



Annual Review 2014-15

**ACTION
THIS DAY**

Christine Ainslie



40 Buckingham Palace
Road · London · SW1W 0RE
Telephone: 020 7828 2468
Freephone: 0800 012 68 67
Facsimile: 020 7630 6784
E-mail: info@veterans-aid.net
Web: www.veterans-aid.net

Registered charity: 1095308
Charitable Company Limited
by guarantee no. 4544532

“Action this day” is the stamp
that Winston Churchill would
attach to documents in order
to strongly communicate
that he wanted something
done without delay.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the
information in this Annual Review is correct but
neither ChapmanCreative nor Veterans Aid can be
held responsible for the accuracy of information
provided by third parties or expressed as the
views of individuals. We apologise for any
inadvertent errors and would like to thank the
many contributing photographers and the IWM
for use of their imagery.

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CARING FOR VETERANS IN CRISIS... NOW!

TRUSTEES AND OPERATIONAL STAFF

Patron

The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere

Honorary Life President

Brigadier Johnny Rickett CBE FInstD

President & Chairman

Colonel Paul Cummings

Trustees

Honorary Treasurer - Mr Robert P Clinton BEM FCSI FCT

Honorary Surveyor - Mr Ray Evans Dip Arch RIBA

Field Marshal the Lord Walker of Aldringham GCB CMG CBE DL

Mr Andrew Wallis MBE

Mr Paul Dyer MA FBIP FIOD ACII

Mr Gilbert Holbourn FCA FCCA DChA

Honorary Adviser

Honorary Psychiatric Adviser - Lt Col Ian Palmer

Professor of Military Psychiatry

Finance & Legal

Legal Advisers - Maclay, Murray & Spens LLP

Auditors - Saffery Champness, Chartered Accountants

Investment Managers & Stockbrokers - S&T Asset Management

Bankers - Close Brothers Group plc, Clydesdale Bank plc, HSBC Bank plc, Lloyds TSB Bank plc

Management of the Charity Drop-in Centre & HQ

CEO - Wing Commander Dr Hugh Milroy OBE BTh MA PhD

Administrator/Co. Secretary - Ms Natalia Dabrowska BA

Secretary - Colonel Geoffrey Cardozo MBE

Finance Manager - Mr Richard Greenhough B.Com ACMA

Finance Assistant - Ms Sandra Juan BA

Deputy Administrator - Ms Lily Paterson-Humphries

Media & Communications Manager - Ms Glyn Strong MA, PGCE, MCIPR, MCIJ

Deputy Media Manager - Ms Viola Dabrowska BA

Events & Development - Major Delia Holdom

OPS Team

Head of Outreach - Mr John Boyle Dip SW
(Funded by SSAFA Forces Help Central London)

Substance Misuse Worker - Mr Phil Rogers BA
(Funded by The Royal British Legion TBC)

Operational Case Worker - Mrs Debbie Langdon
(Funded by ABF/The Soldiers Charity TBC)

Resettlement Support Worker - Mr Jon Fullan
(Funded by SSAFA Forces Help Central London)

IT Support Services - Horizon Telecom

Facilities Management - Mr Dave Buckley, MCIOB, MIFSM, JHJ Facilities Support

New Belvedere House

Manager New Belvedere House - Ms Pat O'Connor MBE

Deputy Manager - Mr Dennis Murphy

Assistant Managers - Ms Lesley McDonald,

Mr Garry Roberts, Ms Anna Waylen, Mr Alexander Ulrich,

Ms Ann James, Mr Kaedon White, Mr Martin Hargrave

Professional Support Coordinator - Ms Alice Mary Servina
BSc (Funded by Henry Smith Charity)

Volunteer - Mr Luke Niland

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



I was absolutely delighted to have been given the opportunity to take over the Chairmanship of Veterans Aid last year, a charity with a world-class reputation and an operating model that is increasingly emulated.

The work done by this charity's dedicated team of highly professional individuals is inspirational; it continues, through its Drop-in Centre, to operate as the 'A&E' of the veterans community, while the longer-term investment of care and support at New Belvedere House continues to deliver demonstrable and sustainable successes. Our work has ensured that street homelessness among veterans is significantly lower than it was 10 years ago, but we are seeing more vulnerable veterans who are members of the 'working poor'. As ever, the causes of crisis are irrelevant; we remain committed to supporting ex-servicemen and women in need, and at point of need.

My tenure as Chairman starts at a most significant time for Veterans Aid; the major development of New Belvedere House is both exciting and challenging but, by working closely and carefully with partners, we hope it will in no way detract from the hostel staff's principal objective of delivering top quality support and care.

Finally, I would like to formally record the thanks of all those involved with Veterans Aid to Colonel Geoffrey Cardozo who retires in April after eight years sterling work as Secretary and Fundraiser.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Col Paul Cummings'.

Col Paul Cummings,
Chairman, Veterans Aid

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

In my 19 years' association with the charity, I can't recall a year like the last. It was a roller coaster with so many highlights that it is hard to know what to single out. But first and foremost, it is worth stating that we are as busy as ever. Although the operations staff in Victoria and our staff at New Belvedere House have been hard pushed, they have coped magnificently. Ironically it is only when visitors spend time with us, and comment on the intensity of activity, that we tend to notice! What is abundantly clear from all of this is that, despite there being over 2,300 military charities and a national Military Covenant, our thousands of interactions with clients confirm that Veterans Aid will be needed for many years to come. It makes the case for our development self-evident.

Our reputation for excellence in our field continues with us being accepted as full members of FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations' working with the Homeless. This was not easy to do and we are delighted to have been recognised by this professional body. It is our intention to use this link to strengthen the charity.

For me, the highlight of the year by far was the War Requiem at the Royal Albert Hall, performed by the world famous Royal Choral Society, to raise money for us. It was a unique and poignant event that helped boost both our income and national profile. The list of those who threw themselves into the project is endless, from the Army & Navy Club, the Cavalry & Guards Club, the Royal Hospital Chelsea, to the Brigade of Gurkhas and many others that we don't have the space to mention; all played their part to make the event a stunning success. However, without the personal efforts and commitment of our magnificent patron, the Dowager Viscountess Rothermere and her wonderful team, it would have been an impossible task. Mere words cannot express my gratitude.

It is worth expanding on the topic of fundraising. During the year, under the leadership of Geoffrey Cardozo, we benefited from the Government Veterans Accommodation Fund to the tune of £3m to help with the refurbishment and extension of New Belvedere House; we had applied for £8m. This has been the single most stunning fundraising achievement in our history and an outstanding swan-song for Geoffrey as he retires.

As if that wasn't enough, Mr Evgeny Lebedev and his amazing team from the Independent and Evening Standard arrived on the scene and raised yet more money for the project. We have to raise another £3m to complete the work, but when it is finished, New Belvedere House will be one of the best facilities of its type in the country.



Left: Richard Cooke (© Photographer: Chris Christodoulou)
Right: Dr. Hugh Milroy (© Photographer: Glenn Copus)

Austerity has had an impact and our clients have paid a price. We are constantly presented with the consequences of inequality in Britain today. While it may be an inconvenient truth for many in the veteran "industry", it is utterly clear to us that it is life, and not past connection with the military, that brings clients to our door. Our modus operandi of "action this day" goes a long way to mitigating clients' problems, but the impact on each one is obvious; humiliation, shame, instability, insecurity, fear, distrust, isolation and loneliness all culminating in feelings of being trapped and totally excluded.

This can be exacerbated by the reality of zero hours contracts and increasing numbers of punitive benefit sanctions. Against this background Veterans Aid tries to create sustainable resilience among its clients. Our wellbeing approach builds security, supportive connectivity and trust which results in clients taking back control of their lives.

Burying one of our clients, Mr Ian Douglas, late last year really brought it home to me that we must remain focused on people, not organisations. Our success in doing so goes some way to balancing the books for our clients against an "industry" still obsessed with spending money on unnecessary pieces of research and veteran initiatives that are not based on actual need.

In conclusion, this has been an exceptional year for us but there is so much more to come and we need you help to achieve our goals!

Wing Commander
Dr. Hugh Milroy OBE PhD
CEO, Veterans Aid

PATRON'S MESSAGE

This has been another wonderful and rewarding year as Patron of Veterans Aid. I have greatly enjoyed getting to know many more of the incredible staff at both the Victoria HQ and New Belvedere House and I have the deepest respect for them all.

This past year we organised a performance of Benjamin Britten's War Requiem to commemorate the Centenary of the outbreak of the First World War on Remembrance Sunday, 9th November 2014, at the Royal Albert Hall. The War Requiem is one of the finest choral and orchestral works of the 20th Century and interweaves the poetry of Wilfred Owen, with the words of the traditional Latin Requiem Mass, to create a deeply moving and powerful work. We were honoured to have Bryn Terfel as one of the soloists performing, along with the Royal Choral Society and London Philharmonic Orchestra. The concert was a huge success and we were thrilled to have received 5-star reviews in the national press.

Most importantly it raised the profile of Veterans Aid and all proceeds from the concert went to the charity.

But we could not have done it on our own. I would especially like to thank Major General David McDowall, Lieutenant Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Colonel Simon Bate, Adjutant and the Trustees, who so kindly allowed us to host a magnificent dinner - prepared by The Royal Gurkha Rifles - in their beautiful State Apartments. The evening was given to thank our generous sponsors and it also raised further support for the concert.

Finally, the year has not been without sadness. The passing of Ian Douglas, Royal Signals and Veterans Aid, was a profound loss at NBH. I was deeply moved at his funeral, where we said goodbye to Ian with such dignity and love. The care that he received from everyone at NBH, but especially Pat O'Conner, was exceptional and I feel so privileged to be Patron of a veterans charity that is not only a leader in its field, but one whose warmth, dedication and commitment to the people it serves is so unique.

My heartfelt thanks to you all for your continued support, which is so very much appreciated.



The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere
Patron, Veterans Aid



THE LADY  FOUNDATION



From left: Veterans Mark Hayward, Hugh Thompson and Sean Staines stand behind Grayson Perry and Evgeny Lebedev during their visit to New Belvedere House.
(© Photographer: Johnny Shand-Kydd)

'Public Eye' took on a whole new meaning for Veterans Aid last year - from the afternoon of its fund-raising concert at The Royal Albert Hall to the morning it became joint beneficiary of the IES 'Homeless Veterans' Christmas Appeal campaign.

Through the former, thanks to The Lady R Foundation and The Royal Choral Society, an audience of around 5,000 people heard Angela Rippon describe the value of the charity's work, before listening to Benjamin Britten's haunting and salutary War Requiem.

Through the latter, VA enjoyed sustained exposure and unprecedented profile through the pages of The Independent, The i, London Live TV and The Evening Standard.

Every morning and evening, from late November to mid February, the life-changing interventions by this charity were shared with millions of readers. The objective of the campaign was to raise funds - but the greatest gift it bestowed was awareness. On many days, before the second edition of the 'ES' had hit the streets, the doorbell at 40 Buckingham Palace Road was ringing. "I've just read about what you do and I wondered if you could help me?"

The 'Homeless Veterans' campaign featured three auctions. The prizes donated came from friends and supporters too numerous to mention - one from a former client who is now making his name in the art world. Creation of a further artwork to be auctioned as part of the appeal was pledged by Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry who visited New Belvedere House with Independent/Evening Standard owner Evgeny Lebedev.



The 'Homeless Veterans' campaign also proved to be a resounding vindication of why publicity and communication of the VA message is so important - a gift that kept on giving, long after the official appeal ended. It put Veterans Aid on the radar of new supporters, media contacts, academics and organisations interested in learning more about the charity's work - and its exciting plans for the future.

The charity was given a platform to talk about the enhancement of its flagship hostel, the myths surrounding PTSD, stolen valour, the rise of the working poor, the Armed Forces Covenant, treatment of foreign and commonwealth veterans, its enduring relationship with the Royal Hospital Chelsea and growing influence on Europe through membership of FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless).

Everyone at VA, in some way, contributed to this campaign; it involved writing, editing, reviewing, challenging and negotiating and it left millions of people wiser about this remarkable charity and its achievements.



The Homeless Veterans campaign raised funds for two charities: Veterans Aid and ABF/The Soldiers Charity. It ended on Friday, 13th February. Angelina Jolie & Brad Pitt made a donation; Mary McCartney Instagrammed her support and those hailing the work of the charities included Stephen Fry, The Archbishop of Canterbury, David Cameron, Ed Milliband, Nick Clegg, James Blunt, Grayson Perry, Chief of the Defence Staff General Lord David Richards, HRH Prince William... and many others.

Glyn Strong

Glyn Strong
Media & Communications Manager,
Veterans Aid

THE JOURNEY BACK



The picture above is a sketch recalling a client's first impression of the Drop-in Centre's tiny street door.

Most people are familiar with the route into Veterans Aid; the rocky road via alcohol, drug use, debt, illness, unemployment or relationship breakdown that leads either to its Victoria Drop-in Centre or, in some cases, the streets. Less well known is the road that leads away from the charity.

Staff at New Belvedere House have always helped individuals into training, employment, work experience or further education. What's new is the establishment of a head office post dedicated to this activity.

It was created in recognition of how important the need was for men and women who don't necessarily spend time in the hostel to leave the charity with a survival kit.

No soldier, sailor or airman is sent into conflict without kit, morphine, a weapon, suitable clothing and an objective.

Similarly, no one leaves Veterans Aid unprepared for what the post-recovery battle might involve.

Just as those recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction need a network of clean, supportive contacts to 'stay straight', those who arrive without employment, or the means to gain and sustain it, need a 'hand-up' when they leave.

Delia Holdom, who joined VA in 2013 after leaving the Army, has taken on that responsibility. Working closely with all the charity's caseworkers and specialists she now provides a single point of contact for veterans who are, in the nicest possible way - on their way out!

WE DON'T CARE HOW PEOPLE ARRIVE AT VETERANS AID... ONLY HOW THEY LEAVE



Specifically, men and women who have addressed their immediate problems but need a bit of extra help to find rewarding jobs, or gain the qualifications that will enable them to secure employment. Without a steady job and / or regular income, it is impossible to gain and maintain accommodation; without an address, access to all manner of benefits and services is denied.

Since establishment of the development post, clients for whom it is appropriate have had the opportunity to discuss their aims and aspirations with someone able to guide them through options for training, education and employment.

The graphic above illustrates how many veterans have been supported over the last year through VA's head office and Drop-in Centre. It does not reflect parallel activity generated directly by staff members at New Belvedere House.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE...



"What does a typical week look like at Veterans Aid?
Can you describe the average client?"

Difficult – and usually guaranteed to raise a smile or two in the Ops Room where few stories either surprise or shock. Statistics capture numbers and trends, both of which are important, but neither reveal the narratives that underlie our clients' crises, or portray the diversity of issues presented.

What follows is a snapshot of activity during one week, in February 2015. Names have been changed, but nothing else!

'The Gambler' – came in to VA's Drop-in Centre following a casual conversation with a staff member. A former infantry soldier who served for 12 years, his addiction to games of chance saw more than £100k go out of his bank account in less than a month, leaving him with an overdraft and the dawning realisation that he had a problem. **(Outcome: Immediate specialist help offered, but the gentleman stopped attending sessions and has not returned to VA).**

'The Monk' – an itinerant septuagenarian with more than 21 years service in two regiments, much of it operational. Subsequently drawn to Tibetan Buddhism and a life of austerity he lived (by choice) in caves and woods. Unable to sustain his peripatetic lifestyle after three bouts of hypothermia he called VA for help. **(Outcome: Safe accommodation secured within days at VA's sister charity in Scotland).**

'The Thief' – a former infantry soldier who failed to complete basic training, came to VA after a lengthy period of living 'on the road'. A self-confessed burglar his response to 'what he'd got' for his crime was to name the items he'd stolen! **(Outcome: Accommodation secured in Scotland with VA's sister charity).**

'The Ex-Pat' – had been living and working in Europe for 12 years owning and running bars. The good life came unravelled after his relationship broke down and the economic downturn ruined his business. He came to VA homeless and was found immediate accommodation. **(Outcome: Immediate temporary accommodation secured pending resolution of his financial affairs).**

'The Walt' – presented with tales of heroism and horrific sights that his 'Special Forces background' prevented him from sharing. Blamed his problems on PTSD. Revealed after routine checks to be a genuine veteran who ("Walter Mitty" style) had greatly 'embellished' his short and uneventful service career. **(Outcome: His real problems are still emerging but he's making progress).**

'The Stranded' – calls and emails alerted VA to the plight of a group of UK veterans stranded overseas after being arrested in an international maritime incident. Although eventually freed from prison their passports were withheld so they were unable to either work or return home. **(Outcome: Ongoing - VA has provided practical help (cash), advice and a friendly ear).**

'The Prisoner' – came to VA's Drop-in Centre straight from prison suffering from unintentional withdrawal from psychotropic medication. (He had been released without a prescription). Fearful and facing homelessness he was in acute distress. **(Outcome: Reassured, medically stabilised and housed the same night in safe accommodation).**

'The Afghan Veteran' – a successful status seeker who left the UK to start a job before going through his Citizenship ceremony. Caught in a Kafakesque stalemate through being denied access to a passport even though he'd served in the British Army in Afghanistan. **(Outcome: VA arranges for the ceremony to be conducted overseas enabling the veteran to secure his status and take up employment with a contractor).**

And then there's The Drug Addict, The Alcoholic, The Single Mum... and the one who looks JUST LIKE YOU.

NEW BELVEDERE HOUSE - PAT AND THE TEAM

'Front of house' at Veterans Aid is the Victoria Head Office and Drop-in Centre where most ex-servicemen and women seeking help first meet members of the charity

Behind that door is a powerhouse of activity - but the invisible engine that drives much of VA's success is the much less visible New Belvedere House. Members of the media are rarely allowed into 'NBH' because, for the men who live there, it is 'home'; a place where Pat O'Connor and her team work tirelessly to create an atmosphere of warmth and safety within a structured, secure and supportive environment.

Many new residents comment on how little it resembles the image they have in their minds of a 'hostel for the homeless'. Visitors gasp at the recreation and conservatory areas so beautifully refurbished by Walpole Mayfair designers, Oliver Burns.

New Belvedere House 'graduates' have gone on to skills and training courses, colleges and universities. Those who subsequently move to homes of their own in the London area become part of an elite 'Old Boys Network' - others acquire qualifications that enable them to work for the charity. While some who have arrived at the Tower Hamlets hostel despairing and in a bad place simply want to put the memory of their problems behind them, others revisit it mentally (as a life changing experience) and physically, just to 'Say hello to Pat'.

Work is now beginning to refurbish this remarkable place; to build on success in every sense of the phrase. Residents will still receive a warm welcome, a clean room, new clothing and fresh toiletries. They will still receive help to conquer their demons, get back on their feet and make new friends; but thanks to the generosity of fund-raisers and donors they will be able to do so in lighter, larger, better equipped premises. For the first time, too, NBH's dedicated and hard working staff will also be able to operate in surroundings that recognise their worth and enable them to give of their best.



Resident Ashley Rosser in his room
at New Belvedere House.
(© Photographer: Micha Theiner)

Recreation areas refurbished by
designers, Oliver Burns.

Staff member Martin Hargrave
joins residents and colleagues at
one of the summer barbecues
organised at New Belvedere House
by VA's Patron, The Dowager
Viscountess Rothermere



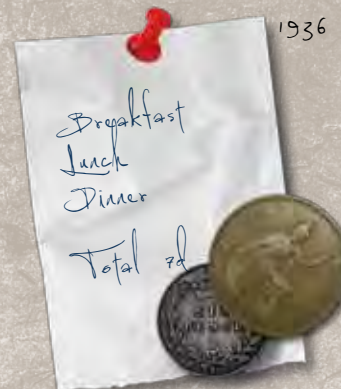
1931



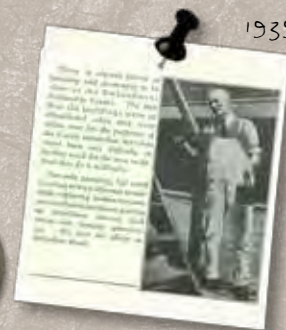
1932



1933



1936



1939



1939



2015

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN... FOR RENT OF £1.

1931 December 1931: Advertisement placed by Mrs Huggins in The Times. The advert didn't attract any benefactors, but on 14 December 1931, Mrs Huggins received a letter from the Ministry of Works offering to let 59a, Belvedere Road for three months - at a rental of £1.

1932 Our first home - canteen and recreation, called H10 opened at 59a Belvedere Road, Embankment.

1933 Report from period ended 31st March 1933 "Physical Training Class which meets twice a week has also proved a great success" - H10 Hostel and Night Shelter for the Destitute provided various activities for Veterans.

1936 The audited cost of providing residents with three meals a day was just over £0.07.

1939 There was always plenty of painting required.

1939 The film "SMITH" was made for the Embankment Fellowship Centre - now Veterans Aid. The idea was to raise awareness of the work that the charity undertook together with fundraising.

1951 The first TV set - September 1951, gratefully received from HMS Glasgow.

1954 Broadcast Appeal by actress (later Dame) Cicely Courtneidge realised £660. She visited Belvedere House and joined men in a game of snooker.

1962 Actress (later Dame) Anna Neagle endorses the EFC with a supporting thank you letter.

1973 HRH Princess Alexandra performed the official opening ceremony at New Belvedere House.

1990 A saving of £6,000 on laundry was achieved at HH due to of the purchase of a washing machine.

1992 The purchase of a computer and printer for the headquarters was approved.

2011 Veterans Aid won the prestigious Institute for Turnaround award.

2011 HRH The Duke of Kent made a private visit to Veterans Aid's New Belvedere House.

2014 ESI campaign support from: David Cameron, Nick Clegg, Ed Miliband, Boris Johnson, Prince William, James Blunt and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

2015 Redevelopment of New Belvedere House begins.



1951



1954



2014



2011



2011



1992



1990



1973



1962

NEW BELVEDERE HOUSE - THE FUTURE



- Cost of upgrade - £6.5m.
- Energy efficiency saving - 40%
- Occupancy throughout build 90% until completion at end of December 2016
- Upgrade to include provision of training kitchen, enhanced IT suite, staff facility, gym, and extra bedrooms
- New plumbing, wiring and redecoration
- More than 800 veterans have lived in NBH
- Current capacity is 55 and rooms are always occupied
- Average stay is 9.6 months
- Annual cost per resident is £5.5k
- Recidivism rate - less than 5%



THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

The 'special relationship' between Veterans Aid and Royal Hospital Chelsea, home of the Chelsea Pensioners, is a strong and flourishing one. Just as New Belvedere House hostel regularly welcomes new veterans, so too does the Royal Hospital and while some of the friendships forged are enduring, new ones are always being made.

Part of Captain of Invalids Colonel Mark Baker's job at the Royal Hospital Chelsea is to introduce new Chelsea Pensioners to Veterans Aid and the visit programme that binds together the two ex-Service charities.

Two newcomers who immediately declared an interest in being part of it are John Gallagher, 66, and Alan Thubron, 76.

The men arrived in August 2014 and soon became fast friends. Both were inspired by what they heard about Veterans Aid and asked about becoming involved.

Miner's son Alan (bottom right) hails from Wingate, Co. Durham. He joined the Army Catering Corps in 1958 and served for 16 years, travelling all over the world with The Royal Sussex Regiment (later 3 Queens).

His distinguished military career took him to Singapore, Aden, West Germany, Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Kenya, Belize, Canada and the UK. After retirement and the death of his wife, he applied to the Royal Hospital. "Now it's become my home," he says. "And when I heard about Veterans Aid I felt I wanted to be part of it... and help in any way I can."

John, who also left in the rank of Sergeant, was born in Kirkham, Lancashire. He joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as a Staff Clerk and served for nine years. After leaving he worked at a rehabilitation centre in Preston where he had his first experience of helping people rebuild their lives. Health problems prompted early retirement and although there was some social interaction at the sheltered living accommodation where he lived, John found it lonely.



Now he has many friends but John immediately felt some empathy for the men described in Mark Baker's talk about Veterans Aid. "Seven years ago, I sought help from a charity myself, after a heart attack. I was in hospital for three weeks and I had a business at that time - I lost everything."

"I see Veterans Aid as unique. A lot of people offer help and put you up and offer you a bed, but that's only addressing a basic need. You need to be accepted by society, you need to value yourself, to be able to work. I like the process that Veterans Aid offers that allows people to take their time, get training, whatever it takes; it doesn't just help and then say 'right, you're on your own now.'"

Both men had seen last year's VA Annual Review and were impressed by the stories of Craig, Peter and Sean who had left New Belvedere House to move into homes of their own.

Alan nods as John takes up the conversation again: "I think we are both caring people, we care about our fellows and we understand because we've been there; we understand their struggles. And we're looking forward to our first visit to the hostel."



MILESTONES & MEMORIES



VA substance abuse worker Phil Rogers with veterans Daz Mallard and Paul McEwan.

(© Photographer: Jeremy Selwyn)



CEO Hugh Milroy at the staff farewell to VA volunteer Lady Amelia Windsor.



Members of the Company of Pikemen & Musketeers and FANY (PRVC) at VA's Royal Albert Hall War Requiem.



Members of the VA team with Museum of Brands CEO Chris Griffin and founder Richard Opie.



CEO Hugh Milroy with supporter Gary Pierce and some of the Christmas truffles he provided for residents at New Belvedere House.



Members of The Queen's Colour Squadron (RAF Regiment) supporting VA at The Army & Navy Club (The Rag) cocktail party.



Ex-Para Bob Pittam with Support Worker Jon Fullan outside the hospital where VA arranged for his medical care.



VA joins forces with police to celebrate the birthday of the bus.



Veteran Darren McNamara & Group Communications Director Victoria Brough at the opening of the London Stock Exchange.



VA Trustee Andrew Wallis after his MBE presentation.



New Belvedere House friends and residents enjoy barbecue food provided by VA Patron, The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere.

SUPPORTERS SHOWCASE

STRONGMAN CHALLENGE: Louis, Tessy and Charlotte overcame obstacles for VA

Prince Louis and Princess Tessy de Luxembourg, joined by friend Charlotte Aslaugberg, raised more than £1,500 for Veterans Aid by taking part in the world's biggest obstacle race - the Strongman Challenge. Princess Tessy, who worked at the charity as a volunteer, said, "I saw its hands-on approach. It is a place of hope that transforms people's lives. When I took on the Strongman Challenge for the second year I was happy for the proceeds to go towards the work of this amazing charity."

LONDON MARATHON: Lizzie went the distance for VA

Regular Army Medical Officer Lizzie Hunt ran the London Marathon for VA after hearing about the charity's work from her programme Director at Kings College, Professor Edgar Jones.

Currently seconded to the NHS in South London she is studying for a Masters degree in War and Psychiatry.

She said, "I'm so grateful for the work Veterans Aid does. I know from my NHS work how difficult it is sometimes to find solutions to housing, vocational training, and legal problems. Veterans Aid brilliantly supports former servicemen and women, and plugs a very crucial gap."

"I finished in 3 hours 57 minutes. Far, far more importantly though, thanks to the generosity of Veterans Aid's supporters, friends, family and colleagues, we beat my target sponsorship goal, and raised over £2,600."



Top: (from left): Louis de Luxembourg, Tessy de Luxembourg and Charlotte Aslaugberg presenting the cheque



Bottom: Lizzie holding a medal after a successful finish

MONGOL RALLY: 11,000 mile taxi trip put VA on the map

VA's Mongol Rally fundraising team of three - Olly Cardozo, Will Ogilvie-Graham and Olivier Rident - depleted by unforeseen circumstances to two - drove a London taxi called 'Mildred' through Europe, the Middle East and Asia and managed to cross the border into Mongolia. Their route took them across 16 countries, three mountain ranges and two deserts.

Olly Cardozo - driving force and ultimately 'sole driver' - survived close encounters with potholes, rear-end shunts in the middle of nowhere, nights in jail, tense exchanges with border guards and a few first aid stops. He said, "I am delighted that we were able to raise £1,300 for VA. The whole experience was fantastic, one that will live long in our minds."

He added, "Veterans Aid is the real A&E unit of the Armed Services charities."

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE: Grenadier Guardsman scaled the heights for VA

Captain Richard Da Gama of the Grenadier Guards, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, Kenya and Longnott to raise money for VA.

He said, "Lizzie Hunt has been praising all the great work you do for veterans. It was brilliant to find a charity ready to step in and help ex-servicemen and women who find themselves in crisis."

"My plans for the expedition started as a personal challenge; however, as soon as I learned about VA, I wanted to undertake a charity challenge to raise funds and support this excellent cause. The work Veterans Aid is conducting daily to support those who have fallen into crisis is highly impressive."



Top: The Mongol Rally team in Mostar, Bosnia. From left: Olly Cardozo, Will Ogilvie-Graham and Olivier Rident



Picture: Richard at the last refuge, one day before the summit of Mount Kenya

Veterans Aid is being talked about; not just in The Evening Standard, in London, or the UK - but in Europe and internationally. This isn't anecdotal: In October 2014 Veterans Aid was admitted to full membership of FEANTSA - the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless.

There are only 21 UK members of FEANTSA and only one (Veterans Aid) dedicated to the needs of ex-servicemen and women. FEANTSA was established in 1989 as a European NGO, to prevent and alleviate the poverty and social exclusion of people who are homeless or faced with the threat of homelessness.

Through FEANTSA Veterans Aid is connected to more than 130 member organisations, working in 30 European countries, including 25 EU member states. Although VA's remit is to help ex-servicemen and women in all kinds of crises, most lead back to homelessness.

"Most of FEANTSA's members are national or regional umbrella organisations of service providers that support homeless people with a wide range of services, including housing, health, employment and social support. They often work in close co-operation with public authorities, social housing providers and other relevant factors. FEANTSA works closely with the EU institutions, and has consultative status at the Council of Europe and the United Nations. It receives financial support from the European Commission."

www.feantsa.org



FEANTSA

FEANTSA Director, Freek Spinnewijn said he was delighted to welcome VA as a full member of the organisation and CEO Dr Hugh Milroy responded in kind, "Our area of operations is already international but membership of this important community represents significant recognition for the charity and I am delighted that VA has been formally acknowledged at a European level. "

FEANTSA membership builds on an international footprint already established in operational and academic terms and puts VA at the heart of a powerful European network of like minded researchers and practitioners.

VA's expertise in the homelessness sector is considerable and already referenced within and beyond the veterans' world. Its recognition that homeless is an effect as well as a cause has illustrated the futility of the 'quick fix' in dealing with the kinds of life crisis that lead individuals to homelessness.

In a recent report entitled 'Doing Our Duty', published by The Centre for Social Justice, the Veterans Aid model of moving from 'welfare to wellbeing' is cited as "an important example of what can be achieved... It offers a fully integrated approach that engages with the root issues of homelessness... their programme of proactive intervention coupled with long term commitment and support is designed to not only get veterans into housing, but into sustainable long term employment, and has enjoyed great success.

The CSJ applauds this effective model and recommends its adoption for other charities..."

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH VETERANS

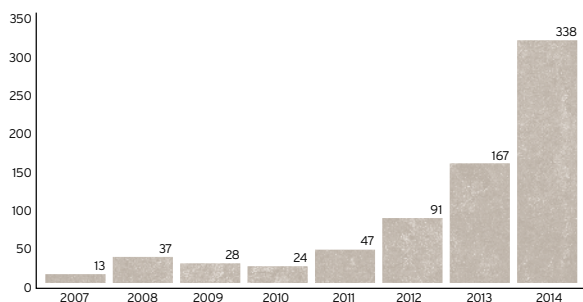
Since Veterans Aid started discrete recording of Foreign & Commonwealth (F&C) related cases, in 2007, the charity has dealt with 408 individuals.

Last year 338 calls relating to F&C issues were made - on behalf of veterans and serving personnel. This represents an increase of 171 from the previous year. These individuals (and their families) are often overlooked when people think of the veterans' community.

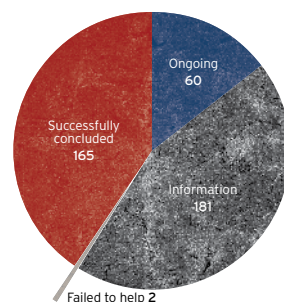
Ministry of Defence data reveals that 42% (4,660) of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community) service personnel were from the UK, with the remaining 58% (6,300) from Foreign & Commonwealth countries.

On average Veterans Aid responds to 28 cases a month from F&C subjects; to date the charity has dealt with 60 nationalities.

Foreign & Commonwealth
Calls for help



Foreign & Commonwealth
Individual cases 2007-15



BFBS THE BIG SALUTE



The British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) is proud to be supporting Veterans Aid for the eighth year running, as one of the five charities that benefit from our BFBS Big Salute campaign.

As well as organising fundraising events we hold a networked on-air and online auction. Shortly before the auction, we speak to beneficiaries and representatives from all five charities. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Veterans Aid for organising these interviews, and also the beneficiaries who allow us to share their life-changing experiences. Their candid accounts are also made into a short video which can be viewed on our Big Salute website www.bigsalute.com

Though their stories and situations are varied, all of these individuals see Veterans Aid as an essential part of their lives, and in some cases refer to the people at the charity as 'family'. This notion of belonging to a wider forces family is also inherent at BFBS, as we broadcast to and connect military communities across the world.

Our global reach is also a theme in the work of VA. There's a natural affinity between our two organisations, which makes it a real pleasure and privilege for us to work with you on behalf of the veteran community.

During BFBS's last visit to the Drop-in Centre in Victoria, Hugh Milroy showed our team of journalists an annotated map of the world. It illustrates the countries in which VA is helping ex-servicemen and women and their families - a global picture of this charity's awe-inspiring work and its sheer determination to literally cross borders and boundaries to reach veterans in need on a daily basis.

This year we look forward to meeting many more of Veterans Aid's beneficiaries. If you would like to find out about the 2015 auction and the BFBS Big Salute, go online to www.bigsalute.com. We wish Veterans Aid all the very best in the year to come.

Nicky Ness

Nicky Ness
Controller, British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) Radio.

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

On the cold, sunny morning of December 10th a sleek, dark Rolls Royce drew up at an East London Crematorium joining cars, taxis and pedestrians making their way from bus and tube stations. Some mourners had travelled the length of the country to be there, others only from nearby Tower Hamlets. They were there to celebrate the life of a veteran, a 61-year-old former soldier called Ian Douglas.

Ian was a quiet, gentle individual who came to Veterans Aid as a homeless man, 13 years ago. He shared little about his earlier life with those who lived alongside him at New Belvedere House, but he touched everyone who knew him.

Robbed of speech by an accident long ago, his playful winks, smiles and gestures gave him eloquence beyond words. Life had taken its toll but, when well enough, Ian liked to dance, listen to classical music and, although unprepossessing in appearance, was clearly a man of intelligence and sensitivity.

His sudden and unexpected passing cast a shadow over Christmas at New Belvedere House. To the 55 veterans of all ages who occupy its single rooms until they get back on their feet, it is a refuge, a resting place and, while typically only for eight months or so, a home.

Ian's funeral reminded everyone that Veterans Aid is a family - from its elegant but 'hands-on' Patron, The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere, to men whose first new suit in years was purchased by the charity. It is an organisation significantly more than the sum of its parts; an eclectic collection of former soldiers, sailors, airmen and civilians drawn from all walks of life, united by passionate support for the organisation of which they are part.

The impeccably presented veterans who gathered to pay their last respects to Ian Douglas had something else in common. All, at one time, had been homeless. All had got their lives back through Veterans Aid. Almost half had taken time off work to be at the funeral.

On the morning of his cremation more than 50 of them - members of Ian's surrogate family - lined up without instruction to greet the hearse bearing his coffin.

In a unifying echo of military life they were called to attention by Veterans Aid CEO, Wing Commander Dr Hugh Milroy, as the cortège approached.

For a moment, regardless of age or length of service, each man was back on the parade ground, standing straight-backed and proud to mark the passing of a fallen comrade. Poignant and intimate, it was a gesture of affection and honour.



Released by the command to 'stand at ease' the men watched pallbearers - there had been many volunteers - carry Ian's coffin, draped with a Union Jack, into the Chapel of Rest.

They filed in silently behind it, following hostel manager Pat O'Connor and members of her team.

Ian's moving eulogy was delivered haltingly, by her deputy Dennis - a former Parachute Regiment NCO who had also once experienced homelessness. He spoke to a congregation struggling with emotions.

Ian Douglas was once a soldier, but his real battle was fought against life and as the Last Post sounded every man in that crowded chapel had reason to reflect on his own journey.

Outside in the watery sunlight bouquets of flowers bearing Ian's name were displayed. The largest was from Veterans Aid, alongside a bouquet of perfect white roses from Lady Rothermere. Others were from fellow veterans whose lives had been touched by this quiet man who, in another lifetime, had served with The Royal Signals.

In the period before his death, Ian's health had deteriorated. He could do little for himself but was cared for at New Belvedere House with tenderness and love. He didn't die in a doorway, invisible and unacknowledged, just another anonymous homeless man. He died knowing he had comrades and a 'military family' that stood by him to the end.

Sadly Ian's wasn't the first funeral that Veterans Aid has organised and paid for, and it won't be the last, but Ian Douglas was special - a man who once walked barefoot in his pyjamas from a hospital in Kent, to get back to the only place in the world he considered 'home'.

Normally VA staff look forward to the day when New Belvedere House residents leave, to pick up the threads of their lives again, but Ian was too unwell for that ever to happen, so an exception was made.

In return he enriched the lives of everyone who knew him and his legacy will be the creation of a single high support unit, called The Ian Douglas Suite.

He will never be forgotten.

WHO HAS HELPED US THIS YEAR

105 Logistic Support Squadron, RLC
157 Bourne Road
20 Squadron RLC, Regents Park
27 Theatre Logistic Regiment RLC
6 Combat Support Bn REME, Delhi Barracks
All Saints Church, Staplehurst
All Saints Church, Wotton Underwood
An unknown Journalist
Arbuthnot Banking Gp PLC
Armed Forces Covenant Team (LIBOR)
Army & Navy Club
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
BAE Systems plc, Farnborough
BAE Systems plc, Stirling Sq, London
Barclays Community Investment
Barclays, Canary Wharf
Belstone Management Services
Camberley & Bagshot Catholic Parish
Canynges Lodge Social Committee
Cavalry and Guards Club
Chaplain, Royal Hospital Chelsea
Co-operative Funeralcare, Bulwell
Coldstream Guards Association, Leicester Branch
Concept Building Svc
Cornhill, Carham and Braxton Parishes
David Barnett Charitable Trust
Davies Family Charitable Trust
Derry Treanor Ltd Pension Fund
Dr. Mortimer and Theresa Sacker Foundation
Edwards Wildman Palmer UK LLP
Excalibur Unit Charity
Fresh Hope Trust
Frognaul Trust
Grendon Underwood, Edgcott and Kingswood Womens Institute
Guild of St Helena, London Group
Harbeth Audio Ltd
Home HQ Royal Dragoon Guards
Home HQ Royal Tank Regiment
Home HQ The Royal Scots

Dragoon Guards
Honourable Artillery Company
HQ JFS, Camp Bastion, Afghanistan
HQ London District
HQ Middlesex Wing ATC
HSBC
IBM Golf Basingstoke Golf Society
IES - Homeless Veterans Appeal
Inner Wheel Club of Chelsea & Westminster
JLR - Old Boys' Association
John Lewis Partnership
John Slater Foundation
Lady R Foundation
Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable Trust
Lloyds Bank Community Fund Team
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Market Traders and Shoppers of Spalding
Masons Company Charitable Trust
MEH Charitable Trust
Members of the public, relatives of homeless Veterans, friends and associates of Veterans Aid
Never Such Innocence
Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church, Camberley
Pamela Matthews Charitable Trust
Parachute Regiment Association, Spalding Branch
Parachute Regimental Association, London Branch
Patrick & Helena Frost Foundation
Placid Gonzales & Associates
Poulterers' Company
Queens Head, Public House, Stepney
Royal Air Force Association, Bisley
Royal Artillery Charitable Fund
Royal British Legion
Goudhurst Branch
Royal Choral Society
Royal Hospital Chelsea
Royal Lincolnshire & Royal Anglian Regimental Association
Poachers
Royal Naval Association, Spalding

Royal Signals Benevolent Fund
Sellmyhome.co.uk
SFM Europe: Brae Holdings Limited Charitable Trust
ShareGift, The Orr Mackintosh Foundation
Small Fund
Smart Giving
South Holland District Council
SSVC/BFBS 'Big Salute'
St Jude's Trust
St Martin's Church, West Acton
St Mary Magdalene Church, Chippenham
St Mary's Church, Old Basing
St Peter's Parish Church, Ightham
St Stephen's United Reform Church, Leicester
Standard Chartered Music Society
Stoller Charitable Trust
Swire Charitable Foundation
Tanner Trust
Taunton RFC Under 13s
The Not Forgotten Association
Towergate Wilson Staff, Maidstone
Training Support Unit, Worthy Down
Uppingham Brownies
Victoria Business Improvement District
Vitol Charitable Foundation
Waitrose, Basingstoke
Waitrose, Motcomb Street, Belgravia
Waitrose, Victoria
Placid Gonzales & Associates, Brentwood
Warren Partners
Wates Family Enterprise Trust
Westminster Foundation
Wilson's Solicitors LLP
Woodlands School, Basildon
Worshipful Company of Glovers
Worshipful Company of Saddlers
Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers
Wyggaston and QE College
Zero Alpha Foundation

Specific assistance on individual projects and work

Personal Empowerment Programme: Emergency Accommodation, Mental Health, Substance-misuse, Education & Training, Families & children:

Lloyds Patriotic Fund (extended beyond July 14)

Grants in aid of Hostel:

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Grant to Refurbish and Extend Hostel:

Armed Forces Covenant Team (LIBOR)

Grants to assist residents moving out of Hostel:

Schroder Foundation, Hanley Trust (1987), Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust

Grant towards work of Hostel staff:

The Henry Smith Charity

Emergency Accommodation: Greater London Authority (extended to April 2014)

Addiction & Substance Misuse: Armed Forces Covenant Team (LIBOR)

Direct assistance to homeless veterans from Drop-in Centre:

Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust

Supporting VA's Alcohol & Drugs treatment work:

The Royal British Legion

Supporting work of Manager at Hostel:

Hans K Rausing Trust (to Jan 2015)

Assistance with tri-service cases:

SSAFA & Officers Association

Drop-in Centre Outreach work (2 posts):

SSAFA (Central London)

RN and RM homeless veterans:

RNRMC, SEAFARERS UK, and RN Benevolent Trust

Drop-in Centre Outreach work & Army homeless veterans:

The Soldiers' Charity & Corps and Regimental Associations

RAF homeless veterans:

RAFBF

Ex-Merchant Navy homeless seafarers:

Merchant Navy Welfare Board

Hostel General Maintenance and Repairs:

Compton Housing Association

Christmas at the Hostel:

Vitol Charitable Foundation, Help for Heroes and many generous people.

Sponsoring a room at the Hostel:

Kensington & Chelsea Branch, Royal British Legion

Assistance for Move-on from the Hostel:

The Schroder Foundation

Clothes, shoes & bedding:

Hedley Foundation, Queen Mother's Clothing Guild

Skills, training & employment of VA ex-Servicemen:

The Army and Navy Club
Timpson

Wates Construction

Concept Building Services

FDM Group

Williams Scaffolding

Bounceback

Wilson James

Higher Education:

Ruskin College, Oxford

Reflexology therapy at Hostel:

Kate Rayer

Immediate provision of Mattresses and Furniture for Hostel:

Jean Notman, The London Furnishing Company Limited

Food for Hostel:

Fareshare, EAT & Pret A Manger

Assistance with venues for hosting VA activities:

Greater London RFCA

Gloves for Veterans:

Worshipful Company of Glovers

Refurbishment and running of Hostel bedroom:

John Slater Foundation

Visits to Hostel residents:

Royal Hospital Chelsea
In-Pensioners

Emergency Kits for Veterans calling in at Drop-in Centre:

John Lewis Partnership

Aid in kind - household goods, cutlery, knitted goods, new clothes, toiletries, Easter eggs etc:

Countless thoughtful individuals, businesses and organisations

Sustained help and encouragement from:

Our Patron - Lady Rothermere - the Victory Services Club, Union Jack Club, London Scottish Regiment, HQ London District, Guards Museum, Army & Navy Club and many others who have asked to remain anonymous

Emergency Short-Term Accommodation Project The Evening Standard:

Dispossessed Fund and The London Community Foundation

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Financial Summary for the year ended 30th September 2014

Income £1,691,345 (2013: £1,945,852)

	2014 £	2013 £
Local Authority payments	499,045	503,434
Charges to hostel residents	55,251	51,016
Grants	301,528	635,235
Donations & Legacies	541,529	391,902
Donations in Kind	189,340	127,410
Fundraising & Sundry	39,382	126,895
Investment Income	65,270	109,960
	£1,691,345	£1,945,852

Net decrease in funds (2013 increase)

Unrealised gain on revaluation of premises	£1,046,684	nil
Unrealised gain on investments	£89,643	£77,450
Total increase in funds	£978,573	£371,098

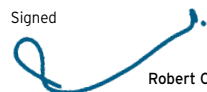
Reserves

	Balances at 30th Sept 2014 £	Movement in year £	
Hollenden House Endowment Reserve	2,216,176	84,022	permanent endowment reserve
Restricted Funds	3,137,111	830,996	donated for specified purposes, plus revaluations
General Reserve (Unrestricted Funds)	1,034,440	63,555	represents 6 months operating costs
	£6,387,727	£978,573	

Trustees' statement

This financial summary has been prepared to illustrate the main areas of ongoing expenditure by Veterans Aid, the principal sources of its income and the funds available. The Board of Trustees confirms that this financial summary is taken from the draft accounts for the year and is subject to audit. The summary does not contain all the information necessary to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of Veterans Aid. Copies of the full accounts, once the audit is complete, will be filed with the Charity Commission and may be obtained from: Veterans Aid, 40 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 0RE.

Signed



Robert Clinton, Honorary Treasurer

Expenditure £1,849,099 (2013: £1,652,204)

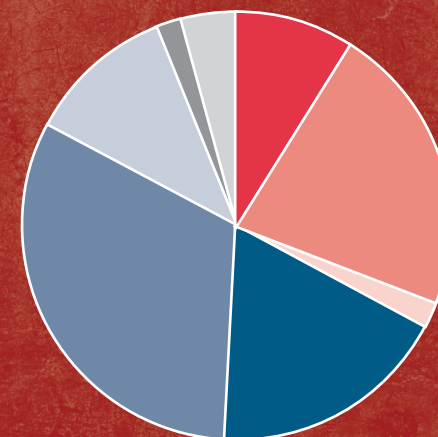
	2014 £	2013 £
Hostel running costs	880,723	775,490
London Relief Centre	835,443	752,441
Governance costs	66,385	62,791
Fundraising & Event Costs	66,548	61,482
	£1,849,099	£1,652,204

The Unrestricted Fund surplus for the year is £63,555 (2013 deficit £32,050). The Restricted Fund deficit (excluding revaluations) of £215,689 (2013 surplus £295,308) includes expenditure of £184,856 relating to grants received in previous years to be spent in this and subsequent years

Where our income comes from

Veterans Aid has a well-balanced mix of income, with contributions from local government in the form of grants and housing benefits paid on behalf of our hostel residents, a grant from the Greater London Authority to assist with emergency accommodation, steady income from our investment portfolio, grants from other military charities, and growing support in donations from the commercial sector and the general public and from fundraising events.

L. B. Tower Hamlets grant	9%
Rent and housing benefits	22%
Greater London Authority grant	2%
Grants	18%
Donations and legacies	32%
Donations in kind	11%
Fundraising and sundry	2%
Investment income	4%



PLEASE HELP

If you would like to make a donation please call 0800 012 6867 or visit our website www.veterans-aid.net





If you would like to make a donation please use the QR code, call 0800 012 6867 or visit www.veterans-aid.net



**40 Buckingham Palace
Road · London · SW1W 0RE**

Telephone: 020 7828 2468

Freephone: 0800 012 68 67

Facsimile: 020 7630 6784

E-mail: info@veterans-aid.net

Web: www.veterans-aid.net

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Charitable Company Limited
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