



CAMPAIGN

The Journal of the BNTVA

Registered Charity 1173575



JUNE 2018

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO DID NOT MAKE IT THIS FAR
AND IN SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO HAVE



MEDAL CAMPAIGN AND CONFERENCE EDITION

Maralinga Man

Maralinga Man

Tales of the Squadron Leader

Sir Arthur Lawrence



Paperback £ 7.99

Available from
Rowanvale Books,
Amazon, Waterstones
and all good bookstores.

This collection of
humorous anecdotes is
set in the nuclear
missile testing Range at
Maralinga, South
Australia during the
1959 to 1960 test series.

The central character is
Squadron Leader Folly,
a five foot 30 stone ex
Second World War
hero. The Squadron
Leader's only friend is
Johnny Walker Black
Label whisky, of which
he consumes more than
a bottle a day.

The stories are told by the Squadron Leader's long suffering young
second in command Flight Lieutenant Gooner, who hates the Squadron
Leader but is destined to become his best friend.

Some very strange Royal Air Force personnel appear and disappear.
Farce and chaos reign. Through it all the Squadron Leader, with his strict
discipline and wicked humour, looms very large indeed.



Welcome to Campaign

Dear Member,

Welcome to the summer edition of Campaign magazine!

The annual conference of the Association was a great success, you can read all about it in this edition of the magazine, with guests from around the world the conference was broadcast live for the very first time.

Inside you will find details of our new Medal campaign which has raised awareness of the Nuclear Veterans across the world. We still need support for the campaign to ensure that the Veterans get the recognition they deserve.

This edition features a new look to the magazine as we are now producing it ourselves in-house to save design costs. If you have any ideas or articles for the magazine, please email editor@bntva.com.

We appreciate your help with all aspects of our work and will continue to work hard on your behalf to ensure that no Nuclear Veteran is forgotten.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Best Wishes

Alan Owen Chairman

The British Nuclear Test Veterans Association is a charity registered in England and Wales (1173575)



If you would like to unsubscribe or change how you hear from us in the future, please write to us at PO Box 1223, Spalding. PE11 9GD, email info@bntva.com or call 0208 144 3080.

NCCF Statement

The BNTVA board wishes to issue the following statement regarding the Nuclear Community Charity Fund.

The BNTVA are committed to the British Nuclear Veterans and continue to support all Nuclear Veterans and their families. The Nuclear Community Charity Fund (NCCF) provide help and support to the Nuclear Community via the Aged Veterans Fund grant.

The BNTVA no longer have any representation on the NCCF board and have no input into their organisation. We are not participating in the Exposure Magazine and any letter you receive from the NCCF has not come from the BNTVA, their membership subscription is not your BNTVA subscription.

We have lodged a complaint with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) regarding the use of the BNTVA mailing list which we believe has been used without the necessary consent. You also have the right to complain to the ICO regarding the use of your data by calling 0303 123 1113 or via www.ico.org.uk.

We are not participating in OBSIVEN and will instead be creating our own Worldwide Veterans organisation to enable organisations across the world to share information and news. The first step of this is the worldwide news in this publication.

The BNTVA needs to keep its singular identity and push forward for the Veterans and their families. We will support the projects within the NCCF, including the DNA research, Memorial Projects and The Care, Wellbeing and Inclusion Fund as these are important to the Veteran community.

We hope this will clarify the situation, but if you require any further information, please contact us on 0208 144 3080 or via info@bntva.com

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Outstanding Contribution Award

We want to Hear from You!

Email any stories to editor@bntva.com or write to PO Box 1223, Spalding. PE11 9QD.



/BNTVACHarity



@BNTVA



MEDIABNTVA



2018 Annual Conference

Grand Atlantic Hotel in Weston Super Mare—19th May 2018

The 2018 BNTVA Conference was a great success with over 100 guests and speakers attending the conference and Gala Dinner.

International speakers from across the world gave the conference an update on their organisations and an insight into International organisations.

Jean Luc Sans from Aven gave a presentation as well as Fred Schafer and Keith Kiefer from the National Association of Atomic

Veterans from the USA who also gave a presentation on the setup of their organisation and their struggle for recognition.

Brunel University gave an update on their projects including the DNA research program and a cognitive study on ageing.

Tony Bristow who is a 3rd generation descendent gave us an insight into what it is like to be a grandson of a Nuclear Veteran.

The conference ended with a Gala Dinner with the Mayor and Mayoress of Weston Super Mare attending as guests of honour. A raffle and fundraising auction was also held, which raised over £1200 for the Association.

The Conference was broadcast live over Facebook for the first time.

Service of Remembrance

The Very Reverend Nicholas Frayling



The Conference was opened by the Very Reverend Nicholas Frayling with a Service of Remembrance. Remembering those who have not made it this far and honouring those that have.

The service was very moving and ensures that we never forget those who have passed on and the families left behind.

The Conference recognised George Young—49th Bomber Squadron who passed away aged 80 on 1st May 2018.



49th Bomber Squadron B Flight.

Conference Report

John Baron MP stepped down as Patron of BNTVA and sent the following message:

Thank you for inviting me once again to address your AGM, and my apologies that I can not join you in person.

I have greatly enjoyed assisting the BNTVA with its campaigns over the years, ever since a constituent first brought the situation of the nuclear test veterans to my attention.

Our major campaign in recent years was to achieve the twin objectives of securing official recognition for the test veterans' unique service, and a form of financial support to recognise this service. It was a long campaign, involving petitions, letters to the Government, meetings with Minister and officials, Parliamentary debates – even a march on Westminster!

However, it was all worthwhile as we achieved our objectives. David Cameron, as Prime Minister officially recognised the test veterans' contribution at the Despatch Box in July 2014. This was an important moment, which I know meant a lot to veterans and their families.

It was followed by George Osborne's announcement in the Budget the following year that the Aged Veterans' Fund would be established. Money from this, via the Nuclear Community Charity Fund, is supporting test veterans and their descendants, and is also supporting projects close to the heart of the nuclear community.

Having seen through this major campaign over a number of years, and as you embark upon new ones, I feel the time is right to hand over to a successor to take up the mantle of Patron of the BNTVA. I have no doubt my Parliamentary Colleague John Hayes MP will do an excellent job in providing Parliamentary representation as appropriate, and I will of course remain a good friend of the BNTVA in future.

It remains for me to thank you all for your help, support and encouragement over the years – I believe we can be very proud of what we have achieved. I wish you all the best for the future.

The Chairman presented a financial statement of the Charity and explained that the income for 7 months since the creation of the new CIO Foundation was £79,302.95. Our main expenditure as in previous years remains the conference, campaign magazine and the overall running of the Association (meetings / postage / telephone / insurance)

The 2018-19 Budget was presented with no increase in membership fees proposed, the budget also included £3,000 for the 2018 Medal Campaign. (£1,000 had already been donated towards the campaign by an anonymous donor)

New Fundraising activities have been setup, including a new JustGiving page, donate via Facebook, PayPal for the new shop items, a card machine for use at events, Go-Cardless for Direct Debits and \$10,000 a month free advertising from Google.

A donation of £15,000 was received from ABF The Soldier's Charity towards the trip to Christmas Island which enabled the creation of the memorial. No help was received from Nuclear Community Charity Fund or RAF Benevolent Fund, but the Royal Naval Benevolent Fund offered to help any sailor, unfortunately, no sailors returned to the island.



Vice Chairman Sandie Hern presented her report, informing members that we now had more members than ever signing up for Direct Debits.

Our membership had increased, with a number of members returning after an absence and an increase in the number of descendants joining.

She also mentioned that she met Prince Harry at the Remembrance Gardens at Westminster Abbey in London. The Association was honoured when Prince Harry addressed Sandie and shook her hand.

The telephone number is proving to be a success, with the lines open between 10am-4pm Monday to Friday.

Conference Report

Shelly Grigg presented a Fallout Group report, 130 new members had joined the group since July 2017. 448 posts, 3179 comments and 5772 reactions since July 2018.

As a closed group, the membership has grown steadily and the group interact extremely well with each other. The Fallout community continues to be the first point of contact for the descendants and the group is very responsive. Shelly mentioned that the DWP had been declining applications and that she was helping families.

‘Thank God I found you’ is the message that she continues to get from new members who have just lost family members.



Susan Musselwhite presented the Social Media Report, with the current likes on the official Facebook page standing at 740 people.

Our Facebook post reach has increased dramatically since changing the posting system. One video had been viewed over 7,000 times. Month on Month we are growing across all pages.

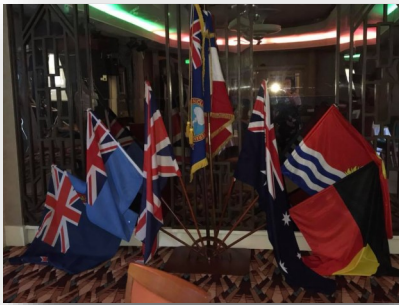
As our main source of news and interaction with the online community, the BNTVA will utilise Social Media as much as possible, with the use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The reach is International with followers across the world interacting with our community,

The Medal Campaign will utilise Social Media to raise awareness of the Campaign and to promote the BNTVA.

Ian Hall presented his last report as Shop Manager and informed the Conference that we raise most of the funds from the shop at events, especially Conference and the All Tests Reunion at Pontins. Some lines are running out and they will not be replaced.

New items will be added to the shop for the Medal Campaign and a new look will be added to the shop on the new website. A set of Operation Dominic items would also be made available.



Doug Hern presented his report as Historian and informed the Conference that a new documentary will be aired on the Sky History Channel on 31st July 2018.

Doug asked for anyone who would like to donate archive material but they must include details and permission of what it can be used for under the new GDPR.

Doug and Sandie have a spreadsheet containing details of health issues from Veterans and their families, this came from the application forms and death certificates. It is important that we continue to collate this information to ensure that we have a history to refer back to.

2017 was busy with TV, Radio and Media across all media platforms. East Midlands television and BBC World Series have all expressed interest.

In the Soldier magazine this year, an article was published referring to the Salisbury poisoning incident and the protective equipment that was used on the Island.

Meetings at the Imperial War Museum have been undertaken and a section of the Cold War exhibits will contain details of the Nuclear Veterans and the Tests.

Research into the civilians present at the tests has also been carried out. NAAFI, WVS, Decca Navigation and the weathermen have never had a mention.

22 Merchant and RFA vessels were involved in the tests as well as New Zealand ships. The BNTVA are now discussing this with the Merchant Navy Association, with Captain John Sail who was an RFA Commander and is the National Chairman of the MNA.

Conference Report

Ron Watson gave a magazine editors report with the Chairman. As Ron spent 5 weeks travelling to Christmas Island, via Singapore, Australia, Fiji and Hong Kong.

It was stated that the Campaign magazine will be produced quarterly in print and email. It will be expanded to include worldwide news.

The magazine needs input from the members and we welcome stories from the members. If you have any input for the magazine, please contact us.

The magazine is open to any ideas that we should be put into the magazine.

Afternoon Session

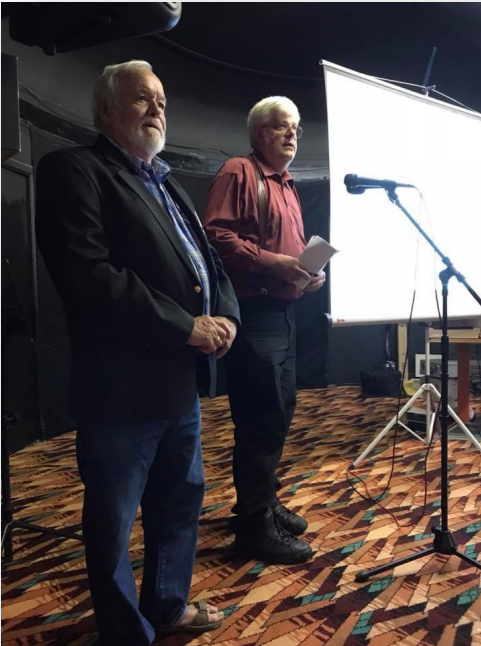
The afternoon session was introduced by Alan Owen who introduced the Return to Christmas Island. Arsenal Football club had donated 20 shirts to be given to the children on the island. The Veterans were thanked for making the trip and a new memorial in honour of those who served during the tests, including the natives of Christmas island was unveiled on 28th April 2018.



Jean-Luc Sans (Chairman of Aven) gave a speech which was translated by Marie Pierre, He explained that we are all involved in the most devastating weapon that Man had ever produced, he explained that we need to ensure that the destructive capability of the tests and the sharing of information across international boundaries is essential.

Each Association uses the methods best for their organisation, but International meetings must take place. In October he will step down as Aven president. Internal meetings must continue after he steps down. An invitation to the General Assembly in France was given to the Chairman of BNTVA and National Commander of NAAV.

Following three amendments to the compensation bill, and since 2017, every person effected by the French tests has been recognised as suffering from 1 of the 21 official illnesses and has been compensated. Each individual will be compensated according to the damage suffered,



Fred Schafer and Keith Kiefer gave a speech on the National Association of Atomic Veterans and the setup of their organisation.

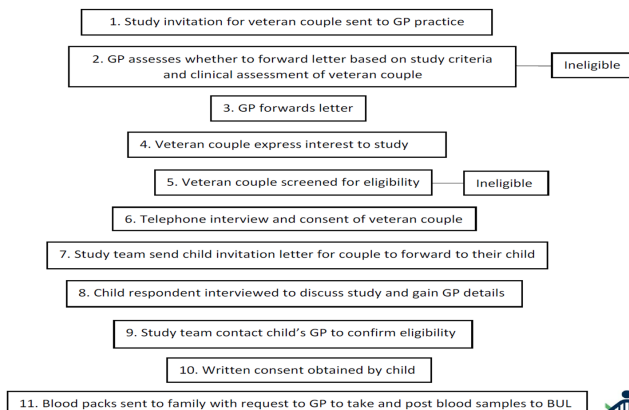
NAAV was founded in August 1979 by Orville E. Kelly of Burlington, Iowa.

Established to assist disabled and needy Atomic Veterans, Nuclear Veterans, members of the U.S. Armed Forces, their dependents, the widows and orphans of deceased veterans who are afflicted with radiogenic health issues.

Conference Report

Dr Rhona Anderson gave a report on the Genomic Study and explained that the study was underway and that whilst people were desperate to volunteer for the study, it had to be a controlled study and people would be invited. She explained that the study was a complex study and obtaining the consent for the study from the family trio was a long process.

Recruitment of family trios to Genetic study



Brunel University London



The recruitment progress was steady and that samples had already been processed for cytogenic and WGS analysis.

A new website has been created which explains the projects and gives regular updates on the research. This website is www.chrc4veterans.uk

The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is also involved in the project as well as The University of Leicester.

Professor Julian Peto, Mrs Christine Rake, Ms Laurette Bukasa, Dr Clare Gilham, Professor Yuri Dubrova, Dr Alex Moorhouse, Martin Scholze, Frances Daley, Julia Michalek, Amy Prescott, George Collett, Jade Stephens and Finlay Smith are all involved in the project.

Professor Mary Gilhooly presented a Health Studies project to the Conference. This study is concentrating on the Exposure worry, ageing and cognitive functioning.

The focus on cognitive functioning is due to the fact that most cognitive functions decline with age, dementia and mild cognitive impairment are relatively common in old age and that cognitive impairment is the leading cause of admissions to care homes.

The study will concentrate on the 'lifetime of worry' of the impact of radiation on physical health and how this might impact cognitive functioning.



George Collett (PhD student) has developed a scale which volunteers were asked to discuss at a meeting on the Sunday morning after the conference.

This meeting was well attended George will be following up his studies with future questionnaires to be distributed in the next Campaign magazine.

Susan Musselwhite then presented a very powerful piece on being a 2nd Generation descendant. This piece was entitled 'This is Us' explaining what it was like to live in the shadow of the tests.. Health issues laughed at, the feeling of being lost, fear for the future and that some descendants are no longer here to speak for their fathers.

She explained that the descendants will be heard, that they will not be forgotten. Some fathers did not see their children grow and that so much was lost and that generations still continue to lose out because of the tests.

We fight to be heard, we cry in pain and that many descendants feel lost, but to remember that we are in this together and together we stay strong.

At the end of the speech, 'This is Me' was played from the soundtrack of 'The Greatest Showman' which brought a tear to many people at the Conference.

Conference Report

Tony Bristow gave a presentation as a 3rd Generation BNTVA member.

His grandfather was Kenneth David Taylor and his nan Pamela Jean Taylor. He was a chef on the Narvik.

Tony has been involved with the BNTVA since he was a very small boy.



Tony explained that he had given presentations at his college and school and had shown people in the Kent area the importance of remembering the Test Veterans.

He was honoured that the BNTVA gave him the chance to speak and welcomed the chance to meet other 3rd generation descendants and discuss their experiences and feelings.



Conference Report

The Mayor of Weston Super Mare Councillor Mrs Joe Holder gave a speech, thanking the BNTVA for inviting her to the Conference and that she was honoured to attend and listen to the Veterans stories.

The Jesse award and the Medal Campaign were then launched (see separate articles). Once the conference had concluded, a Gala Dinner was held with a raffle and auction to raise money.



Conference Report





Medal Campaign Launch

2018 Medal Recognition Campaign details—Online Petition

At the 2018 Annual Conference in Weston Super Mare, Chairman of the BNTVA Alan Owen announced that the BNTVA would be campaigning for the UK government to provide an official medal to the British Nuclear Test Veterans to recognise their unique service. The campaign would take the form of an online petition, a social media campaign. Tom Watson MP has backed the campaign and produced various articles and a video

to help the campaign. The Daily Mirror is backing the campaign to get medallic recognition, with articles from Susie Boniface published in the National paper and on their website.

Accuracast have been employed to provide targeted ads across Facebook to raise awareness of the campaign and to encourage people to sign the online petition. This campaign will run for 6 months.

A new logo was unveiled with 4 new videos which will be published across Social Media and on the BNTVA web site. A full range of merchandise has also been produced for the campaign.



Medal Campaign



We need at least 10,000 signatures to ensure that the Government has to respond to our petition. 100,00 signatures and it has to be considered for debate in Parliament. Share the petition with as many people as you can, share it in your Facebook groups and help the Association get you the medal that you deserve.

<https://www.bntva.com/medal>

Letter of Support from Roy Sefton, Chair NZNTVA

On the 30th March 1998, after two years of NZNTVA meeting with the NZ Government, Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters announced that nuclear service, and pensions to New Zealand nuclear test veterans and their widows, would be upgraded from 'Routine Peacetime Service', to 'War and Emergency Service'.

“Those sailors, some as young as 17, were exposed to considerable risk from nuclear fallout while observing detonations, and it is only fitting that we recognise the sacrifice these veterans made while serving their country. The Nuclear Test Veterans Association has said the risks of Operation Grapple cannot be considered a normal peacetime activity and I agree with that view”.

NZNTVA considered such service should be recognised with a medal. A nuclear medal campaign was initiated. Government argued that the available medals were only awarded for service against an enemy. NZNTVA countered that if no medal was available, then a medal should be created.

It was finally agreed that a multi purpose medal, “The New Zealand Special Service Medal (NZSSM)” with a ribbon identifying each theatre of service would be designed. Government had the NZNTVA work with the NZ Defence Force in the design of the medal.

I urge the BNTVA membership overall, to give full support to Chairman Alan Owen and his team in seeking nuclear medallic recognition. I know from our intense experiences with Government, a united, and staunch commitment, needs to be exercised by all involved. It can be done.



National Atomic Awareness Day

3rd October 2018 - 12:00-16:00 National Memorial Arboretum

National Atomic Veterans Awareness Day is where the community of British Nuclear Test survivors gather to remember those who have passed and to share their legacy with new generations.

This year significant enhancements to the National Memorial will be unveiled and the BNTVA Chaplain, the Very Reverend Nicholas Frayling will lead a dedication service. Afternoon tea will be served to guests in the Marquee.

Visit bhlink.at/navad2018 for online bookings

The dedication event is free to attend but the Afternoon Tea and reception, which is also free, requires pre-registration.

National Memorial Arboretum
Croxall Road
Alrewas
DE13 7AR

Organised by

NCCF
PO Box 8244
Castle Donington
DE74 2BY

Telephone 0115 8883442

Email office@thenccf.org

The Frank Furlong Story

Recollections by John Hickman

I first met Frank in 1951 when we moved from Abergavenny to Longmoor, Engineers Railway Depot. We were camped over by the railway station in billets that were built – I think called Nissan huts – for the war. Rather draughty and cold with a big stove in the middle of the room. There were about 20 in the hut. Frank had the bed with the stove at the foot, so he was in charge as the stoker. Being a driver, I often used to get the job of collecting coal or coke and distributing around the huts. Frank somehow found a second coal bunker, so there were two for our billet instead of one, and if I didn't fill both up I knew about it!

Frank was a true Welshman, and I believe he came from Mountain Ash in the Valleys. He was quite a good singer, and a good mouth organ player, and in the bed next door but one was a lad from Birmingham by the name of Spooner, and he also used to play the mouth organ, so we had our own little entertainment.



I cannot remember in which ship he went to Monte Bello, but when we got there we used to travel from the mother ship to Hermite Island, where we were building a camp, and also the control room on top of the hill. On the completion of the tents, we moved into the camp, so we were nearer to the work and could do more hours.

Things progressed and some of us went back aboard ship. We were informed that Frank had been killed, which was taken very seriously and hit a lot of his colleagues hard, as by this time we had become a family, rather than a squadron. Frank was killed driving a bulldozer which slipped on the rock, threw him out, and then rolled on him. I was told that his coffin was made by one of the Marine coxswains of the LCM, as that was his civilian job



Christmas Island 2018

Sixtieth Anniversary Memorialisation in Kiritimati

A group of smartly dressed men stand to attention in the sweltering heat before a rapt audience. The gentle susurrant of cicadas is the only sound, as one man slowly raises a new flag. This flag represents the shared past of Kiritimati (Chris-i-mas) and Great Britain, when their lives were perilously entangled during the Operation Grapple tests that produced Britain's first hydrogen bomb. We bow our heads for a minute's silence. The hush continues until *Reveille* plays, and then the flag is raised. This is the sixtieth anniversary ceremony for the commemoration of the Grapple Y hydrogen bomb, which was detonated on 28th April 1958.

Return to Christmas Island



The pastor provided a moving speech at the commemoration and dedication of the new memorial.

This group of aged British nuclear test veterans and their families have travelled thousands of miles across continents to undertake this ceremony, to place a new memorial for all of the communities affected by Operation Grapple, to revisit their past and to share their experiences with the people of Kiritimati – whom they were forbidden from fraternising with during the tests many years ago. For our veterans, it has taken sixty years for this opportunity to arise. Sixty years since they were young men, racing land crabs and playing in the sea together on Christmas Island, working long hours in sometimes dangerous conditions.

This memorial ceremony is the result of a year of planning and organisation by Ron Watson. Ron decided that it was time to return to Christmas Island, as it was then, to discover what it is like now and support the local community. Ron was accompanied on this endeavour by a collective including Robert & Jacqueline McCann, Ray and Mary Carbery and their son Gavin, Ron Taylor and Leslie Hawkins.

Return to Christmas Island

There are two different routes to Kiritimati nowadays. Some of the group travelled via Nadi, Fiji; and the rest travelled via Honolulu, Hawaii. However, all travellers were greeted with fresh coconuts and a garlanding ceremony on their arrival, by both the women of the local tourism office and some of the men of the Kiritimati Nuclear Victims Association. The local men hugged their international counterparts, grinning broadly while they gazed at our veteran's photos and exchanged stories.

The veterans stayed at the slightly ramshackle Captain Cook hotel, a Kiritimati government-owned facility in the exact place of the officers' quarters where Main Camp used to be. It has taken sixty years for our Sappers to receive promotion to higher ranking accommodation on Christmas Island. The land around the hotel is dotted with reminders from another age, from old squadron plaques to the ruins of the Camp Church, where until recently local people used to live. The sturdy cement bases that anchored military structures to the ground have remained intact after sixty years, but many of the buildings have been dismantled and repurposed by local people.



The men of the Kiritimati Nuclear Victims Association (KNVA) laugh over old photographs.

Return to Christmas Island



Ron Taylor talks animatedly during the ceremony.

There are relics of the later American occupation during the Operation Dominic tests, including an old basketball hoop that somehow still stands. There are also still land crabs.

While our group relaxed and enjoyed the sea views, Ron Watson got to work at a series of meetings to organise the finishing touches to the memorial and the impending ceremony. The memorial has been built by Kiritimati Islanders to a simple and classic design in cream. Upon the memorial there is a plaque that bears the following dedication “In commemoration of all of those from Kiritimati, the United Kingdom, Fiji and New Zealand who took part in the nuclear tests on this island”. This inscription intends to memorialise everyone who has been affected by Operation Grapple. The memorial is permanently situated underneath an Australian pine tree, planted in *Ronton* (London), Kiritimati by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1959. It is not far from the courts, on government land for perpetuity - the local tourism office will happily show you where it is, if you plan to visit in the future.

Return to Christmas Island

On the day of the ceremony, the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement. The veterans had spent some time preparing their speeches for this special day. I ventured up early in the afternoon to ensure that AV equipment and my camera were set up correctly, then I relaxed and waited for the veterans and their wives to arrive at the ceremony. The service included an introduction by local government, a speech on pacifism and the bomb from the local pastor, the ceremony itself, and a talk by Chairwoman of the Kiritimati Nuclear Victims Association, Teeua Tetoa.

There were unexpected aspects, such as when a friendly stray dog scampered into the memorialisation ceremony. He was on a mission to “christen” the new memorial, and looked very pleased with himself for becoming a part of nuclear history. Once the ceremony was completed, the community came together to feast on local specialities, including breadfruit chips, crab, fish and pandanus fruit stewed in coconut milk. There were also cakes and biscuits for the less daring. We enjoyed chatting to local people, mingling, eating and gossiping together.



The elegant veteran wives, Mrs Mary Carbery and Mrs Jacqueline McCann

Return to Christmas Island



Chairwoman of the Kiritimati Nuclear Victims Association,

Teeua Tetoa (right) and her friend.

This was a unique memorial for a unique event, Britain's first and last solo H-bomb operation. The world has changed irrevocably in sixty years. Kiritimati is now independent of British rule and a burgeoning tourism spot. A new building is being constructed that will soon replace the old Cassidy Airport. We do not know what the next sixty years will hold, but we now have a permanent memorial to the nuclear communities of Kiritimati, and they will not be forgotten.

Report by Dr Becky Alexis-Martin who attended the ceremony to provide media coverage for the BNTVA. Further reports and videos will be published from the trip in the next edition of Campaign and via our social media platforms.



Return to Christmas Island



The new Sixtieth Anniversary Memorial, in front of a tree planted by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1959.

The British nuclear test veterans and their new nuclear victim association companions: Ray Carbery, Leslie Hawkins, Robert McCann, Ron Watson and Ron Taylor (From left to right).



A historic plaque for one of the squadrons still remains on Main Camp.

Return to Christmas Island



Ron Watson dressed up before the ceremony, in front of a hand-painted map of Kiribati.



This return to the Island was the brainchild of Ron Watson, he spent over 12 months discussing the event, organising the event and ensuring that the Memorial was built on time. During the visit, Ron has established links with other organisations across the world, including Fiji, Australia and Kiribati.

The BNTVA would like to thank ABF The Soldier's Charity for their generosity which enabled the Veterans to visit the island and to unveil the new memorial. We would also like to thank the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust for their offer of assistance to any Naval personnel.

The Nuclear Community Charity Fund were approached to provide support, but unfortunately their memorial fund does not fund any memorial overseas, even on Christmas Island.



New Patron

Rt Hon John Hayes MP to become BNTVA Patron

It was announced at the 2018 conference that John Baron MP had stepped down as BNTVA patron. We are delighted to announce that our Vice Patron Rt Hon John Hayes MP has accepted our offer to become our Patron. During discussions with Doug Hern, John was delighted to accept the position and is fully backing our Medal Campaign.

The board of the BNTVA would like to thank John Baron MP for his hard work and commitment for the BNTVA, his dedication to our cause was greatly appreciated by all the members.

We now look forward to working with Rt Hon John Hayes MP in the future, especially with the Medal Campaign to ensure that our Parliamentary representation continues.

Nuclear Tests Reunion



2017

Sand Bay, Pontins

September 24th to 28th 2018

The Nuclear Tests Reunion at Sand Bay is a unique event which enables Veterans to meet other Nuclear Veterans and discuss old times and enjoy the activities.

The event is for adults only and a full weeks activities are planned, culminating in an Hawaiian night with Gilbertese dancers providing traditional dances. If you haven't attended, it cannot be missed.

For anyone who wants to attend the Nuclear Tests Reunion at Pontins, Sand Bay, Weston Super Mare in September this year. You need to register your interest. An application form can be obtained from Sandie Hern by calling 0208 144 3080 or calling Pontins direct on 01934 428200 and quoting 'NTR' or by emailing s.hern@bntva.com. If you have already booked and have contacted Pontins, please make sure you tell them you are attending the Nuclear Tests Reunion as we have a reduced rate.



Christmas
day 1961 .

Christmas
Island

Jesse Award

Bob Fleming becomes the first recipient

During the 2018 conference, it was announced by the Chairman that a new award will be presented at the Annual Conference and at the Nuclear Tests Reunion each year. This award is to recognise the dedication of a member of the BNTVA who has dedicated their life to helping the BNTVA and has gone above and beyond to help our cause.

This award is in dedication to our Chairman's father James Ronald Owen, who served on Christmas Island during the Operation Dominic tests 1961-1962. It was presented by Alan Owen and his sister Laura Jackson with the winner receiving a trophy. This year's winner was Bob Fleming who was at the conference to receive the award personally.

The “Jesse” Award



Join the BNTVA

To join the BNTVA contact us for a membership application form which contains all the details on paying your membership.

Single Member £20. Family Membership £30.

Membership of the BNTVA entitles you to receive the Campaign magazine quarterly or via email.

There are two ways to pay your BNTVA membership: Cheque and Direct Debit.

Cheque Payment

Make cheque payable to BNTVA, write your membership number (if known) on the rear of the cheque and return to:

BNTVA

PO Box 1223

Spalding

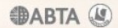
PE11 9GD

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Email info@bntva.com or call 0280 144 3080.

All membership data is stored on a secure server in accordance with GDPR. We will not pass on your information to any third party. To view our privacy policy, visit www.bntva.com or call 0208 144 3080 for full details.

Pebbles Travel



Pebbles travel supported the BNTVA during the recent return to Christmas Island, organising the whole trip. As you can imagine, the trip was very complicated to arrange, with lots of flights, hotels and connecting travel.

The staff at Pebbles travel went above and beyond to help our Veterans and are on hand for any of your travel requirements. From a flight to a full cruise, they will help you to ensure that your holiday runs smoothly.

Pebbles Travel
2 The Causeway,
Chippenham,
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SN15 3BT


01249 447488

Contact the team and inform them that you are a member of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association. You can also visit their website:

<http://pebblestravel.co.uk/>

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 shore to get you there!



Greetings from across the pond!! My name is Keith Kiefer and I live in the United States (USA), in the State of Minnesota in the northern midwest. I have the honor of being the National Vice Commander, as well as, Minnesota State Co Commander for the National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV). We have also been doing business as NAA & NV (National Association of Atomic and Nuclear Veterans).

Our mission, much like BNTVA, is to; assist disabled and needy Atomic Veterans, Nuclear Veterans, members of the U.S. Armed Forces, their dependents, the widows and orphans of deceased veterans who are afflicted with radiogenic health issues; perpetuate the memory of deceased Atomic Veterans, Nuclear Veterans, members of the Armed Forces and to comfort their survivors; conduct programs for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes; sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature.

NAAV is both a 501 (c) 19 and 501 (c) 3 non profit organization. The 501 classification is a USA Federal classification for tax purposes and donor deductibility. While the (c)19 sub category is a non profit Veterans Organization and the (c)3 is a non profit for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes.

Our organizational structure is similar to BNTVA, yet different, instead of having nine trustees with different roles we have eight Board members with different roles. Additionally, we have, non voting, State Commanders (50) and a Commander for the territory of Guam.

It was my and Fred Schaffer, the current National Commander's honor, with our wives, to attend the May BNTVA convention in Weston Super Mare, U.K.

I learned we share common experiences and challenges in our attempt to gain the recognition and justice for our members and non members. From areas such as a Medal campaign, ten plus years for us, to Medical care and compensation.

Worldwide News



I'm very impressed with the professionalism and dedication of the BNTVA organisation and its membership. The love, care and generosity we received has been humbling and over the top.

We look forward to receiving representatives from BNTVA at our NAAV conference near Portland, Oregon, USA in September 2018. Additionally, I believe the relationship our mutual organizations are forging will benefit both organisations.

We can learn from each other, benefit by speaking with a common voice and the sharing of information. The good book says "many hands make light work".

We have received encouragement that members of AVEN (French Atomic Veterans) and the President of Tahiti will attend the NAAV convention. We have extended invitations to the Marshall Islands and other organizations. I believe both of our organizations can benefit joining forces with other like minded organizations and associations.

These international endeavours prove to bring additional media and public attention to our mutual plight.

I look forward to our mutual collaborative efforts.

Keith Kiefer

NAAV National Vice Commander & NAAV Minnesota State Co Commander



The importance of the Massey University and Brunel University Cytogenetic studies.

In 2008, Massey University, New Zealand, published its cytogenetic research findings on 50 NZ Operation Grapple veterans and 50 matched controls. The study found three times the chromosome damage in the veterans as that in the matched controls. The study report states, *"This result is indicative of the veterans having incurred long term genetic damage as a consequence of performing their duties relating to Operation Grapple". Following peer review and publication, the NZ study findings were upheld by a NZ Government appointed "Expert Panel", and some internationally recognised geneticists. To further confirm the study results, the NZ researchers asked a similar study be conducted on British nuclear test veterans, an important scientific practice.*

Funded by the Aged Veterans Fund, Brunel University, London, is presently conducting research, similar to the NZ study. Brunel is studying 50 UK nuclear test veterans, their partners, and one of their children. If the UK veterans show genetic damage as found in the NZ study, it will be hard for the UK, and other governments, to deny that their UK nuclear testing programme veterans have been genetically damaged by exposure to radiation. Sadly, be it far too late for the overwhelming majority of veterans and their spouses, if the two independent studies, (UK and NZ), show genetic damage in the veterans, Governments may be persuaded to officially recognise and provide service disability pensions to the surviving veterans and widows. (Veterans Affairs NZ, automatically provides a pension, related medical costs, and other assistance, to NZ nuclear test veterans who suffer one or more of 26 listed cancers. Their widows may receive a pension. Pensions for other presumed nuclear health conditions can be sought).

Roy Sefton QSM
Chair.
NZ Nuclear Test Veterans Association
Charitable Trust.



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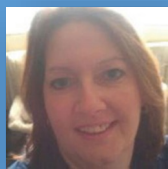
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Standard Bearer

Appointed Persons



The Very Revd, Nicholas
Frayling BA, LLD
Association Chaplain



John Hayes CBE MP
Patron



New Range of Items

Medal Campaign Items

We have added new items to the shop. We now have a complete range of items with the Medal Campaign logo.

Hoodies, T-Shirts, Tote Bags, Ceramic Mugs, Car Stickers, Jackets and much more are now available online.

Visit www.bntva.com/shop for a full list of the stock that is available. We are adding items daily. You can support the BNTVA by buying items and advertising the Association.





The Fallout group on Facebook enables descendants to publish stories, photos and videos in a closed group. This group is controlled by admins who monitor the group and posts to ensure that the group provides the help and support to the descendants.

This group has grown dramatically since being setup and now has 515 members from around the world. This unique community has proved to be very successful in helping the descendants through troubled times , ensuring that no-one should be alone. All issues can be discussed within the closed group, privately and with confidence.

For any family member who wants to join Fallout, please go to Facebook online and search for:

‘Fallout - Nuclear Test Veteran Childrens Group’

You are not alone as a descendant of a Nuclear Test Veteran, so please join this unique group and enjoy the conversations, stories, pictures and videos posted every day.





The Digital Age

Social Media is the key to ensuring awareness

Love it or hate it, Social Media is now part of everyday life, from Facebook to Twitter, information on demand is here to stay and we need to embrace and be part of the 21st century.

The BNTVA continue to promote their news and services across the digital platform, with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram our preferred platforms.

We need to ensure that the next generation of descendants can see the sacrifices made by the Nuclear community.

Our Social Media Team constantly monitors the pages, tweets and pictures and reacts very quickly to any media situation.

We need your help. Like our page on Facebook, join the Fallout group if you are a descendant or have family members who could benefit from the group.

Interact with the sites, put your comments online. Post your pictures and let us know how you are feeling. We are a unique community and we need to show the world that the Veterans and their families are still engaging an invisible enemy.

How to find us online

A simple guide to the BNTVA online

The main BNTVA website can be found by typing in www.bntva.com into any Internet Search engine or browser. This is our main site and contains details of the BNTVA and the shop to purchase items.

On Facebook, you can find our pages by searching using the following:

- B.N.T.V.A. The Charity for Atomic Veterans - Official page
- Fallout - Nuclear Test Veteran Childrens Group - Descendants group
- british nuclear test veterans association (bntva) - unofficial page
- Children of Atomic Veterans - American descendants page

On twitter, search for @BNTVA or follow our Chairman using @BNTVAC

On Instagram use BNTVAMEDIA to post pictures

Our Facebook page contains the majority of posts and articles and news, the Fallout group is a closed group and you will need to be accepted to join the group. If you can get online, have a look at the posts on Facebook and the fantastic pictures and stories being published every day.



2019 Annual Conference

Chateau Impney, Worcester 18th May

We are pleased to announce that the 2019 Annual Conference will be held at Chateau Impney, Worcester on 18th May 2019. The Chateau has excellent conference facilities and can cater for all of our Veterans. Rooms will be available from £55 per night. Sitting in 140 acres of picturesque grounds, with quaint bridges over glistening streams and a glimpse of the Malvern Hills in the distance.

Easily accessible and just minutes from Junction 5 of the M5, Chateau Impney is one of the finest, most authentic examples of classic French chateau-style buildings in the UK, with a rich history spanning more than 100 years. Full details of booking the event will be distributed in January 2019, but for now, make sure that the weekend is kept free in your diaries.

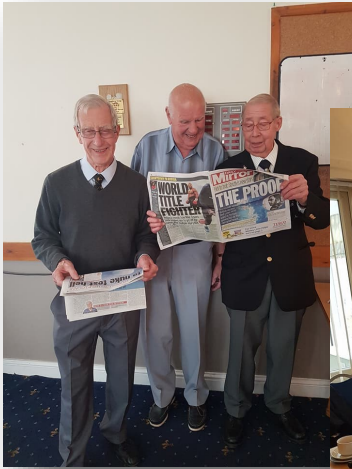
Anglia Branch

Visit to Anglia Branch - 9th June 2018

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Historian visited the Anglia branch to present the new Medal Campaign and to provide an update to our last remaining Branch on BNTVA activities.

The meeting was well attended and the news of the Medal Campaign very well received.







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