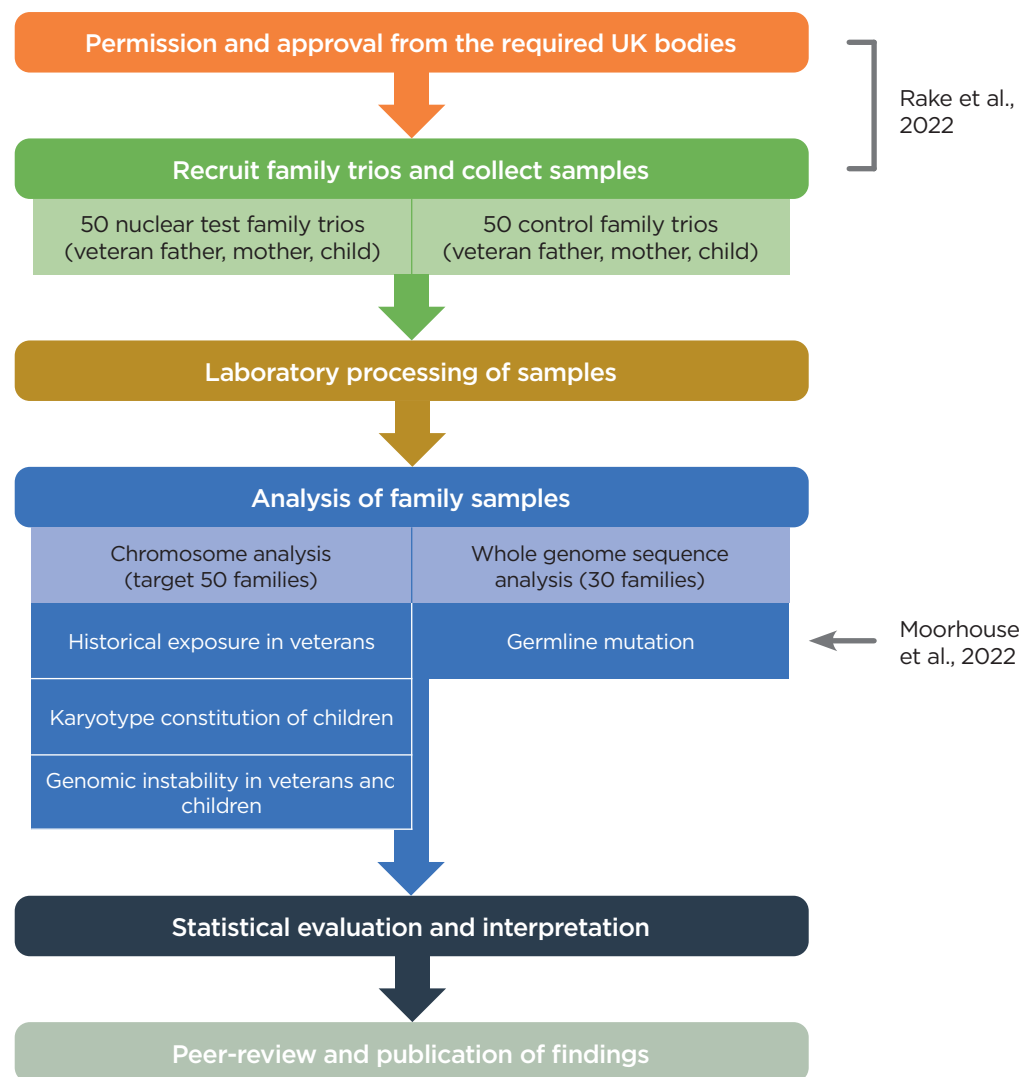


Figure showing stages of GCFT study and publication outputs to date

Study population

Firstly, Rake et al., 2022 is a descriptive paper of the approach we took to recruit veterans to take part in the study. Our aim was to select those nuclear test veterans with the highest potential for exposure to radiation and to compare them to a control group of veterans not present at test sites. Key challenges at this stage of the study included the time which had elapsed since the nuclear tests, the age of the veterans, the limited records on exposure history or dose which were available, the data protection laws which protect confidentiality, the need to recruit family trios (veteran father, mother and adult child) and also, the need to gain blood samples from all.

Surviving test veterans, aged 82 or younger, who had attended multiple military operations and/or who had participated in certain activities with the potential to result in exposure, comprised our long list of 1,459 veterans to invite to participate in the study. This number was reduced to 908 after feedback from the NHS mainly due to death, diagnosis of cancer or not having GP contact details. As shown in Rake et al., invitations were sent to GPs with requests to forward our study packs to veterans if medically appropriate and thence subsequently, to their partners and children. Rake et al., describes how our study population of 49 test veteran and 42 control families, representing veteran servicemen from the Army, Royal Navy and RAF, reflects those veterans and their families who responded and who were eligible to take part.

Rake et al., also provides a general description of the study population who was recruited and shows some of the characteristics of the two (test and control veteran) family groupings. For instance, as part of the recruitment interview process, information on a range of other potential exposures and health conditions in families were gathered.

The paper shows similar proportions of nuclear test and control families reporting ever smoking, drinking alcohol regularly, having X-rays, CT scans or other medical scans involving radiation. Differences were seen between the groups, however, with a higher proportion of nuclear test veterans reporting at least one of their children or grandchildren being born with a congenital anomaly, sometimes known as a birth defect, and, a higher proportion of control veterans reporting chemical or radiation exposure through their jobs. The paper discusses how these reports may, or may not, be representative of the entire test and non-test veteran population in the UK and highlights the demands of this study, including the requirement to provide blood samples, which may have led families with a particular interest to be more likely to participate. For instance, nuclear test veterans may have been more likely to take part in the study if they thought their family had been adversely affected, whereas other servicemen may have been more likely to participate if they were concerned about their chemical or radiation exposures.

Rake et al., doesn't include any results of the genetic analysis undertaken meaning the information presented on family health concerns does not provide a link between exposure and genetic health outcome. All of the information gathered and presented in Rake et al., will however be used in further evaluations of the GCFT study as outlined below.

Germline DNA mutations

The second publication to arise from the GCFT study describes the genetic analysis to look for new (*de novo*) DNA mutations in the germline of veterans (Moorhouse et al.,). DNA *de novo* mutations in the germline are variations in the DNA of the child but which are not present in either of the parents' own genomes. The aim of this part of the GCFT study was to ask

if more than expected *de novo* mutations were detected in the germline of nuclear test veterans compared with families whose veteran fathers did not attend nuclear test sites.

Moorhouse et al., describes how the *de novo* germline DNA mutations were measured in the sample of 30 test veteran and 30 control veteran families. The paper also shows the comparison between families in the nuclear test group with families of military personnel not present at nuclear tests (control group). This comparison shows there to be no difference in the total amount of *de novo* DNA mutations in the germline between the two veteran family groups. DNA variations can also be categorised based on their type. Again, when the amount of the different types of DNA mutation were compared between the 30 families in each group, no difference was found.

The paper compares its results with those carried out by other research groups in different human populations, and shows similar findings to that of Yeager et al., 2021 who studied those exposed as a consequence of the Chernobyl accident. Further, the results published in Moorhouse et al., are consistent with studies examining germline mutations in general (non-exposed) populations. The main conclusion drawn in Moorhouse et al., is that the lack of any observable difference in the amount or type of *de novo* DNA mutations in the descendants of nuclear test veterans compared to control veteran families likely reflects the very low doses thought to have been received by the majority of test veterans. This finding should offer reassurance that as a population, we find no evidence for a genetic legacy of test participation in the 30 families sampled here.

One difference was detected, however, in a small number of test veteran families. An increase in the amount of a particular pattern of DNA mutation, known as mutation signature SBS16, was identified. Moorhouse et al., stresses that based on our research so far, we cannot rule out that this could be a random or chance observation. Further, the paper highlights that the meaning, if any, of the increased mutation SBS signature 16 observed in a small number of nuclear test offspring is not clear at this stage and does require further investigation. This investigation will involve a deeper analysis of the data thus far generated.

Accordingly, until we understand more, it would be wrong for any associations to be drawn between this finding and, any relevance to health.

What is next?

Work on the GCFT study continues. We are finalising a chromosomal examination of veterans to give some insight into their previous radiation exposure and, we are carrying out additional chromosomal analysis to look for genetic alterations in their adult children. As above, we shall compare all families within the test veteran group with all families within the control family group to look for

any differences between these two populations. We anticipate that upon completion of these chromosomal analyses, we will additionally be able to undertake a holistic evaluation of all findings thus far generated from across all parts of the GCFT study to enable further study within each population. This part of the work remains ongoing however we hope we will be in a position to submit further papers for peer-review leading to publication, later this year.

- Whole genome sequence (WGS) analysis is a laboratory process that is used to determine the genetic sequence (or code) of nearly all of an individual's complete DNA sequence. Changes to this DNA structure can arise naturally due to DNA damage. These changes, which can be identified by WGS analysis, are known as DNA mutations and they contribute to normal variation between individuals.
- A new DNA mutation that arises in a germ cell (egg or sperm) of one of the parents and which is then transmitted to the child or children, or in a fertilized egg cell itself, is called a *de novo* mutation.
- DNA mutations arise throughout our life in all cells of our bodies, including in our germ (sperm and egg) cells. This means that the number of new DNA mutations per individual increase naturally with every generation.

Full Reference:

Christine Rake et al (2022). British nuclear test veteran family trios for the study of genetic risk. *Journal of Radiological Protection* 42(2), 021528. <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1361-6498/ac6e10>

Lay summary on CHRC Website: <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/11526-2/>

Moorhouse et al (2022). No evidence of increased mutations in the germline of a group of British nuclear test veterans. *Scientific Reports*. 12, 10830. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-14999-w#citeasac6e10>

Lay summary on CHRC Website: <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/11545-2/>

Yeager M, et al., (2021) Lack of transgenerational effects of ionizing radiation exposure from the Chernobyl accident. *Science* 372 (6543), 725-729. https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abg2365?url_ver=Z39.88-2003&rfr_id=ori:rid:crossref.org&rfr_dat=cr_pub%20%20pubmed

Lay summary on CHRC Website: <https://chrc4veterans.uk/lay-summaries/yeager-and-co-workers-explained/>

Collett, G., Martin, W., Young, W. R., & Anderson, R. M. (2022). "Is that a coincidence?": Exploring health perceptions and the causal attributions of physical health conditions in British nuclear test veterans. *SSM-Qualitative Research in Health*, 100127.

Lay Summary on CHRC Website: <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/is-that-a-coincidence-exploring-health-perceptions-and-the-causal-attributions-of-physical-health-conditions-in-british-nuclear-test-veterans/>

“Is that a coincidence?”:

Exploring health perceptions and the causal attributions of physical health conditions in British nuclear test veterans

Collett, G., Martin, W., Young, W. R., & Anderson, R. M. (2022). “Is that a coincidence?”: Exploring health perceptions and the causal attributions of physical health conditions in British nuclear test veterans. *SSM-Qualitative Research in Health*, 100127.

Background to research

There have been claims that the health of British nuclear test veterans (BNTVs) and the health of their descendants has been affected by ionizing radiation exposure. At the time of this study, there had been no evidence to suggest an increased risk of cancer incidence or mortality in this veteran population. However, outside of the British nuclear testing context, health conditions such as cancer, cataracts, and cardiovascular and circulatory diseases had been associated with ionizing radiation exposure but at doses higher than what most BNTVs are recorded as having experienced. Interestingly, these health conditions are also age-related.

What did the research involve? We conducted interviews with 19 British nuclear test veterans. The interview topics were broad and focused on health perceptions and the psychological impact of the tests (the latter has been described in a separate article). The interview recordings were transcribed, and the transcriptions were analysed using thematic analysis which generates themes across the interviews to best capture the data.

What were the research questions?

The key research question was to understand how BNTVs, with varying health conditions, perceive their health and understand the causes of health conditions in themselves and in their family members, in the light of being an aged cohort and their previous involvement in nuclear weapons testing.

What did we find?

There was a broad sense of luck across the interviews, with most participants perceiving themselves as lucky regarding their own health and their family’s health. This generally related to their involvement in the tests but also the general ageing process.

Most participants understood their health conditions by understanding what was ‘normal’ for one’s age, gender, lifestyle, and family history. This was often done by comparing themselves with other BNTVs or similarly-aged others.

There were some discussions about healthcare experiences. The medical uncertainty regarding the causes of health conditions complicates the experiences with healthcare providers, especially in the context of nuclear weapons testing. A few BNTVs indicated dissatisfaction at healthcare providers suggesting their health conditions are caused by ageing due to the perception that it was an ‘easy’ explanation. We highlight that understanding the patients (i.e. the nuclear test veterans) narrative and beliefs about their health condition would likely have improved both patient satisfaction and the patient-clinician relationship.

Who did this research?

Researchers in CHRC. This work was, in part, supported by the Nuclear Community Charity Fund (NCCF) through funds received by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust under the Aged Veterans Fund Grant AVF16 and Brunel University London.

Key messages:

The veterans understood their health conditions by considering what was ‘normal’ for one’s age, gender, lifestyle, and family history.

The feeling of luck was pertinent regarding the ageing process and their involvement in the British nuclear testing programme.

The medical uncertainty regarding what causes health conditions (i.e. Is it age? Is it ionizing radiation? Or is it lifestyle?) might complicate the veterans’ experiences with healthcare providers.

The healthcare experience may have been improved by clinicians understanding the context and listening to veterans’ beliefs or perceptions about their health conditions or symptoms. General practitioners may use these findings to inform their practice with similar populations.

Link to research paper:
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmqr.2022.100127>

Guinea Pigs

The Space, London 4th–8th October

Guinea Pigs is a new play exploring the generational impact of moral injury in nuclear test veterans and their descendants.

“How much more mental harm has been done to the veterans and their descendants by the decades-long wait for an apology?” asks Elin Doyle, the play’s writer.

My partner, Damian, has just been diagnosed with PTSD following a serious head-on collision last September when a van crossed oncoming traffic without seeing him on his bicycle.

He was left with multiple head injuries, including a lower jaw in three parts after taking the brunt of the impact and probably saving his life, as well as two brain bleeds.

The brain is an incredible and mysterious thing. There’s so much that specialists understand about its functioning and yet there is still much that we don’t.

Damian’s physical recovery has mostly happened. The driver forgiven. The apparent impact of the brain injury has mostly settled with a few small exceptions.

Until a few weeks ago.

The driver, having pleaded not guilty to a charge of Driving Without Due Care And attention at their first court appearance will now be back in court to face trial and Damian has received a witness summons, though he has no memory of that day.



Jonny Emmett - Gerry and Elin Doyle

Cue the first ever anxiety attack of Damian’s life, launching a succession of inexplicable feelings of anger and angry outbursts, which have ultimately led to this diagnosis of PTSD. A diagnosis which hasn’t surprised me as I remember saying to his Occupational Therapist not long after he came out of hospital that he seemed almost “too okay” considering his near-death experience. The driver’s refusal to acknowledge their responsibility in the accident seems to have unleashed an inner, hidden trauma that has been lurking in the background since the accident.

Why am I telling you all this?
(With his full permission,
I might add).

Well, this all comes two months before we open a play that I’ve been working on for the last few years. The play is about Gerry, a nuclear test veteran whose family has been blighted by his time at the Grapple X test and who, by the time we meet him, is clearly suffering trauma symptoms.

Set mostly in the 1980s, GUINEA PIGS is told through the eyes of Coral, Gerry’s idealistic teenage daughter (named after Christmas Island Coral). I wrote GUINEA PIGS from my own experience growing up in a nuclear test veteran family. Though to be clear, GUINEA PIGS is a fictional story about a fictional family that deliberately does not resemble mine.

I have a sibling with a birth defect and recently found out from Mum that my parents immediately put it down to the tests. I can only imagine the mixture of emotions Dad might have felt; anger, guilt, fear, betrayal? If he did, he can only have internalised these emotions because I was never aware of them being spoken about or expressed.

Dad experienced health issues himself that impacted on his ability to continue to be self-employed and he ended up in a series of menial jobs that must have been agony for someone who had successfully run their own business for 25 years. Add to this the financial difficulties my parents experienced as a result and Dad was still working until the day he died. For many years during my childhood, Dad's spare time was sucked up by his time as an active member of the BNTVA during the early years of the test veteran campaign.

And yet we never joined up the dots. We never understood why Dad, who was on the one hand an incredibly kind, generous, funny and intelligent man but on the other hand could start a row with his own shadow as soon as we were outside the home. God help the waitress slow to serve our table or the person who accidentally queue-hopped in front of us. The one thing he couldn't bear was injustice and saw red wherever he perceived it, seemingly unable to determine a great injustice from a minor annoyance. I was the only child in school who on Parents' Evening was even more worried about what Dad would say to my teachers than what they had to say to him! (And they had some stuff to tell him, believe me.)

Things got to the point where we dreaded going anywhere with him because it happened everywhere. We never realised. We didn't have the vocabulary back then.



Mike Doyle, Elin's father

And even if we did, it just wasn't something that men who were teenagers in the 1950s talked about. Not wanting to put too much of an armchair psychologist's romanticised spin on it – but was he subconsciously trying to protect us in a way that he hadn't been able to protect us before, when the people he'd trusted to keep him and his descendants safe had broken that trust?

To avoid confusion, PTSD is not the same as moral injury, though they do share some similar traits; anger, depression or addiction. Whereas PTSD occurs following threat-based trauma, such as threat to life in active service or civilian life, an assault or a serious accident, moral injury is caused by events that threaten a person's deeply held beliefs and trust.

A Lancet article from March 2021 describes moral injury as;

“...the strong cognitive and emotional response that can occur following events that violate a person's moral or ethical code. Potentially morally injurious events include a person's own or other people's acts of omission or commission, or betrayal by a trusted person in a high-stakes situation...”

Nuclear test veterans can suffer from both PTSD and moral injury.

However, as portrayed in *GUINEA PIGS* and as I am again reminded by Damian's recent experiences; when one family member is going through something, the whole family goes through it with them, which is why I describe the play as “exploring the generational impact of moral injury.”

When I wrote *GUINEA PIGS*, I hadn't even heard the term moral injury and I never set out to write about it. What I did set out to write was the test veteran story from my own truth. From how I experienced it as the young daughter of a nuclear test veteran. It wasn't until I spoke with Ceri McDade, CEO of the BNTVA, I discovered what I'd written about was moral injury. I'm glad it worked out that way because in not knowing anything about moral injury beforehand, there's nothing contrived or set-up in its depiction.

This year, both the BNTVA and the NCCF have been very supportive of the play, an acknowledgment for which I'm hugely grateful. I hadn't really considered myself part of the nuclear community because I've never been particularly involved – probably because Dad was so active in my childhood and after he died, we just wanted to move on. But I've come to realise that whether actively involved or not, I am a member of the nuclear community by definition of the fact I am the daughter of a test vet.

It's been great to see the renewed media interest with the BNTVA once more engaging with a broader media. I found myself in tears watching Ceri's recent interviews with Naga Munchetty on the BBC Breakfast sofa. Tears that surprised me by springing from nowhere, triggered by something deeply internal,



The cast of Guinea Pigs reading together

which I realised was Naga and her co-host's obvious shock and curiosity at learning about the test veterans' story – how many decades have I watched broadcast journalists express the same shock and curiosity at the test veteran story? How come people still don't know?

Why are we still here all these years later? Why is the story still not publicly known and a proper apology and resolution found? How many of our nuclear test veterans have died in the intervening years between the 1980s when I watched the likes of my dad, Ken McGinley and others interviewed on TV sofas, to the TV sofas Ceri was interviewed on this year?

For me, that is where the moral injury also lies; not only in the acts of commission of sending young men into a live testing environment and the acts of omission in failing to protect them and provide proper medical aftercare – but also in the intervening years that successive governments have refused to acknowledge their responsibility in the aftermath

of the tests and their duty to care for those involved. Rather like the driver of the car that took a right turn across oncoming traffic and failed to see a cyclist on a straight piece of cycle lane in front of them. It's for the test vets we lost before they could hear an apology that my anger is fuelled.

Despite its hard-hitting topic, GUINEA PIGS is essentially a heart-warming story with much light relief found in Gerry and Coral's relationship. Coral's teenage idealism makes for some great comedy moments, especially for those with a nostalgia for the '80s.

Actor, Jonny Emmett, who plays Gerry is himself a service veteran. As a former paratrooper turned actor, Jonny lives with a diagnosis of PTSD stemming from his service during the Northern Ireland troubles. He is active with both veteran charities Combat Stress and Odin's Oath, a charity for homeless veterans. Caron Kehoe, who plays Coral's Aunty Maureen (Gerry's Sister) is a writer,

director and performer. She is a co-founder of Yellow Coat Theatre Company – a cross-generational, female-led collective. Originally from Liverpool, Caron is now based in SE London and continues to create work that focuses on celebrating women's experiences through innovative and energetic theatre. Our director, Sam Chittenden, Artistic Director of A Different Theatre also spent some time at Greenham Common during her student years. And me, actor, writer and producer? Well, I was the young idealistic teenage daughter of a nuclear test vet in the 1980s...

Rehearsals begin in September for a short run at The Space, London. Performance dates are timed to coincide with the 70th anniversary of Operation Hurricane, which saw Britain's first live nuclear test on 3rd October 1952. Our aim is to use this short run as a platform to launch us into our next phase; touring the play around the UK in 2023.



Sam Chittenden – Director



Elin Doyle – Coral



Jonny Emmett – Gerry

He made a nuclear bomb, she's Ban the Bomb.
There will be an explosion...

GUINEA PIGS

A new comedy-drama
about our right to protest,
the power of women
and
the true story
of the families
we tested our
nuclear bombs on

THE SPACE
4th - 8th October

Book now

Tickets £15/£12
www.space.org.uk
Box Office: 0207 515 7799

BNTVA
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More information about the play can be found here:
<https://space.org.uk/event/guinea-pigs/>

Photography and poster image by Damian McFadden
www.damianmcfadden.com

We are incredibly grateful to the NCCF who are offering to cover the ticket cost of any London-based nuclear test veterans or descendants wishing to attend these London performances.

We have already been contacted by a number of nuclear descendants whose response to the play has so far been overwhelmingly positive, especially in knowing their story will be shared to a wider theatre audience. This is what I want, in particular – for the community to feel seen and for the wider public to know our story.

However, due to some of the storyline, there may be elements that are triggering for some and so we highly recommend that audience members exercise caution when booking, with subjects touched upon such as family separation, infant mortality and graphic description of a live nuclear test.

GUINEA PIGS will run at:

The Space
269 Westferry Road
London
E14 3RS

from 4th – 8th October 2022.

The performance of Friday 7th October will be live-streamed and also include a post-show Q&A.



Jonny Emmett and Elin Doyle

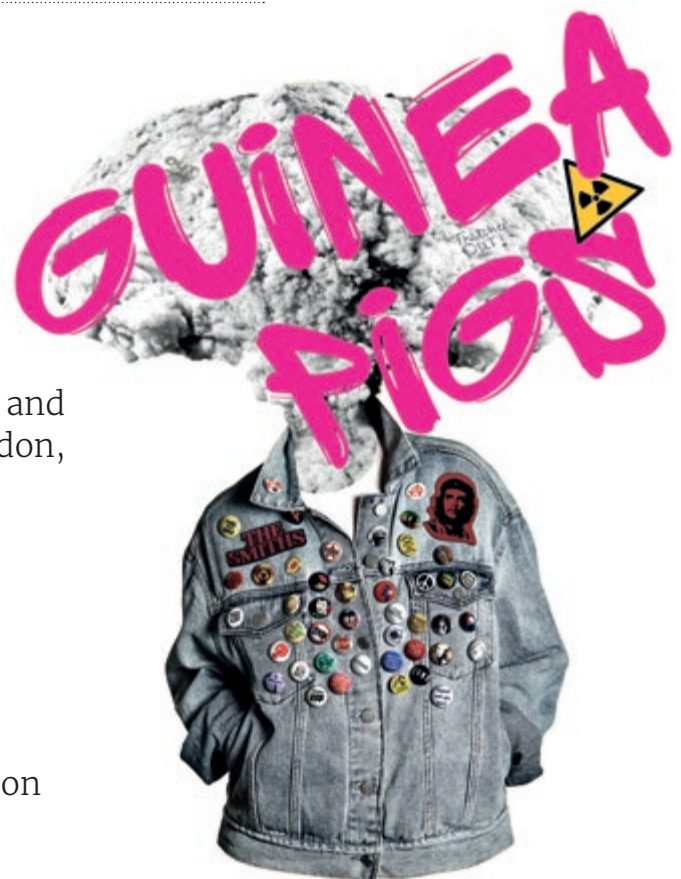
Guinea Pigs Tickets

If you are a veteran or descendant member of the Nuclear Community, are London based and would like to see the play at the Space in London, the NCCF will pay for your tickets*.

Guinea Pigs is running 4th - 8th October 2022 at

**The Space
269 Westferry Road
London
E14 3RS**

If you would like tickets please call the NCCF on **0115 8883442** and leave us a message or email **office@thenccf.org** telling us when you'd like to attend.



*Ticket are subject to availability and the discretion of the NCCF.
Please note The NCCF are unable to reimburse anyone who purchases tickets themselves.

Wikimedia Commons / Royal Engineers construct the airfield runway on Christmas Island



Send us your Story

If you have a story that you would like to share and be published in exposure magazine then get in touch with us.

If you have something to say that would be of interest to our reader then why not write about it and send it to us. It doesn't necessarily have to be about your service or the tests, any experience or information you think would be interesting to the community would be welcome.

If you are unsure or need help or advice please call:

0115 888 3442

Please clearly leave your name and telephone number and we will get back to you.

Email

editor@exposure.press

Or write to

The NCCF
PO Box 8244
Castle Donington
DE74 2BY

A letter of thanks

Stephen Bexon,

What started out as a request for a book to be a fathers day present, resulted in the NCCF helping me with my mobility problems.

It has given me a more positive outlook for the future.

So I thank the NCCF and the grants panel for all your help and making my life a lot more manageable with my mobility.

Thank you

A Boy Soldiers Story

I joined the army as a boy soldier in 1953 and served a total of 14 and a half years.

During this time decorated twice, GSM for the Cypriot EOKA campaign and GSM for my time in Saudi Arabia in the Radfan Campaign, where I spent three weeks in hospital with injuries from a hand grenade.

I also served at Christmas Island for the atomic bomb tests. While there I maintained eight massive generators that gave power to the phones, radios and anything electrical.

While there I went through a few bomb tests and lost one friend on the island, who was buried at sea 3 days after his death. We never knew the cause of his death.

I returned to England and got married. In the first 3 years of our marriage my wife gave birth to 3 baby girls but all died. It was a terrible time for my wife and myself. Later we had 2 boys who both survived, one however has heart problems and the other has breathing problems, what was to blame, no one knows? I am now on my own living in one room in my sisters bungalow. At this moment in time I am 84 years old.

I still love my country and even though I don't think they have done enough for our veterans, maybe one day they may open their eyes.

Yours Sincerely
David C Thorpe





I think I need help - How do I get it?

- Are you a member of the British Nuclear Test Survivor Community based in the UK?
- Do you have issues affecting your daily life?
- Struggle getting up and down stairs?
- Can't sleep properly?
- Difficulty walking to the shops
- Difficulty Bathing?

The NCCF wants to help you

We have developed our simplest application form and recent usage seems to indicate it is being well received with a surge in applications and support being given to needy members of our community.

We don't just provide stairlifts and wetrooms, We look to provide innovative and useful assistance to people. We have provided respite breaks, repaired or replaced broken heating systems, replaced damaged

and dangerous carpets, funded dementia respite care and provided many other measures which have changed lives and increased wellbeing.

If you feel you need help but are not sure exactly what is available we have a range of assessment options to identify goods and services that can address your suffering and enhance your wellbeing.

Just get in touch and request an application form - We will take it from there.

Email:

office@thenccf.org

or call:

01158 883 442

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Making lives better

exposure

The combined magazine for the nuclear community

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Next issue copy deadline for all editorial sections:
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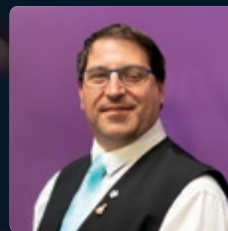
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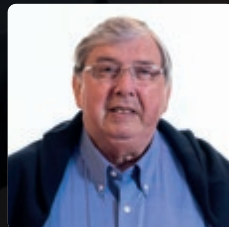
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